

ALANSON HINMAN.—The career of this well-known pioneer, whose portrait appears herein, has been unique and interesting; and in one respect, at least, he occupies at the present time a peculiar place among the early settlers of our country. That is, he is almost the only man yet living, of the *earliest* pioneers, who still remains in the full vigor

of mind and body. There are, indeed, a few yet living whose immigration dates further back than Mr. Hinman's; but they are almost all now in extreme old age. He, on the other hand, though he has now been here forty-five years, came so young and is possessed of so robust health, that he is still as active in body and as accurate in memory and judgment as ever. This gives a peculiar value to his historical reminiscences. And when we remember that he has been prominent in nearly every phase of our development, educational, commercial and political, we can readily see what important contributions it is in his power to give to history.

Mr. Hinman was born in New York on the first day of May, 1822. In 1842 his active and enterprising mind caught the great westward movement of the times; and he went to seek his fortune in Iowa. His first work was one to which he subsequently devoted much attention, *i. e.*, teaching. Two years having passed in this line of life, the farther and then unknown West, the *ultima thule* of the adventurous spirits of the border, far-off Oregon, excited his interest; and thither in the spring of 1844 he turned his face. This was the second large immigration, consisting of eight hundred souls, of whom two hundred and fifty were able-bodied men.

The immigration of the preceding year, under the guidance of Doctor Whitman, had demonstrated the possibility of taking wagons through to the Columbia. The immigration of 1844, therefore, pushed right through the shaggy defiles and over the towering heights of the Blue Mountains, and in the autumn reached Walla Walla. Here Mr. Hinman spent the winter, engaged in his former vocation of teaching. In June, 1845, he proceeded, in company with Doctor Whitman, to the Willamette valley; and there he again found employment as wielder of "the birch and rod." This time his work was in the Salem Institute, which was situated near the present site of the Willamette University.

In 1846 he was married to Martha E. Jones Gerish, of whom he was deprived by death in 1861. His children were Deidamia, Arvid, Mary E., Ida, Oliver, Sarah, Alanson and Charles. Of these, Deidamia, Sarah and Charles died in infancy.

In the historic and tragic year of 1847, Mr. Hinman was connected with the mission station at The Dalles; and there he was during the terrible days of the Whitman massacre. A fund of valuable information is stored up in his mind concerning those "times which tried men's souls." It is to be hoped that his remembrances of the controverted events of that time may sometime be published in full; for they would constitute a resource for historians which might well supplant the tissues of assumption and prejudice put forth latterly so voluminous under the sacred name of history.

After the events of 1847 had rendered the Inland Empire uninhabitable for Whites, Mr. Hinman followed the wise fashion of the times, and in the spring of 1848 located a Donation land claim in the beautiful valley now known as Patton's valley, at a point three miles west of the present town of Gaston. There he lived, engaged in stock-raising and farming for several years; when he moved to

Forest Grove, Oregon, and there has since made his home.

In 1860, having formed the design of embarking in the mercantile business, he went to San Francisco for a stock of goods. Returning on the old *Northerner*, he took part in the wreck of that ill-fated rover of the sea off the shaggy headlands of Cape Mendocino. He lost on this occasion eight thousand dollars' worth of merchandise, but deemed himself fortunate in escaping with his life; for over a third of the passengers were drowned. After this disastrous adventure, Mr. Hinman, nothing daunted by misfortune, went to the Idaho mines. There he met with such success as to repair his broken fortunes, and to lay the foundation of the financial prosperity which has not since failed him during his active and laborious career.

In 1865 he was married, secondly, to Miss Margaret Sophia Bowen, of Oberlin, Ohio, whose rare qualities of mind and heart have long made their beautiful family residence a center of attraction, and have added much to the scope of her husband's influence and power. The children of this marriage were Charles Lucius and Frank William.

In 1867 Mr. Hinman was appointed collector of customs for the Oregon district. This position he held six years, living at Astoria. The duties of this responsible office he discharged with distinguished ability and faithfulness. Mr. Hinman has been in various offices a number of times, having been justice of the peace, member of the legislature, and county commissioner. Since returning from Astoria to Forest Grove in 1873, he has been engaged constantly in mercantile life.

Though now relieved by his sons Alanson and Frank, and his son-in-law, Reas Leabo, of much of the confining drudgery of business, he is still as active as ever in managing the details of his various enterprises. Although the pedagogic period of our subject's life has long since passed, he has not lost his interest in educational work. For thirty-six years he has been a charter member, and for eleven years a trustee, of Pacific University, and during the greater part of the time has been president of the board and chairman of its financial committee. The institution owes much to his business shrewdness and general good sense.

As one of the most intelligent and effective, as well as earliest, builders of the growing empire of the Northwest, the subject of this sketch is deserving of special remembrance.

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