

**INDIAN MISSIONARY REMINISCENCES,
PRINCIPALLY OF THE WYANDOT
NATION. IN WHICH IS EXHIBITED THE
EFFICACY OF THE GOSPEL IN ELEVATING
IGNORANT AND SAVAGE MEN**

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Indian missionary reminiscences, principally of the Wyandot nation. In which is exhibited the efficacy of the gospel in elevating ignorant and savage men by Charles Elliott

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CHARLES ELLIOTT

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BY THE REV. CHARLES ELLIOTT,
SOME TIME MISSIONARY AMONG THE WYANDOTS.

"Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all," Col. iii, 11.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following is the history of these Reminiscences. While missionary at Upper Sandusky, in 1822, the author kept a brief journal of passing events, for the first three months of his stay there. The keeping of the journal was interrupted by the increased duties of an extensive revival, in the first place; and subsequently, by his spending the latter half of the year in obtaining supplies for the increasing wants of the mission school and family. The Reminiscences took their origin as follows:—About the end of February, 1834, shortly after the writer commenced editing the *Pittsburg Conference Journal*, he was relating one day the substance of what is contained in Reminiscence XVI., to some friends in the printing office. They requested that it would be written and published. This was done, and after the publication of this, several others followed. Shortly after this, some thought that the incidents contained in these unadorned and unpretending narratives might be interesting to the public as a Sunday school book. This led the writer to

add the above-named journal and some other incidents not published in the Conference Journal. He judges that the life of *Between-the-Logs* will be acceptable to most. He also supposes that the concluding observations on the efficacy of the Gospel, both in civilizing and Christianizing man, will not be unacceptable to those who may have patience to read what precedes; or who feel interested in the conversion of the world. No one who peruses this humble production will expect any literary embellishment. This is beyond the reach, and, in this work, foreign to, the design of the writer of the *Reminiscences*.

CHARLES ELLIOTT.

Pittsburg, Feb., 1835.

INDIAN

MISSIONARY REMINISCENCES.

REMINISCENCE I.

John Steward the coloured man, the apostle of the Wyandots—His conversion—Licensed to exhort—Remarkable dream—Sets out from Marietta toward the north-west—Arrives at Goshen among the Moravian Delawares—Journey to Pipetown—Incidents there.

JOHN STEWARD was born and raised in Powhattan county, Va. He was a free mulatto, and claimed kindred with the Indians. In the early part of his life, he lived without an experimental knowledge of religion. He could read and write but imperfectly, yet, after he became religious, he improved much in reading, so that he could read, with tolerable fluency and precision, his Bible and hymn book. Through the instrumentality of Methodist preaching, he was convinced of his sinfulness by nature and practice. He sought God earnestly, and found the pearl of great price, accompanied with the direct witness of his sonship, by the agency of the Holy Spirit; a clear sense of which he afterward retained. In his Christian experience he was very clear. This I learned from hearing him preach, pray, and exhort, frequently, as well as from frequent private conversations with him. He prayed much, and lived near to God.

He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at Marietta, where he obtained the reputation of a consistent Christian. After some time, in consideration of his gifts, graces, and prospective usefulness, he was regularly licensed to *exhort*; and as an exhorter he laboured, especially among the people of his own colour, with acceptance and usefulness. Shortly after he was thus licensed, he esteemed it his duty to call sinners to repentance, in a more extended way than what falls ordinarily to the lot of exhorters. But as there is something altogether extraordinary connected with this man, a minute history of his early movements may not be unacceptable. With him I had frequent conversations respecting the first steps by which he was led to attempt to preach among the Indians.

About the time, or shortly after he commenced exhorting, he had a remarkable dream. And although dreams are uncertain directories, and are never to be followed, unless they have the authority of the revealed word to sanction what they teach, yet when they teach us what the Bible and common sense teach us, it is wise and safe to follow them. The only reason why we ascribe Steward's dream to a good cause, was, that the subsequent steps by which he was conducted lead us to the certainty of *facts*, which testify that his cause was one that was under the direction of the Almighty.

He dreamed that he was in a certain house, about to commence a religious meeting, and that an Indian man and woman, while he was sitting,

came into the house, clothed in particular garments—they came into the house in a peculiar manner—accosted him, and shook hands with him—retired and took their seats—and seemed to manifest peculiar earnestness and interest in respect to his message. He also gathered from them, that they invited him to go and preach for their people, who lived in a direction *north-west* from Marietta. This dream made an uncommon impression on his mind. And though he used many means to argue away its force, it still clung to him by day and by night. When he resisted the impression on his mind, he was afterward in a state of mental misery. But when he was determined to follow the indented impression of his mind, his peace and joy returned. He would frequently go into the woods and fields, to pray, and ask God for direction. It seemed to him as if he *heard* the voice of these two Indians continually, *saw* them always before his eyes, and heard their *invitation* to him, to come and preach to them, as well as their *warning* to preach the truth faithfully. He would sometimes seem to hear them praise God with sweetest voices. They still seemed to come from the north-west, and invited him to proceed in that direction. He would sometimes find himself standing on his feet, and addressing a congregation. A sense of his weakness and ignorance prevented him from attempting the contemplated journey, though his mind was continually drawn to travel toward the source from whence the voices came. The impression made daily on his

mind became stronger and stronger. And in consequence of having resisted this call, from a sense of his own insufficiency, the agitations of his mind so affected his body, that he was thrown into a severe fit of sickness. During his illness, and as he was recovering, he resolved, with God's help, that, should the Lord restore him, he would attempt the work which he believed it his duty to perform. When he thoroughly recovered, he firmly resolved to go, provided he would be enabled to pay some debts he had contracted before he experienced religion. This he was soon enabled to do, and commenced preparing to take his journey. He opened his mind on the subject to several members of the Church, but they generally viewed his impressions as merely imaginary. From this source he therefore either met with no encouragement, or with repulse. Here his difficulties again increased. And though he was convinced he *must go*, yet he had no person or Church authority to *send* him. The quarterly meeting conference justly enough supposed that the hazard was too great for them to venture any particular interference. At length he conversed with a certain class leader, one of his confidants, on the subject, and the leader gave him the following wise advice:—"Your impressions and sense of duty are so peculiar, that no Church authority can act just now in your case. But as you verily believe it is your duty to go somewhere north-west, and preach to the Indians, obey what you esteem to be the command of God. And probably you