“HUMBLE MISSIONARY”: CHARLES MACLAY IN CALIFORNIA, 1851-1890

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The stereotype of the missionary is the white Westerner ministering to a flock of Africans or Asians or Latin Americans. Many missionaries have skewed this traditional image, and one who did so was Charles Maclay. His life and work serve not only to illustrate that “missionary” has a very broad meaning, but also that the “civilizing” interpretation of mission as imperialism was inadequate to explain the interaction of religion and society.

I will take as a touchstone the work of William R. Hutchison. In his study of Protestant foreign missions (foreign to western countries, that is), he posits the “civilizing” approach over against the “evangelizing” approach. “Civilizing” meant educating, providing health, sharing the material blessings of western civilization, and, what seemed decidedly “imperialistic” to many, teaching English and inculcating in non-western peoples the values and mores of western countries. “Evangelizing,” on the other hand, meant proclaiming the gospel and reducing mission work to converting persons to Christianity.¹ Both ways, unfortunately, end up being imperialistic, as Paul W. Harris has shown.² Charles Maclay’s life demonstrates that there is another interpretation that has not been explored, namely, that Christianity can be a culture-creating force.

Charles Maclay was born in 1822 in a Scot-American family who had settled in central Pennsylvania in the early 1700s. Some of his forebears distinguished themselves through public service. His great-uncle, William Maclay, served as Pennsylvania senator in the first Congress and wrote a droll commentary on some of the founding fathers.³ Other Maclays served in the Revolutionary War, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Pennsylvania legislature. Maclay’s father was a soldier in the War of 1812. It was not public service, though, that became his father’s greatest contribution to our heritage; rather, it was his breaking with the family tradition of Presbyterianism and joining the Methodist Episcopal Church.

This new enthusiasm led the parents to engender in their children a yearning for the ministry. All of their five sons became Methodist preachers. Charles followed his older brother, John, into the ordained ministry as a circuit preacher in the Baltimore Conference, which at that time included large portions of Pennsylvania.

Charles Maclay began keeping a journal in 1845, when he was already a preacher. At the beginning of the journal he sketched out his early life and included particular events from the previous four years. He reported that he was converted at age twelve and became a fervent participant in Methodist services. After attending Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, only a few months, he left college, became licensed to preach, and took a circuit a few miles from home. During the next few years he served circuits and while serving near Williamsport, Pennsylvania, became an agent raising funds for Dickinson College as well as Dickinson Seminary in Williamsport, a predecessor of the present Lycoming College.

His written rationales for fund-raising show that even as a young man he saw the mission of the church and the mission of the American nation as very similar if not identical. In one of his appeals for the school, for example, he wrote in a Whitmanesque vein about the present as an age of improvement, mentioning the development of railroads and the telegraph. A church college, he believed, was part of this surge toward progress.

Like most fund-raisers, then as now, he also stressed the prudential aspect of giving, saying that those who give will receive more than they give. But in making this statement he could not help referring to the “great & grand characteristic of all civilized, & christianized nation[s],” liberality in giving. Pagan nations, he wrote, do not help the needy; they allow their aged and their disabled young to die.

Maclay seemed to enjoy being a pastor and doubling as a fund-raiser for Methodist schools, but he could not help thinking about becoming a missionary. His younger brother, Robert Samuel, whom he greatly admired, went to Foochow, China, in 1847, in the first wave of Methodist Episcopal Church missionaries to China. Charles wrote in his journal, “I am ready at the call of the church either for China or California.” His reason for thinking of California seemed to be his interest in raising money. “I have a project in my head which I am disposed to think is praiseworthy,” he wrote, “to go to California & get a large quantity of gold, enough to endow Dickinson Seminary at Williamsport & Dickinson College at Carlisle . . . .”

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5 “Lecture on Giving March 17/62,” Maclay Papers, Box 1, MC 163, Huntington Library. This item is reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
7 Journal of Charles Maclay, February 7, 1849. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Eventually he did receive the call. John P. Durbin, corresponding secretary of the MEC Missionary Society, recommended Maclay, and Maclay was asked to go to California. Maclay recalled praying for “the destitute heathen” at the family altar and wondering “if I should ever visit there dark abodes & present to them light, life & immortality through the Gospel. Those days of childhood are gone . . . & here I am to night assuming the responsibility of a humble missionary.”

Humble though he may have felt, he retained enough common sense to realize that it would be helpful to marry before leaving. He proposed to Catherine Paxton Lloyd, the daughter of a banker in Williamsport, whose family he had known through the church. The two were married, set sail from New York on April 1, 1851, and arrived in San Francisco on May 5. (Along the way Maclay could not resist commenting that Roman Catholic churches along the Mexican coast were there to “humbug & heathen-bug the people.”)

In California he joined a mission already under way. The Oregon mission had been established by Jason Lee in the 1830s and William Roberts had become its superintendent in 1847. After the discovery of gold in California in 1848, with its attendant heavy migration, the MEC sent Isaac Owen to oversee the work in California. William Taylor, who became famous for his street preaching, arrived in 1849, and Methodist societies and classes were organized in northern California.

Maclay and his wife were sent to establish a church at Santa Clara, near the existing congregation at San Jose. The Maclays marvelled at such exotic sights as giant stands of redwoods and Californios lassoing wild horses. They were less impressed with the dominant Roman Catholic church, whose burial practices Maclay criticized. They also had difficulty adjusting to the dry and windy climate. Maclay threw himself into his work, however, helping to build the church out of adobes, “mix­ing & carrying mortar . . . the hardest work that can be engaged in.”

Maclay also bought a farm and worked it himself, plowing, sowing, and harrowing fields for wheat and putting up fences.

Once again he was asked to help raise funds for a school. The school, at first named California Wesleyan College, was the first Protestant college in California and the forerunner of the present University of the Pacific. It opened in Santa Clara in 1852. It was coed from the beginning, though the sexes were discreetly separated for instruction. Less than a year later it numbered 120 students, with four teachers of a liberal arts curriculum.

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*Journal of Charles Maclay, January 7, 1851. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
*Journal of Charles Maclay, April 23, 1851. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
*Journal of Charles Maclay, May 8, 1852. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
*After moving to nearby San Jose in 1871, the school moved to Stockton in the 1920s.
Besides serving as fund-raiser, Maclay served on the board of trust the entire time he lived in northern California—until 1873. He served frequently on the financial committee and in 1862–63 as treasurer.12

During the 1850s, Maclay became more and more engrossed with his own business and less involved with the life of the church. The very last entry in his journal referred to another younger brother, William, who had also come to California as a Methodist preacher: “he wishes me to go in partnership in a store. I think seriously of doing it.”13 Gradually Maclay moved from being an active itinerant pastor to a supernumerary. He not only entered the general store with William, he built a gristmill and tannery and had a real estate business on the side. By 1860 he was no longer serving in the itinerancy.

These business interests obviously stemmed in part from his aptitude for dealing in finances. They had the effect, however, of drawing Maclay into the maelstrom of California culture and politics, not always an atmosphere readily associated with being an “humble missionary.” He had first encountered the violent side of life in California when he was street preaching in San Francisco during the Annual Conference of 1851. A rowdy in the crowd interrupted him, and according to one family recollection, Maclay drew a sidearm and dispatched the man on the spot. Maclay’s own account, though circumspectly worded, implies that the man was already wounded, however, and simply died during the preaching.14 In any case, Maclay did “the right thing” for a Methodist preacher and took up a collection, netting $130.

Whatever the facts of this incident, they were merely a prelude to Maclay’s participation in one of the most controversial episodes in American history: the vigilante period in San Francisco in 1856. Maclay was there because for one year he served on the Alameda Circuit, which meant that he preached part of the time in San Francisco.

12 General Minutes of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1854; Rockwell D. Hunt, History of the College of the Pacific, 1851–1951 (Stockton, Calif.: College of the Pacific, 1951), 8; bulletins of the University of the Pacific, 1854–74, Holt-Atherton Pacific Center for Western Studies, University of the Pacific, Stockton.
13 Journal of Charles Maclay, January 22, 1853. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
14 Maclay: “I preached on the plaza at 4½ to a multitude of men of every cast. Gamblers, etc. When I was speaking of the death of the ungodly, how miserable they died, some poor wicked wretch cried out it is a lie. & swore most profanely. he was shot I guess under the fifth rib & could not stand it much longer. They soon took him off. he had not one to back him. I told him to hold on a little that I was about to change the picture & no doubt the christians death would fall more sweetly upon his ear & not [illegible] up the sympathy of his heart. They showed him out of it.” Journal, August 18, 1851: The more colorful version comes from Lawrence C. Jorgensen, ed., The San Fernando Valley, Past and Present (Los Angeles: Pacific Rim Research, 1982), 86, where an unnamed granddaughter of Maclay’s is cited as source.
The event that precipitated the vigilante period of 1856 (other episodes occurred in San Francisco in 1851 and 1877) was the street killing of James King, who called himself King of William. King had begun publishing his own newspaper, the San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin. In the style of the day, he carried on personal vituperative verbal duels with local politicians and other editors. King was killed by James Casey, a county supervisor and editor of the Sunday Times.

The immediate result of King's death was a claim that law and order had broken down and that it was necessary for citizens to organize a military organization, known as the Vigilance Committee, with the avowed purposes,

for the maintenance of the peace and the good order of society, the prevention and punishment of crime, the preservation of our lives and property, and to insure that our ballot boxes shall hereafter express the actual and unforged will of a majority of our citizens. . . .

The ensuing takeover of the city led to the lynchings of four persons, including Casey, and the expulsion of 28 men, mostly Irish. The period of military domination by the Vigilance Committee lasted only from May 14, 1856, when King was killed, to August 18. Committee members remained a force in San Francisco politics for a decade, however.

Maclay was a card-carrying member of the Vigilance Committee. Of the approximately 7,000 men who were members, Richard M. Brown identified more than 5,000 in the papers that remain from the organization. Maclay is listed as member number 1161, having duly paid $2.50 for the privilege.

We do not know how actively Maclay participated, although a notice in a San Francisco paper carried the following announcement on May 25, ten days after King's killing:

Rev. C. Maclay will preach in the Folsom street M.E. Church at 11 A.M., and at 3 ½ P.M. Subject in the morning—The Life and Death of James King of Wm. In the afternoon—The Duty of Citizens.

Maclay never referred to his part in the vigilante period, but his participation indicates his identification with a certain racial and political group—young men in their twenties and thirties, who were predominantly from the northeastern U.S. and mostly merchants, tradesmen, and craftsmen. Maclay's participation also suggests his identification with the
attempt of the so-called Yankee merchant class to assert its power over against Irish and other immigrant workers.\textsuperscript{17}

The submersion of Maclay’s religious faith under the weight of this prevailing pro-business and anti-Catholic movement seemed to become almost total in the 1860s. Working with others to derogate the incumbents in the Santa Clara delegation to the state legislature, he was elected in 1861 as a member of the assembly.

As a Republican, he upheld the Union in the Civil War, and he stood for limited rights of blacks. Leland Stanford reigned as governor and Maclay loyally supported him in asserting the dominance of the railroads and corporate interests.

As for the Civil War, Maclay proved to be almost too zealous in its behalf. He introduced a bill depriving supporters of the Confederacy of their civil rights, saying there could be no such thing as neutrality. Toward Confederate supporters he mockingly allowed, “I am not in favor of shooting them or hanging them, or imprisssoning them, I am in favor most decidedly of confiscating their property & taking away their rights of citizenship.”\textsuperscript{18} The bill passed the house 38–27 and became law.\textsuperscript{19}

Maclay also supported a bill that would allow Blacks to testify in court, declaring that Blacks were “Beings possessed of souls of infinate value, Beings blessed with reason, with Intellects, & passions such as we have, Beings having the stamp of immortality upon them.” He argued that evidence from Blacks would often assist Whites in court, that Blacks were often mistreated by Whites, and that granting the right to testify would not bring social equality.\textsuperscript{20} The bill passed but specifically excluded Chinese.

Maclay supported a bill imposing a head tax on Chinese, although the bill died in the Senate. He voted against bills and resolutions asking that Chinese immigration into the U.S. be stopped. He identified with the prevailing Yankee establishment by voting with the majority against a bill to repeal the Sabbath law.\textsuperscript{21} He also introduced a bill requiring licenses


\textsuperscript{18}Handwritten manuscript in a file headed “March 15, 1862, Speech by Charles Maclay before the California Assembly introducing a bill for the punishment of treason.” Maclay Papers, MC 162, Huntington Library. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

\textsuperscript{19}The debate and vote were reported in the \textit{Daily Alta California}, April 9, 1862.

\textsuperscript{20}Maclay Papers, Box 1, MC 164, untitled manuscript dated April, 1862, on outside of folder. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

\textsuperscript{21}Despite some legal rebuffs in the 1850s, Protestants persuaded the legislature to pass the Sabbath law. Such legislation was common in eastern states but was difficult to uphold in the rowdy West. See Sandra Sizer Frankiel, \textit{California’s Spiritual Frontiers: Religious Alternatives in Anglo-Protestantism, 1830–1910} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 47–48.
Charles Maclay did not run again. The reasons are not clear, although one factor may have been a disastrous fire that in 1863 destroyed his mill and tannery. He rebuilt, but the energy and expense may have detracted from his political interests.

He had recovered enough by 1864 to serve as an elector for Abraham Lincoln in his re-election. At the end of the war, he failed to receive the Republican nomination for state senator, which precipitated his change to the Democrats, who nominated him for state senator in 1865. (He was not elected then but in 1867 at the death of the incumbent.) In explaining his reasons for changing Maclay complained about Republican advocacy of the black franchise. Maclay expounded on the last reason:

They say that the blacks must vote to counteract the foreign vote. I have heard some of the candidates on the other side say so. What is that. Why that niggers must vote to count against the votes of Irishman, Germans, French Italians Swedes, etc. etc. Great God has it come to this that the foreign population is to be put on a leval with the black man, yes beneath him. I respect the black man & dont wish to ruin him. I am opposed to his being allowed to vote, for this reason. There old masters would controll their votes like the Iron Masters of Penn., where I was born.

As a state senator, Maclay worked unabashedly for his own interests. He introduced a bill to construct a turnpike road from Santa Clara to Pescadero, when he was president of a joint stock company building the road. The bill passed. He supported the railroads and said in later years,

All the time I was in the Senate I attended to the business of the railroad, as Gov. Stanford and Col. [Charles] Crocker wanted me to do their business, they asking that I should never introduce a bill for them that I did not think was perfectly right, and I will say to their credit that they never asked me to do a single dishonorable act or introduce a bill that I did not fully approve of.

22The Journal of the Assembly, 13th session, 1862, vol. 68, 297, 550 for votes on Chinese immigration; 318, 425–26 for the marriage bill. The vote on the Sabbath bill was noted in the Daily Alta California, March 12, 1862, and the head tax on Chinese in the same paper on March 28, 1862.

23A political adversary supplied another reason: “Mr. Maclay came before that Convention [of the Union, or Republican party in 1865] seeking the nomination for the place so ably filled by our late Senator, Dr. Knox. . . . The first choice of that body was for Dr. Knox. From that moment the scales fell from Mr. Maclay’s eyes, and he was a ‘regenerated’ Democrat!” San Jose Mercury, December 26, 1867.

24“Reasons for accepting the nomination for the State Senate,” handwritten manuscript, Maclay Papers, Box 2, MC 170. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

25The Journal of the Senate during the Seventeenth Session of the Legislature of California, 1867–1868 (Sacramento: D. W. Gelwicks, state printer, 1870), page 244; San Jose Daily Mercury, “Santa Clara News,” August 25, 1869. As the San Jose Weekly Patriot described the situation on February 21, 1868, “Mr. Maclay said he was about the only person interested in the passage of this bill, its object being to authorize him to complete a road from Santa Clara to Pescadero, a distance being left uncompleted of about eight miles. . . .”

26Charles Maclay, Dictation of Charles Maclay: ms., [undated] (BANC MSS C-D 817), The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Quoted with permission.
The gratitude of the two members of the "Big Four" was expressed through free railroad passes to Maclay and his wife.27

Maclay introduced numerous bills and supported the railroad and financial interests throughout the session. In doing so, he was forced to reverse himself on many votes he had cast five years earlier as a representative. But on another issue Maclay showed all too much consistency for his critics. After opposing efforts to restrict Chinese immigration while a member of the assembly, he used Chinese laborers on his road project as a senator.28 Throughout his business and political career, Maclay employed Chinese laborers and rather consistently supported Chinese immigration. In later years, Maclay said, however:

I think the Chinese taken as a whole are an injury to the country. There was a time here when I suppose it was necessary to have them, when the railroads were building, but now I think the sooner we get rid of them the better. Their influence is bad, they do not mix with us, and they are a drain upon the country, giving nothing back in return.29

Maclay always paid close attention to constituent needs, but was less active during the 1870–71 term. In 1873, he was nominated again by the Democrats for state senator but lost by a large margin. The reasons were probably multiple: a rising reformist tide, Maclay's own diffidence, his identification with corporate interests, and possibly a public perception that he wanted to leave the Santa Clara area. In 1870 he held an auction for his tannery, mill, and store, but failed to find interested buyers. Almost immediately after his loss in 1873, however, he turned his attention to southern California. The reasons are not clear, although his daughter and son-in-law lived there. Another contact was his nephew, Robert Maclay Widney, a lawyer who had been part of the Maclay business empire in Santa Clara but had moved to Los Angeles in the late 1860s.30 Widney had helped the Southern Pacific win a competition with the Texas Pacific for rights to build north from Los Angeles, and he may have alerted his uncle to possibilities like that of buying into the estate of

27A packet of ephemera in the Maclay Papers contains four railroad passes: one to "Chas Maclay and wife" on the Central Pacific Railroad and signed by Leland Stanford; a pair of Union Pacific passes to "Senator Maclay & wife"; and another to "Mr Chas Maclay" on the Central Pacific, also signed by Stanford. All are dated 1872. "Land Papers, 1874–1908," The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
28"More of Mr. Maclay's Record," San Jose Daily Mercury, August 9, 1869.
29Charles Maclay, Dictation of Charles Maclay: ms., [undated] (BANC MSS C-D 817), The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. 3. Quoted with permission.
30Widney was the son of Charles's sister, Arabella. He was born in Ohio in 1838 and came to Santa Clara in 1857, was graduated from the University of Pacific, and became a lawyer and businessman. Also a Methodist, he became a financial supporter of the University of Southern California and in 1871 a judge of the 17th judicial district of California. Edgar S. Maclay, The Maclays of Lurgan: Being a Biographical Sketch of the Descendants of Charles and John Maclay Who Came to America in the Year 1734 (Brooklyn, N.Y.: no publisher: 1889), 72.
Pío Pico, the last Mexican governor of California. Pico’s land was part of the old Mission San Fernando, which lay near the proposed railroad route.\(^{31}\)

On visiting the valley in early 1874, Maclay saw not only its possibilities as an agricultural area but also its commercial potential. Maclay met the owner of the remaining part of the Pico estate (part had been sold earlier to ranchers) and discovered that he was about to lose it because of a $60,000 mortgage. Maclay immediately took an option and then raced for San Francisco to borrow the $60,000. He had a deadline because the date for the sale was immediate—the day after he finally reached San Francisco. Failing to raise the money from two old business and political partners, George K. and Benjamin Porter, Maclay turned to Stanford, who issued him a check within 24 hours. The funds were wired to southern California and Maclay had a new bonanza.\(^{32}\)

What he had was a vast area of 56,000 acres, the total price of which was about $115,000, or approximately $2 an acre. Immediately he shored up his investment by getting the Porters to buy an interest in the area. The three divided up the land, and the town of San Fernando was developed on Maclay’s portion. Once the railroad was completed from Los Angeles to San Fernando in 1874, the latter became the northern terminus from Los Angeles for about two years. The investors promoted heavily in the rest of California and arranged for daily excursions out of Los Angeles. A barbecue and band greeted prospective buyers, many of whom were land speculators themselves. The lots, however, were designed for the individual owner—farm tracts for 40 acres each, and town lots that were 25 x 100 feet.

Maclay, of course, built a store at once, as well as a home. He organized a water company on his land and sponsored the construction of a Methodist church.\(^{33}\) These were prosperous years for the Maclays, partly because the former senator continued to use his relations with Stanford and Crocker and to be used by them. Maclay continued to ask for free railroad passes, despite a law prohibiting them.\(^{34}\) Stanford could telegraph plaintively to Maclay: “Mr Porter wants all the money paid to him what will we do,” about the financial arrangements in buying the Pico prop-

\(^{31}\)Widney may have exaggerated his role in the Southern Pacific advocacy, but his writing does affirm that he knew about Southern Pacific affairs. Robert M. Widney, *Los Angeles County Subsidy* (Los Angeles: Star Print, no date), 347–64.

\(^{32}\)These events are described in many local histories, the most reliable of which is Jackson Mayers, *The San Fernando Valley* (Walnut, Calif.: John D. McIntyre, 1976), 61–65. See also Jorgensen, *The San Fernando Valley*, 85–86.

\(^{33}\)The church building was dedicated on March 2, 1884, with the help of Methodist P. S. Bresee, who was later to become a founder of the Nazarene Church.

\(^{34}\)Crocker wrote, “I notice your request for a pass. The law passed last winter by the Legislature of this State prevents us from issuing a pass to you, but when you want to come to San Francisco, write me a few days in advance and I will fix it for you.” Apparently Maclay succeeded, since a year later Crocker wrote, “I herewith enclose you the ticket as your (sic) request.” Letters January 24, 1877, and February 28, 1878, Maclay Papers, MC 55 and MC 58. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Maclay bragged to Crocker, "it is in my power to change at least 300 votes in this county," in a congressional race. Maclay asked Stanford, then a U.S. senator, if he could arrange an introduction for their daughter, Mary Griswold, to President Grover Cleveland.

Professionally, Charles Maclay now entered on a period marked by commercial transactions, litigation, and political entanglements, although he never again ran for public office. He was assisted in his work by his nephew Widney in Los Angeles, who was also one of the charter trustees in what became Maclay's most durable legacy: the founding of a school of theology. Not until 1884 were the financial and legal problems over the Pico property settled. Once they were, Maclay found himself in prosperous circumstances, as he had been at other times in Santa Clara. But this time he vowed things would be different:

I had made a good deal of money in the upper country but everything had just slipped through my fingers, and I made up my mind that the next big rise I got I would do something for the church, and the moment I made this sale here I told the Judge I would endow a theological school here. I told him my plans and sent for Bishop [C. H.] Fowler, and told him I would give a hundred thousand dollars, and put up the building, and when they were making out the papers I told them they might as well make it a hundred and fifty thousand.

Actually, Maclay seems to have made the initial contact through the Rev. R. W. C. Farnsworth, presiding elder of the Los Angeles District. Bishop Fowler made the gift public at the Southern California Annual Conference regular meeting on September 12, 1885. The $150,000 was in the form of scrip in the San Fernando Land and Water Company. A deed was drawn up, the endowment placed under a board of trustees, and a board of regents organized.

Maclay also donated ten acres in San Fernando for a campus, agreed to pay the costs of erecting a building, and donated another 60 acres of land as a reserve fund. The cornerstone of the building was laid in December 1887, and the scrip representing the endowment fund was exchanged with land from the water company for the amount. Since a boom was still in effect, the revenue from land sales came to some

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35Telegram, July 21, 1877, Maclay Papers, MC 211. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
37Letter of Maclay to Stanford, May 9, 1888, Maclay Papers, MC 222, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Mary wrote to her mother from Williamsport, Penn., that she visited the White House and sat in Senator Stanford's Senate seat, but she did not mention seeing the president. Letter, September 11, 1888, Maclay Papers, Box 7, MC 75, The Huntington Library.
38Charles Maclay, Dictation of Charles Maclay: ms., [undated] (BANC MSS C-D 817), The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 8. Used by permission.
Charles Maclay in California

$400,000. Farnsworth was elected dean and a faculty of two were named. The first term began in October 1887, with ten students.

The "regular course" led to a bachelor of divinity, although certificates were offered to those who could not fulfill these requirements. Stress was laid on the study of Christian mission. Unfortunately, Farnsworth died in early January 1888. After an acting deanship by Prof. F. B. Cherington, who taught historical theology, the board of regents named Robert S. Maclay, Charles's brother, dean. 39 Robert Maclay had just retired after forty years as a missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church in China and Japan. 40

The school graduated two classes in the next two years, which must have meant that certificates were awarded. Financial difficulties began to be encountered, however, because of the fall in the price of land. When Charles Maclay donated the land, he had written into the deed a clause that none of the lands in the original endowment fund were to be sold for less than $150 an acre, and if this provision was violated, the property was to revert to the original owner or his heirs. As the price of land fell, the interest-bearing contracts on the sales from the property in the endowment fund were forfeited. This meant the school lost the interest and the land reverted. The school closed in 1893, but Widney had a new deed executed which enabled the school to re-open in 1894. After remaining a part of the University of Southern California for several decades, it became the School of Theology at Claremont in 1957 and today is one of the thirteen theological schools related to The United Methodist Church.

Maclay thus saw his dream initiated. Afflicted with a cancer of the eye, he declined and died on July 19, 1890.

Maclay was the rare individual who had a dream and was able to fulfill it. He not only fulfilled his aspiration to be a missionary but the additional one of finding gold to support an institution of higher learning. Thus there was a positive, acculturating aspect of his life and work to which the "civilizing" attribute does not do justice. Maclay and others like him were engaged in creating a new society.

39Chief source for the material on the Maclay College of Theology is an unpublished manuscript, Leslie F. Gay, Jr., History of the University of Southern California (USC M.A. thesis, 1910), 166–192.