

CHEMAWA AMERICAN

Printed at Chemawa, Oregon, and Devoted to the Interests of Indian Education

Vol. XXIX

Wednesday, April 25, 1928

3 MAY 8 No. 29

♦ Famous American Indians ♦

SARAH WINNEMUCCA

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A century ago the Piutes were a peaceful tribe, living in the State of Nevada, scattered around Pyramid Lake. They were not warlike nor ambitious for territory, yet they would drive off Indians from neighboring tribes who would come to fish in their streams and lakes and hunt in their mountains.

These people were taught many lessons of kindness and goodness by their chief, Winnemucca. He was a peace-loving chief, and taught his people to make peace and keep it, to be kind to one another, to respect older people and strangers, and to tell the truth.

Long before Lewis and Clark came across the mountains French traders had from time to time passed through the country and traded with the Indians for furs, which they took back East and sold at exorbitant prices. One band of these traders passed through the valley and met by one of Winnemucca's Indians. This Indian was greatly frightened and rushed at once to Winnemucca to warn him of the coming of these people. Winnemucca at once recognized them as the people of his dreams, for he had heard of the white man, and he had pondered much on the strange persons of which he had heard so little. The strangers were afraid of Winnemucca and would have nothing to do with him.

When General Fremont crossed the mountains he at once recognized Winnemucca's friendly signs and struck up a friendship. They conversed by means of the sign language. Winnemucca was made General Fremont's guide through California. Winnemucca learned English and was proud of his ability to have a working knowledge of it, but was prouder of a piece of paper on which General Fremont had written him a recommendation, calling him Captain Truckee—meaning "all right." Chief Winnemucca called the recommendation "My Rag Friend."

Winnemucca was struck with the beauty of California's landscapes. He longed to return, and finally did, leaving his son Winnemucca II in charge. He took his four grandchildren with him. He named them Natchez, Lee, Mary and Sarah. Sarah was his

favorite and he always called her "My Sweetheart."

Sarah was very much afraid of white people, the reason being that her grandfather had told her that the white people would some day cause her people great trouble. A sister of charity succeeded in winning her heart, took her in the San Jose Mission School, where she learned to speak English. The feeling was such that the white people declared they would take their children away from the school if she was allowed to remain.

In the meantime her father, Winnemucca II, was having trouble with the whites. Some Piute braves got into a fracas with some white soldiers and were shot. The Indians, as would be expected, were indignant. Later two small Indian girls were kidnapped. The fathers of these two girls searched and found them in a terrible condition. Two white men were suspected and killed by these Indian fathers.

The Indians got into trouble and a call was sent for Chief Winnemucca. His heart bled when he saw the treatment his people were receiving. He returned to Pyramid Lake and ruled again and by his kind and just ruling he kept peace until the end of his days, much to his credit. His large, warm, thinking mind, saved his people from many a battle. In the same year that Sarah attended the mission school her people were confined to the lands about Pyramid Lake, which was later turned into a reservation. The government did not allow agents to sell powder and shot to Indians, but a Mr. Nungent, agent to these people, sold some to an Indian. This Indian rode away and was soon met by one of Mr. Nungent's men. He tried to take the powder away from the Indian, but the Indian did not understand and rode away, and was shot by the white man. The Indians set out to kill Mr. Nungent, for they believed that Mr. Nungent had sold this Indian the powder so as to give one of his men an excuse to kill the Indian. Sarah and Natchez made a hasty flight to the agent's house in an attempt to save the agent's life, by warning him of his danger, but he declared he would rather stay and fight. Sarah and Natchez hastily returned and met the angry Indians at a ford, and called a meeting. Here Sarah succeeded in quieting the excited Indians.

Soon word came that two white men near a place called Deep Wells had been shot by a brother of the

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