

The Chemawa American

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SPRING is all around us, the flowers, the birds, the sunshine, and the cheerfulness of everyone. Something is stirring us all. While some toot and play instruments of every kind, others sing, whistle, or laugh to give vent to their feelings. Were you to stop and pause for a moment, your ears would be greeted with music and laughter coming from the various quarters occupied by pupils. A pessimist would be benefited in seeing spring arrive at Chemawa.

WE HAVE RECEIVED from the Indian office, with a request that it be published, copy of a circular letter recently sent to the field relative to commencement exercises at Indian schools. The Office desires to give this as much publicity in the service as possible, with a view to impressing upon all school employees its great importance. While some of the Indian schools do not have annual commencements, they conduct closing exercises of some kind, and to these the circular is equally applicable. It is as follows:

The Office desires the schools to have practical demonstrative work by graduating pupils made a leading feature of the commencement exercises. This plan has been successfully carried out by a number of training schools. At the commencements of the Tuskegee Institute, for example, a boy brings his tools upon the stage and performs a piece of mechanical work in the presence of the audience, explaining the process as he goes along. A girl illustrates and expound in like manner a branch of domestic industry in which she has been trained. The same plan is carried out, to a greater or less extent, at Hampton.

It is suggested that the example of these two so noted schools could be followed to advantage in arranging for the commencement exercises at your school, varying the nature of the work shown so as best to bring out the acquirements of the pupils and exemplify the methods of instruction, especially along industrial lines.

In class essays or papers at commencement, pupils should be encouraged to talk about conditions at home and to tell how they hope to better these conditions when they return. For example, if a boy expects to cultivate his allotment, have him tell something about what kind of a house or barn he would build, how he would lay off his land into fields, the farming implements he would need and the kind of stock he would select, or otherwise how he would conduct his farm. Grain or vegetables might be brought in and the various processes of growth illustrated, as far as practicable, with the seeds, then the young shoots, then the matured plant and finally the ripened product. The boys might talk about the trade they are learning, the demand at their home for good carpen-