

# Weekly Chemawa American

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## The Indian as a Society Reporter

As I have always been a champion of the idea that Indians, like Caucasians, ought to have the whole field of employment open to them. Instead of being confined to two three callings for a livelihood, I am interested in every new development of the principle, and have rejoiced as I have seen evidence of greater and greater diversity of interests and talents among our Indian youth.

The Superintendent in charge of the Makah Indian Agency at Neah Bay, Washington attended the other evening a dance organized and conducted Indians exclusively, and suggested to a full-blood Makah named Randolph Parker that he should write up the affair in newspaper style. I thought your young people might be interested in seeing the result. Mr. Parker obtained his knowledge of English and cultivated his talent for composition at the local Indian school at Neah Bay.

I ought to add, for the benefit of those who are not familiar with the Neah Bay Indians, that they have their village organized with as much completeness as any municipal corporation of the same size in this country. They contributed from their own resources for the expense of having a surveyor come and lay out their streets, and they have moved their houses into conformity with the topography of the village, and their sanitary and public street departments are as well managed as those of any small community. It is not remarkable that their social accomplishments should follow the same progressive lines.

Here is the report, without a word of editing or other changes:

The birthday dancing party of Miss Nellie Clapham, a girl of a high standing among the Makah tribe of Indians, which took place Thursday the 14th day of February, 1907, at the life boat station hall, was considered the most complete, successful and enjoyable one the young people ever had this year. The hall was unusually and commendably decorated to the astonishment of those who attended. On the walls at each end of the room was a heart of 1907, attractively printed with ferns. And in the center stood a large table on which was spread the most appetizing and delicious dainties ever witnessed lately on such occasions.

The lunch was delightfully served before the dance proceeded; the attendance large and fine in every respect, enough to make up thirty couples of dancers, including the Superintendent and his wife, Mrs. Dr. C. L. Woods, Mr. Hart, the telegraph operator; Mr. W. W. Washburn, the post trader and two other white women and a girl. Quadrilles, virginia reel, singing circle, the tucker dance, waltzes, two step waltzes, two step and seven step schottisches was, each, easily and gracefully danced to the music, which consisted of two violins, a mandolin and a piano played skillfully by young Indian men of the tribe. In fact, the whole affair was able and carefully managed and conducted solely by Indians.

The good order preserved, refinement, pleasing and agreeable manners of the young people had shown explicitly not only headway they are making towards the light of civilization but the wonderful achievement of the United States Government.

Would not this society paragraph do credit to a good many reporters of more pretensions than Mr. Parker?

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