

SHAKER INDIANS.

A Sect That Flourishes in the Pacific Northwest.

The Indians of this county have just closed a religious revival, and have left for Pacific county, where they will endeavor to rekindle a religious spirit among the tribes there. Their religion is very unique, strikingly original and distinctly Indian. It is known as the Shaker religion. It is said that it first originated in the Sound country, among the Mud Bay Indians.

The story is that one of the tribe, John Slocum, was taken sick and gradually wasted away and died. Preparations were made for his funeral, but John surprised his friends by coming to life again the day the funeral was to be held. He stated that he had gone to Heaven, but that he was told to go back to earth again and help his people; that they were very wicked, and that he must help them. His recovery was very rapid, and he at once started this new sect. It forbids the use of kerosene oil as an illumination; also, the use of tobacco and intoxicating liquors of any kind. It has worked wonders among the Chehalis county Indians, who previously were not noted for their morality or sobriety. One who has witnessed some of their meetings says:

"When a candidate announces a desire to join he is placed in the center of the room on his tip-toes, with his arms extended full length over his head. The crowd circles around him, singing, shouting, ringing bells and hammering away at anything that will make a noise. Frequently one of the heavy bells is broken, and this is hailed with delight, as it is supposed that the bad spirit has left the candidate, and entered into the bell, filling it to bursting. When this happens the candidate is completely cleansed from all evil, and is born again. The candidate for admission, after standing in this position for a short time, commences to shake through fatigue. This is taken as a sign that the good spirit is entering; and the noise and din is, if possible, increased as the poor victim's shaking increases, until from sheer exhaustion, he falls trembling upon the ground. His conversion is then complete, and he is admitted into full membership.

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