

## Nevada Journal, Volume 3, Number 45, 3 March 1854 — Indian Festival. [ARTICLE]

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### **Indian Festival.**

The spring festival of the Indian tribes in this county came off on Wednesday evening, about two miles east of this city. Attracted by the continuous trains of Indians, males and squaws, passing through this place, and availing themselves of an invitation by King Wemah, about a hundred citizens went to the scene of festivity where they were mulcted to the amount of \$1,00 each. They found the Indians encamped to the number of about four hundred, having erected a large conical house, 60 feet in diameter constructed of pine branches and bark, covered over with earth. The dancing was in the house, entirely by the warriors—the women sitting about on the ground. The dances were varied from rude cotillon sets to hybrid polkas. The music was made by striking sticks together, and blowing melancholy reeds. The dancers were in primitive costume—that is, with a breech cloth instead of fig leaves and a head decoration of feathers. The dancing was kept up till about ten o'clock. This was the second “assembly” of the season, and one more takes place in a day or two. Some of the “boys” attended on the information that the Digger ladies would dance *a la model artistes*—but that part of the programme, though announced by his majesty, the King himself, did

nounced by his majesty the King, did not transpire.

It is peculiar to notice the Indian processions that pass through this city. The women carry large wicker baskets, in the shape of an inverted cone, containing utensils, food, clothes, &c. and often a picaninny on top of all, making a load from thirty to a hundred weight—while the lord of the family, with feathers in his hair, and bow and arrows in his hand, marches in dignified gravity at the head. Some of the Americanos, not seeing the justice of this distribution of labor, sometimes interfere to tell the male to take the burden. Such an idea is totally disgusting to the Indian husband, who emphatically dissents from such interference with his family discipline.

We are informed by those best acquainted with the habits of the Indians that the squaws are scrupulously faithful to their lords, and save in making them do all the work, the husbands are kind in return.

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