

Historical Section - Part 111

Is there a real choice offered to the Indian? Does he want to become part of an industrialized society whose values are completely different from his? Should he attempt to become attuned to machines, clocks and dollars? In some instances he may wish to, and we are responsible for helping him if he wishes it in the same ways that he helped our first forefathers by teaching them how to survive in a strange land. It is important that we remember the moral of the story of the two men discussing Indians when we are determining what, if anything, to do.

One man declared that he knew all about Indians, and that they always walked in single file. Queried as to how he knew this, he replied: "The only one I ever met, did!"

We must not attempt to generalize or in any way try to impose our ways upon Indian people; we must stand ready to act as their guides if we are called upon to do so.

Perhaps more Indian people might wish to join our society if we could learn some of the old truths that have been his for centuries. We all look for security; is it found in having two cars or three, in having one house or two? For some reason we feel that security is to be found in things, rather than in people. We save, - but how much is enough? Must we always be in bondage to machines and clocks? or can we learn to make them serve us?

Will we come to acknowledge that good things in living come from powers greater than ours, or will we regard ourselves as masters of our own destinies?

Maybe we may yet learn that respect and concern for the Spirit within all human beings with which Indian people greeted the first explorers. Answers to these questions may be found if Indian and non-Indian will search for the path of life together. It will not be easy at first because of the many things that have come between us before, that has caused much unhappiness.

We have started on the path together by initiating visits of Indian people to non-Indian communities. Will there be another step taken in a further exchange - perhaps to take place on Reserves? How will you continue the friendships now being kindled? or will these sparks be snuffed by forgetfulness and distance?

These are serious matters for you to consider, and the choice of direction is yours to make. Shall we, in future generations, grope still in darkness, or light enough sparks now, carefully feeding them into full torches of truth that will light our way to a fuller life. All living is a form of transition from one state and belief to another.

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