



Beyond Penn's Treaty

Narrative of a Second Visit to the Indian Country

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and error, and to take up, or use those powers and affections of the mind, which under the guidance of evil, were more venomous and destructive than serpents, without injury." —



JOSEPH CLARK'S NARRATIVE

Of a second Visit to the Indian Country.

In the first volume of Friends' Miscellany, was published an Account of a Journey to the Indian settlements, for the purpose of bringing some of the young female natives to receive an education among Friends, near Philadelphia. It will be recollected, that six Indian girls were committed to the care of Joseph Clark for this purpose, and that they were placed with divers friends in Chester county and parts adjacent, where they remained for some length of time, in learning the arts of domestic economy, and acquiring the habits of civilized life. At suitable opportunities, and with persons from their own neighbourhoods in the Indian country, three of them were conveyed home; the other three remained with Friends till the year 1801, being about four years. It was then proposed that Joseph Clark should return with them, in order that they might be safely conducted to their respective habitations, parents, relatives and friends. Joseph cordially acceded to this proposal, and cheerfully undertook the journey, as feeling not only a warm interest in the Indian natives, but under some obligation, on account of the confidence reposed in him by the parents when

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they committed their daughters to his care. Of this journey, he gives the following narrative.

“Upon our arrival at New York, we received every mark of attention that was necessary. As I was alone with the Indian girls, Friends expressed great concern for me; and we were conducted to a friend's house which proved “as a brook” by the way,” both temporally and spiritually. It being first-day, we attended meetings both forenoon and afternoon.

Next morning, our beloved friends here furnished us with a carriage and horses, to carry us as far as Albany; with a letter of recommendation to a particular friend there, who, on our arrival, received us with open arms, and procured a carriage with a sober driver, that conveyed us safely to the Indian country.

On my arrival at Stockbridge and delivering up the girls, I could discover no less joy manifested by the whole nation, than by their parents. In a day or two, a council was called. It was held in a large room, at the house of one of the chiefs. Three great trunks of trees were brought in, and laid on the floor apart for the women to sit on. On one side was a two armed chair, constructed by the natives, in which sat the sachem; the interpreter sat next, and myself was seated next him; while the chiefs occupied a seat opposite the women, the latter sitting in a leaning posture, with their eyes fixed on the ground, the lids of which appeared not to move. A solemn silence ensued;—when He who “meted out the heavens with a span,” seemed to preside over the whole assembly: and I can safely say, the

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impressions of that solemnity have never departed from me.

After some time, I arose in much humility, and informed them that it was neither curiosity, ease, nor interest, that induced me to leave my habitation; but that their children whom they delivered to me four years ago, might be safely returned to them, with their qualifications and improvements. And as the great and good Spirit had preserved them from various evils, so I hoped they would continue to do well; with more to that import.

A solemn pause ensued: then some low words were spoken by the chiefs, and lower whispers among the women. A pause then followed; after which the interpreter stood up, and turning towards me, spoke to this import;—"Brother, attend. We rejoice to see you come by the side of our fire-place; and that our girls have been preserved from various dangers; also, that you have been preserved while walking all along the long path;—and we know that all you do is out of love to us poor Indians."

It is proper to remark, that each girl had a Bible and other religious books, in which they could read; also, a spinning wheel, with abundance of clothes of their own making.

Our friend John Dean, his wife and son, reside at this place, under patronage of the Indian committee of New York Yearly Meeting. On first-day, I sat with this family in a meeting capacity, which is their usual practice. When our meeting ended, I went with J. Dean to the Indians' place of worship; where the ceremonies of a funeral were about to be solemnized. The coffin was placed about twenty yards from the house, while the congregation re-

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mained within. One of the Indians named David Fowler appeared in supplication: after which, the whole assembly sung an hymn in the English language, two lines of which were,

“Lord, make our souls ascend on high,
Where neither gold nor pearls can fly.”

Next day I paid a visit to David Fowler. Upon entering the house, my attention was first attracted to a shelf, containing Cruden's Concordance and a large folio Bible; the latter was in the Indian language. This person is a man of exemplary life,—interested for the progress of knowledge among his brethren, and has devoted some time to the instruction of their children. He also possesses an extensive acquaintance with plants, as to their qualities and medicinal virtues.

I also visited John Crossly's family, where were a number of children; and notwithstanding I was so great a stranger, they manifested no surprise or curiosity, but appeared to be entirely engaged at their books. This I considered an example to those in civilized life, and what is called refined education.

I now took leave of my Indian brethren at Stockbridge, informing them that I was going among my friends;—and were it a thousand miles off, their house was my house,—their table, my table,—and their bed, my bed. At which they gave a loud sigh.

Set out with John Dean, and passed through the Tuscarora nation to Oneida; where I was conducted to the house of John Scanadoc, the chief of that nation. Immediately on my entering, the old man shook his ears,—indicating that we could not understand each other's language. My mind was cover-

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In this room were six or seven women, and a little babe fixed upon a kelah of exquisite workmanship, covered with two silk handkerchiefs. They informed me by their fingers that the age of the child was four weeks and four days. After some time, the wife of the chief spoke a few words; at which, all present assumed an air of seriousness. Then, going across the room, the others followed her, and placed themselves three on each side of her. She then took down from the wall, a curious, twisted string, of considerable length, containing a number of knots; and to every seventh knot, a piece of red wool was attached. This was her calendar. One of the women informed me that every knot was a day, and every red mark was a week; constituting the time since the chiefess had buried a valuable daughter. This circumstance was attended with more solemnity than some of our funerals.

After recommending the distribution of the presents I had in charge; and through favour, all things appearing to harmonize,—a proposition was made to smoke,—a practice in high esteem among the Indians: but I not being accustomed to it, did not accept the offer. Whereupon John Scanadoc gave me two curious pipes as presents.

I now took leave of my Indian friends and set out for Utica, accompanied by John Dean. On our arrival there, we called at the house of a lawyer, where Grace, the daughter of John Crossly, resided. I requested of my companion, that he would make choice of some retired house for a lodging; my mind being disposed for silence and meditation,

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in reflecting on the favourable opportunities we had had among the Indians. But, contrary to my request, at least in appearance,—he rode up to the greatest house in the place, occupied by a person whose name was Walker, and who highly approbated the labours of Friends among the Indians.

Being introduced to the family, we sat in a splendid hall, where tea was served. In the course of conversation, I happened to mention some events of my labours among the poor people in New Jersey, in the neighbourhood of a furnace, where I had distributed some books; and had been accompanied from cottage to cottage by the superintendent's wife, who had an amiable daughter that was married to a magistrate of that place, and had lately been received into membership with the Society of Friends.

As I was relating this circumstance, Walker's wife broke forth into tears; and, raising her handkerchief to her face, wept aloud. Her husband inquired the cause of her emotion; when she pathetically informed us, that the persons I had spoken of were her mother and sister. It was a very affecting season. A comfortable night's lodging, and an early breakfast prepared us for pursuing our journey; and in secret my heart ejaculated, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

The morning was mild and serene, and we proceeded down the Mohawk river to Schenectady. On the way, stopped to visit some Germans, and distributed some books among them in their own language; which they received with tears of gratitude. Went by the way of Nine Partners, and at-

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tended Quarterly meeting there. Thence to New York, where the Indian committee being assembled, I gave them such information as they required.— Then directed my course toward home, where, through continued favour, I arrived and found all well.

JOSEPH CLARK.”



LETTER FROM JOHN HUNT,
Of Moorestown, New Jersey.

Esteemed friend,—

Since thou left our house, it has rested on my mind to impart a few thoughts to thee. I have considered it a great favour, so to spend our time that we can look back upon it with comfort, satisfaction, peace, and hope; and to be conscious that we have employed it to some profit and advantage; which is too frequently not the case in our social visits. After many of them, I have looked back and been ready to say, Oh! how seldom is it that we do as well as we might do, and ought to do!

In the work called “The Power of Religion on the Mind,” there is an account of one John Janeway, whose words express great concern on account of the barrenness of conversation among professing Christians, in their social visits: “Oh!” said he, “what indifference! to spend an hour or two together and to hear scarce a word that speaks people’s hearts in love with holiness.” How is this to have our conversation in heaven and on heavenly things! Doth it not demonstrate where our treasures and hearts are? Should we talk as we do, if we con-

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