

Friends' Work for Indians

1. An Outline Sketch - 1800 to 1869

By John Nicholson

5th Mo 1899

If the question were asked in this Meeting to-night, "When did Friends' work for the Indians begin?" probably the minds of many would at once revert to the historic ~~11th~~ day of October 1682, when William Penn, who had recently arrived from England, and was about to establish his Colony upon the foundation of "loyalty to God and justice to men," met by appointment under the famous elm-tree of Shackamaxon, the representatives of neighboring Indian tribes, and in that open-hearted and open-handed interview, secured from them the beginning of that confidence and esteem, which soon developed into love and friendship for him and his companions - a feeling which by their tradition has been wonderfully preserved for more than two hundred years, ever ready to be ~~transferred~~^{extended} to any one bearing the name and having the qualities of the true Quaker.

Friends, in their intercourse with Indians during the ~~past~~^{succeeding} one hundred years, were generally careful to foster this feeling, by acts of neighborly kindness, and by liberal and honest dealing: and there was a

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constantly increasing number, who manifested an interest in their welfare and felt sympathy for them, in the privations and suffering which often attended their enforced surrender of homes and hunting grounds. ~~It was not however until~~ ^{the 18th} near the close of ~~the~~ century, that this interest and sympathy had become so general among Friends, as to develop in the Yearly Meetings a concern, that organized effort be made to extend aid and advice to the Indians, under the new conditions which the march of civilization had forced upon them.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting ^{the 2nd 10th month} on 1795 appointed a Standing Committee, "to endeavor to promote the civilization and improvement of the Indians" ~~which entered promptly upon the discharge of the duties thus conferred to it.~~ As an evidence of the care exercised by the Yearly Meeting before taking this step, ~~I will state~~ we find the matter had been referred to a large Committee of forty three Friends, who in their written report state, "The Committee