

verse in English, to take them into our counsels, and learn from their own lips their own Indian views as to their present position in this country, and their prospects for the future. Do they wish this present Indian Reserve system to be continued? Do they wish to dwell for ever as separate communities? Do they wish to retain for ever their own language?

When trouble arises, when Indians threaten war and put on their war paint, the white man is ready enough to consider their grievances, and listen to their complaints. But why should we wait for war and trouble? Were it not better and nobler now while the poor Indian is at peace with us, to take him into our counsel, and endeavor to devise a way by which he may rise from his present despised and degraded condition, and become a worthy and industrious part of our great and growing nation? I believe if steps were taken to ascertain the real feelings of the Indians, as regards amalgamation with our white population, it would be found that they were almost unanimously against it. My impression is that they do not wish to become Canadians. They wish to adopt our laws and customs up to a certain point; they are ready to throw over their heathenism, with all its dark superstition, and to accept in its stead the light of Christian teaching; they are ready to acknowledge the benefit of education, and wish to have their children educated,—but—they still cling to the old saying of their ancestors, “the earth is our mother, and cannot be divided;” “earth, water and air, are the free gifts of the Great Spirit to his children, and cannot be owned by individuals.” These and other kindred sentiments, I believe, are strong—very strong; strongly rooted in the Indian breast from Mexico to Hudson Bay, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And it is these and other such-like inbred sentiments, that seem to preclude, at any rate for many long years to come, any kind of amalgamation between them and the white race.