



A note written by
my father E. Winslow Sprague
to a young 'problem' boy
who was helped by
Owen Dawson at the
Shawbridge Home for Boys,
and who my parents
employed one summer -
(See reference to Owen Dawson
on page 3) A.B.

Thérien Frères
(1960) LIMITEE

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Como P . Q .

September 15 1944 .

My dear Lucien

Thank you for helping to make our holiday so happy. Mrs Winslow-Spragge and I look forward to seeing you at our home in Montreal and of showing you the motion pictures providing these turn out well.

If you keep on as a worker in the way you did while we were with you, there is no reason why you cannot become head of an industry some day.

I have had a good many thousands of men and boys pass through my hands in the last thirty years. From this experience I say that 90% of all the work in the world is quite easy enough to be done by you or by me, once we learn it . Most of it is quite as easy as making bread or painting a house . Of the remaining 10% of work which only a few gifted people can do over 50% of this is not well paid . In all the above I am only referring to the kind of work which we think of as work done to earn a living . I am not talking about the unusual kinds of artistic or scientific work which is not practical for people like you or me .

Now if anyone with the will can do any job, why have people like myself found so great difficulty in finding a good man when we need him? I tell you this so that you may prepare yourself so as to be chosen as a good man when the time comes or rather when each time comes .

The difficulty is :-

First

I do not want to burden myself with a man I don't like . Therefore
I must find someone with a good disposition - someone who likes to
save me trouble - someone who does not add to my troubles by being

late, by being forgetful, by holding me up for more money every time I try to give him a chance to show what he can do.

Second

I do not want to burden myself with someone that other people don't like. Therefore in choosing a man I must choose someone acceptable to his fellow employees and to the Companys customers.

Third

If these first two conditions are satisfactorily met I do not say that nothing else matters but I do say that as a matter of personal experience a heavy percentage of our top paid engineering salesmen started with us as office boys and I think that most of our top shop men at the works started either as office boys or apprentices.

How then can an office boy or an apprentice or a boy like yourself become recognized as being the kind of fellow we like ?

Well I can only size you up in three ways - by my eyes , by my ears and by my nose . so I say .

- 1 . Watch your dress
- 2 . Watch your correctness of speaking
- 3 . Be scrubbed well and often .

So first choose a good team to work for . With good clothes you will get to first base . With good speech and very little of it , you will get to second base . With cleanness of mind and body you will get to third base . Then if you make your motto - " Never let the boss down " you will make a home run just as sure as anything in the world . It is just a question then of time and perseverance . And by " The Boss " I don'

mean so much the general manager . I mean the fellow right next in line a above you. If you satisfy him , other people will try and get you no matter how hard he may try to hang on to you - and if two people " Want you " that is what makes a market either for a piece of merchandize or for a man .

You have got nearly everything you need from your recent schooling and from Mr Dawson . Never forget that teaching. It has been done by decent people with "No axe to grind" and with nothing but your good and your country's good in mind .

The only thing I can perhaps contribute , is these simple hints as to how to let your good character become known so that a person in a position to pay wages and salaries can become conscious of your existance and later can become so confident of you that he will become a bidder for your services ; because that is really what every employer is - a bidder for the services of the best available men .

I hope that before too long you may be " The best available man " for whatever work you take up .

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Edward Winslow-Spragge .

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Let Alice see

A Criticism
of
Quakers
as their
Ideals are described
by
Fox.

Oct 1948

Written by
Edward Winslow Spragge

The Quaker Message

My Comments and Points of Criticism

1. Page 11

"Fox held that the soul illuminated by the divine light is its own ultimate authority."

Page 12

His message was "to preach freely and to bring people off from these outward temples made with hands, which God dwelleth not in - - - and to draw people off from all their superstitious ceremonies, and from all the hireling teachers that take tithes and great wages, preaching for hire."

^{and following pages}
Friends found themselves under the practical necessity of having to distinguish the appearance of the inward light from the light of conscience. --
Answer In all his good intentions Fox

was inordinately presumptuous.

In the final analysis I agree that each man, having obtained all the light possible must follow his own judgement of what is right. - But

I do not agree that in forming his ultimate judgement that a really spiritually minded man can artificially divide his sources of guidance by calling one source "conscience" and the other source "inward light." I prefer to think that the guidance by means of "inward light" is not the sole possession of a Quaker but on the contrary

2

that many other spiritual leaders and others who make a lifetime effort through prayer and supplication to obtain "inward light" do receive it.

I am willing to concede that ministers of the Church and many others sometimes live too elaborately and not in as simple style as Christ indicated by his example but I am not willing to concede that the catholic ^{for example} priest who is clothed and fed by his organization is necessarily any better man than the Quaker who takes a leading part in Quaker meetings but at other times may be found in the market place buying and selling to make the profit necessary to feed himself and his wife and his children; nor is the man who takes no direct pay necessarily any better than the missionary worker, for example, who is given a pittance to assist him in carrying the teachings of Christ to his less fortunate fellow men.

Rather than reviling others to whom the "inward light" has shown the desirability of ceremonies and has shown the desirability of setting up an organization to do on a larger scale than has been found possible by the rather limited scope of the Quaker plan — rather than reviling such others might it

not be less presumptuous and more Christ like to work in parallel with others and not to - self righteously - make the same mistake as some of the other organizations who in their turn, imagine that they have the exclusive and only real knowledge of the wishes and intentions of Jesus Christ.

Page 27 - Outward rites are unnecessary and - Contrary to their understanding, of the nature of God - The sacraments derive their origin from the church and not from the mind of Christ -

Answer The same might be said of the wearing of clothes, the practice of monogamy and a hundred other practices which by usage have become so common that deviation from the recognized usage would result in disorder; disorder would result in discord and discord would result in hate.

Therefore until some better practices are developed it is expedient that certain positive actions be followed such as welcoming the child into the Church (Baptism), shaking the hand of a friend, welcoming a new family into the (over)

Church (marriage) . . . assuaging the sorrow of those who are bereaved (the Burial Service)

The man who fears to join in communal life and to give his hand in friendship or to observe the other decencies of life by which we publicly adhere to established customs designed to promote the co-operative attitudes without which Quakerism or any other ordered living would be wiped out by gangsterism, barbarism, nihilism — the man who fears the repetition incidental to the carrying out of these customs can live like children in a nursery but only so long as some grown up person ~~takes~~ continues to take on the job of maintaining order and protecting these children from persons who have not yet learned the law of God through the teachings of Jesus Christ.

I think there is room in the world for Quakers, monks, nuns and others

who for various reasons have developed into escapists to a greater or a lesser degree.

My only quarrel with such groups is when they become arrogant and begin to believe that, each in his little way, ~~that~~ he is the possessor of the only real access to the will of God and that everyone else is living in superstition, is an hireling pretending to a love of God which is false and unworthy and while adopting a technique of meekness, nevertheless lets it be assumed that these others - living in sin - will at the last day find themselves sitting a very long way below the Quakers in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Why is it so difficult to be good and to be really and honestly humble at the same time?

W.S. (E. Winslow Sprague)