

# SUN BEAR SUN FEARS

I am an Indian in blood and in spirit. I wish to tell you about my people. The American Indian had a sense of living and belonging with the land and blending with nature. Because of this, he referred to the animals as his Little Brothers. His sense of responsibility to the land was such that he never killed anything he didn't eat, and when going out to gather a plant for medicine or food, he didn't take from the first plant he saw, but, offering a prayer, he would go to the next one of the species and harvest from it.

The average medicine man has a knowledge of about 150 herbs he uses for treatment of sicknesses and in ceremonies. The sense of giving and being part of the land was such that in farming, he would always give to the land in the form of fertilizer such as fish, and never disturb the topsoil any more than necessary in planting. He left the stumps of trees in his garden and planted around them.

When invaders from across the Great Water tried to force treaties upon my Brothers, and make them sell their lands, their reply was, "The Earth is our Mother. We do not sell our Mother." And such it is, for every living thing receives sustenance from the Earth.

Friends, Brothers, if you wish respect and friendship of the traditional Indians, or other communes with the land, be not like the tourist, but bury your cans and other rubbish, so that the Earth will remain clean to the eye of its keepers.

The American Indians' religion was such that when the first Europeans came to his lodges, the Indian people said, "Come, sit down and have something to eat, Brothers," and gave them gifts. And their way was to treat the stranger as the Great Spirit in disguise. Hospitality was a sacred thing to us. That is why it is a sad thing to come up on the streets of your city and stop someone to say Hello, and their eyes freeze over, and their philosophy is to treat the stranger as the Devil in disguise. "I don't know, so I don't trust him," is their thought.

It is the old way to give food or medicine to one from behind a mask so that he will not feel obligated to the giver, but think of it as a gift from the Great Spirit. It is the way of my people, in the spring when the fish run to spawn, that we spear extra fish and give them to the old people and women without men, so that these may also share the gift of the Great Spirit. The old way in the buffalo hunt was the same. When Crazy Horse killed buffalo, his first buffalo was for the families who had no hunter to get their meal for them.

When a man went to become a chief, he would fast, and say, "What can I do that will best serve my people?" The Indians fasted because at a time when you take no food or water, you are closest to the Great Spirit, and your mind is not dwelling on things of the belly. A man was chief only so long as he did the will of the people. There were cases where a chief got too "chiefy" and arrogant. He would go to sleep at night, but while he slept, the band moved away, leaving him to be chief all to himself.

For many years the

American Indian had neither freedom of religion nor freedom from religion, in that he could not practice his own beliefs, and yet missionaries of all sorts were assigned to his particular reservation. If he didn't attend their churches, he was regarded as a "bad Indian." Chief Joseph, the great Nez Perce wished to follow the way of his people, the Dreamer's religion, but he was forbidden to, and his battles in defense of his people and their way of life is recorded in your histories. Sitting Bull was murdered for standing up for the rights of his people and for following the Ghost Dance religion. Today there are many Indian people who are practicing the old ways still, and others who are returning to learn of them.

The sweat lodges are used by many people to cleanse their bodies and give a sense of feeling with the land. For in this ceremony, one sits naked upon the Earth in an enclosed dwelling with hot rocks in a pit. Sage is first thrown into the pit. Then the rocks are pushed in from outside. Cold water is thrown on the rocks, bringing up steam. The steam sweats the body, cleansing it of poisons. The sweat runs off, back to Mother Earth, and you step forth, a new person, to walk upon the land.

Brothers, learn this. Learn to walk upon the land.

Learn a sense of balance and blending with the land. Do

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not try to conquer it.

Do not try to exalt yourself above your Little Brothers, the animals. They share the land with you. Do not be like the foolish white man who declares some animals like the coyote and fox as predators, and slaughters them wantonly. Disturbing the natural balance of nature caused 100 million mice to become a plague upon the land at Tule Lake, California.

To the Indian, everything was natural, and because of this, he had no double standard of sex, where one was a holier-than-thou philosophy, where one refused to talk about it and sat with folded hands, and the other, dirty pictures on outhouse walls. To the Indian, sex is a perfectly natural thing--his Little Brothers did it, and so did he.

Sex is the He and She rains. The light and heavy rains that bring strength to the crops in the desert. Sex is the ceremony of the Return of the Sun--by watching the Sun-Watcher Peaks to determine when the Sun has reached its southern-most point. At that time the solistic ceremonies start in celebration of the Return of the Sun, the Rebirth of Life. Father Sun bringing new life from the Earth Mother. Sex is a beautiful thing--the giving of new life to the land which means food for people. It means fish spawning up a stream. It means ducks bringing forth their young in the marshes. This is why the Indian people regarded it as a natural thing. It was part of life.

But they were first able to live on Earth as men and women and then reach up for higher things, because of having a balance and not complexes and psychiatrists and scribes who consumed a lifetime writing volumes on sex.

To the Indians, sex was not a spectator sport. It was between the man and the woman who participated only.

At this time, the Indian people are concerned with creating new industry and an economy on their reservations. In some places, this is slanted toward tourist recreational developments, improving and developing land for farming and ranching, setting up co-operative hand craft stores, and in Nevada, we hope to go into silk-screening Indian designs on skirts and blouses and making other handcraft items.

My advice to our Brothers who wish to return to the land is: learn which crops you can grow for your own use in a given area, and then have your craftsmen who turn out items marketable in other areas. The greatest failure of communities of people living together in a tribal manner has been not having a practical means of survival. It is good--the amount of free time you have for study and meditation when people work together and co-operate. I hope in the future to be able to find people to help us market Indian made products.

We want to retain our land and develop it and live together as a people rather than be pushed off of what we have left of our Earth Mother. It is hard to get small craft and industry projects going without capital, in most cases. But the Indian people are becoming more united and we are making progress along this line. In fact, more progress has been made in Nevada in the past three years than in the 75 years before.

### THE FIRST SOUND CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

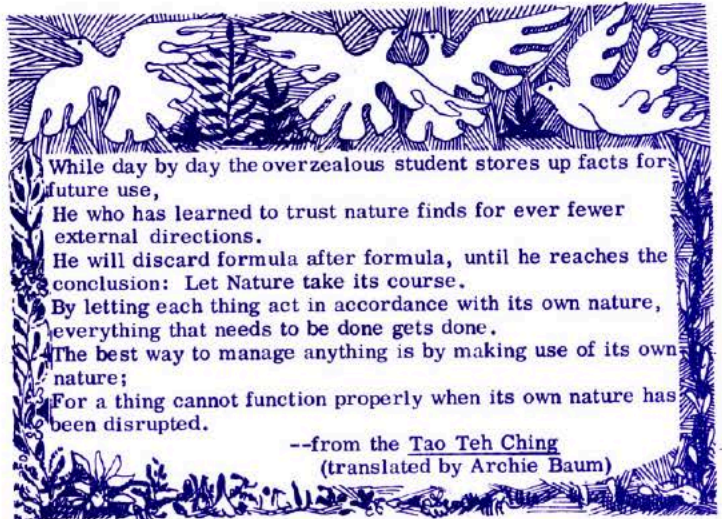
when I leave the city in a couple of days and go back down the coast I'm going to go back in there. I'll ask a friend to tend my garden while I'm gone, as you must do if you plant and then leave, and I'll take a few things, some eats and a bag to sleep in, and pen and ink and paper maybe, in and be there for a while.

What happens when an angel fucks a star--do they become stunned in their gorgeousness, and locked together?

But here, in this, now, I have for man something which as an idea and practice may be both reality and help: Silence. Consider, if you can, what might occur upon you each individually for an instant or a moment or an hour or a day the entire world went suddenly stone silent--nothing of sound except an all absorbing synchronized inhalation of the breath of all that lives, and the slow quiet letting of it out--and then, perhaps, the possibility that through man and all the animals of this earth which are his keep all other beings might begin to breathe together. Consider it--all beings breathing. You have now enough strong men to insure it. Find them, but do not praise them. Take of them, but do not take away from them the individuals that they are. If

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# SOUNDS FROM THE SEEDPOWER SITAR



## ON WILDERNESS LIVING

Read How to Stay Alive in the Woods by Bradford Angier, Collier paperback 02805 (95c.) (Collier Books, 866 3rd Ave, N. Y. . . . Also, Early Uses of California Plants by Edward K. Balls, U. of Calif. Press, and Edible and Useful Plants of the West by Muriel Sweet, Nature-graph Press, Healdsburg, Calif.

## INSIDE INDIAN CALIFORNIA

"Most of the California Indians learned one trick that was characteristic of their culture, an ability to deal with and a consequent dependence on, acorns produced by the wide spread of abundant Oak tree of the country. Most of the California tribes could grind acorns into meal, and leach this to extract the bitter tannin and make it palatable. Acorns rather than corn and buffalo meat were the staff of life in Indian California. These were supplemented by a wide variety of edible plants and by animal foods ranging from grasshopper and sea mussels to elk and antelope." --- Dasmann, The Destruction of California.

"The acorns are collected when ripe, spread out to dry in the sun, cracked, and stored until the kernels are dry, care being taken that they do not mold. The kernels are

then pulverized in a mortar to a fine meal, with frequent siftings to remove the courser particles, until the whole is ground to a fine flour, this being essential. The tannin is then dissolved out by placing the flour in a filter and letting water percolate through it for about two hours, or until the water ceases to have a yellowish tinge. (One form of filter is contrived by laying a coarse, flat basket of strainer on a pile of gravel with a drain underneath. Rather fine gravel is now scattered thick, over the bottom and up the sides of the strainer, and the meal laid thick over the gravel. Water is added, little by little, to set free the tannin. The meal is removed by hand as much as possible, then water is poured over the remainder to get it together, and thus little is wasted. The meal by this time has the consistency of ordinary dough.)

The dough is cooked in two ways: First, by boiling it in water as we do corn-meal mush, the resulting porridge being not unlike yellow corn-meal mush in appearance and taste; it is sweet and wholesome, but rather insipid. The second method is to make the dough into small balls, which are wrapped in green leaves. These balls are then placed in hot ashes, some green leaves of corn are laid over them, and hot ashes are placed on the top, and then the cakes are baked. . . .

---from Horace Kephart, Camping and Woodcraft