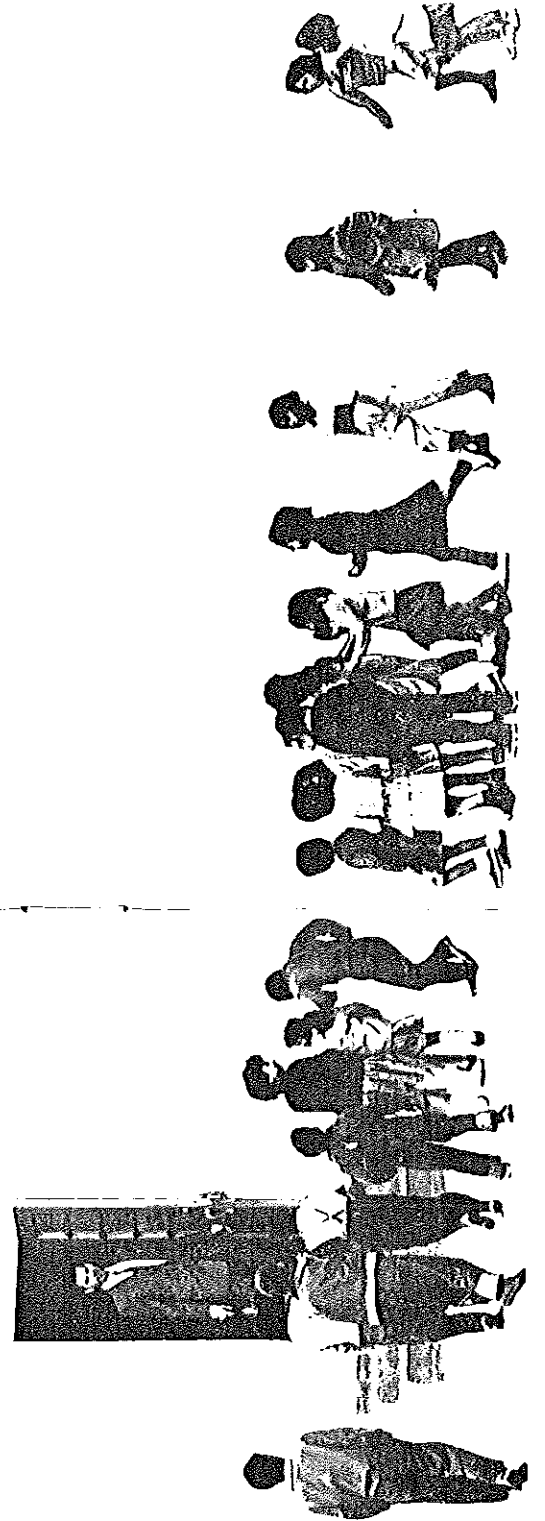


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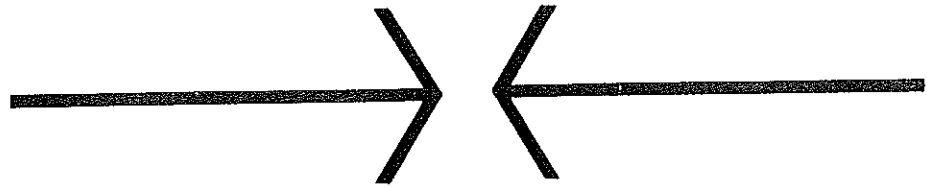


INDIAN EDUCATION

*Sampul*







## INDIAN EDUCATION

### *Introduction*

Centuries ago in Canada, education was measured by a knowledge of the forests and streams, of the traditions and crafts of a people; success, by proficiency in the hunt.

It was education essential to survival.

For a proportion of Indians today it is still a vital form of education and a way of life. But, for a growing number, a broader foundation of knowledge is essential.

It is not difficult to find the reason. Canadian expansion has proceeded westward and northward; technology has changed the economy. Roads now traverse once isolated areas; planes crisscross a continent.

While the Indian population, because of improved medical and social welfare measures, has increased in recent years, the wildlife population, on which many depended, has decreased. Meagre prices for furs, because of competition from synthetic fabrics and style changes, have also added to the economic woes of the native inhabitants. The result has been that, for some time, Indians have been in a race between the vanishing way of life of the hunter and trapper, and the new economic opportunities which a modern era has provided.

White settlement and industrial progress first affected Indians living near southern, urban areas. Their adjustment to it was oftentimes painful. They were bewildered by the complexities of the non-Indian world. Life on reserves and in remote areas had not prepared them for the changes they were forced to make.

In more recent years, it has been the turn of their compatriots in what were once far distant regions to have their dependence on traditional means of livelihood imperilled. Now, more and more, northern Indians are forced to seek wage employment.

To compete in this new field, unfamiliar to so many, they require education — academic, technical and social.

#### *A Federal Responsibility*

Education of Canadian Indians is a federal responsibility. In nine provinces and the Yukon, it is undertaken by the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration; and in the Northwest Territories, the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources looks after the education of both Indian and Eskimo children. There is some overlapping in this arrangement. For instance, Indian schools at Moose Factory and Fort George have a number of Eskimo students, while the Eskimo school at Great Whale River has an Indian student minority. Indian education in Newfoundland is a provincial responsibility although the federal government has granted the tenth province some financial assistance to improve the living conditions of the Indian population.

It is the aim of the Indian Affairs Branch to raise the standard of living of Indian people and to furnish them with skills and education to enable them to participate fully, if they so desire, in off-reserve life.

Its plan is three-fold: to provide Indian children with the opportunities for educational, social and economic progress that are available to non-Indians; to make available to adults other forms of education — literacy classes, vocational courses, leadership training, and club work; to help both Indians and non-Indians to associate socially and economically.

#### *Policy implemented*

This is a course which was recommended in 1948. A Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons, having heard many witnesses on the subject of the Indian Act, suggested a revision of the educational sections so as “to prepare

Indian Children to take their place as citizens". The Committee specifically recommended that "Wherever and whenever possible Indian children should be educated in association with other children."

Expenditures on Indian education by the Indian Affairs Branch, increased enrolments, and more schools in which Indians attend classes with other children testify that this path is being followed. In the year 1950-51, expenditures on Indian education amounted to \$7,394,147; in 1963-64 they had increased to \$31,291,822.

It is difficult to estimate the per capita cost of Indian and non-Indian education for there is a lack of uniformity in the way the provincial authorities report expenditures. Some include debenture costs, while others do not. It is clear, however, that the per capita cost of educating an Indian child is higher than that for a non-Indian. Maintenance of pupils and transportation costs greatly increase the cost of Indian education.

In the last 14 years Indian enrolment in schools has mushroomed. In the fiscal year ending March 31, 1951 enrolment stood at 26,903; in 1964 it was 55,475 (including 4,575 pupils attending provincial schools for whom complete information was lacking.)

Today every Indian child on a reserve or in an Indian community can receive the education he desires and from which he is capable of profiting, and the federal government will pay the total costs — if necessary — right through university. Not all Indian parents, however, appreciate the new opportunities. Where schools are aloof from communities, where school committees do not exist and where parents themselves lack education, the importance of learning in the lives of children sometimes is little appreciated.

Then, too, many Indian parents place more emphasis on parental training than on school instruction. They resent the fact also that their children return with non-Indian ways, unfamiliar with the traditional pursuits of hunting and fishing, that they are sometimes scornful of their parents' viewpoints and of Indian culture.

Association of Indians with non-Indians is a voluntary

process. It cannot be forced. It cannot be hurried. There are bound to be setbacks and frictions — for instance, when Indian children, trained in the non-Indian world, return to homes traditionally Indian in outlook.

To be successful and lasting, the process must be at a pace, and in a manner, acceptable to Indians and non-Indians alike. Desire and need on both sides are prerequisites; isolation and wide gulfs in economic circumstances are gaps to be bridged. One cannot force people to associate with one another, if they are averse to such contacts. The most that one can do is to persuade and to encourage such association.

The school, the church, the trading post, and social organizations provide the best means of linking the world of the Indian and non-Indian. The process is slowest in isolated regions where there are few social and commercial contacts amongst peoples, and most rapid in urban centres where there is common schooling and constant association in daily living.

#### *Problems of Indian Education*

Education cannot be limited to merely formal instruction. While it must provide the basic knowledge required for academic, professional and vocational courses, it must also encourage self-development. It must find expression in leadership in many types of community activities. It is this broader meaning of education that is described in this booklet.

To accomplish such objectives in the lives of Indian children — and adults — many problems must be solved.

The Indian population of a little more than 204,000 as of January 1, 1964, is scattered throughout the country; bands are at widely different stages of development. Some live in remote settlements, some in urban areas.

There is a multiplicity of dialects. In British Columbia alone, eleven different Indian dialects are spoken. Many Indians do not know either the French or English languages.

A number of children leave remote settlements at an early age and are educated in central institutions — with the emotional upheaval such changes entail.

A new way of life must be taught. Some pupils have never before seen water flowing out of taps, experienced central

heating of buildings, or encountered electric lighting. Planes are familiar to many but not cars, trains or bicycles.

A new philosophy is encountered. To the non-Indian, time waits for no man; to the Indian, time is related traditionally more to the demands of the changing seasons than to a daily timetable.

It has often been said that the Canadian Indians are a neglected race. There were grounds for such accusations in the past — but not now so far as education is concerned. The education budget is increasing every year. For many older Indians, unfortunately, the assistance comes too late.

Many of the problems which Indian children still face arise out of their background. One major hurdle is that the lessons are taught in what is to nearly all of them a foreign language.

How fast would any non-Indian child progress if he had to learn his lessons in Cree or Ojibway? If the teacher used the word "netam" would a non-Indian recognize in that word, "my dog", or if he were asked in Kwakiutl, "masis, uksukw dakwa?" would he understand that she had said: "What are you doing?"

Then, there is the problem of figures. The Blackfoot Indians, for instance, have no numerals.

Texts also incorporate symbols and a way of life foreign to Indians from isolated areas. Indian pupils are familiar with hunting equipment but not with vacuum cleaners; they know about caribou but are unfamiliar with escalators. They do not understand the subtleties of children's stories or the reasoning about real estate or interest rates.

Conditions in many Indian homes make it difficult for pupils to do their homework. This is especially true when whole families live in one or two-room dwellings, equipped with only a limited amount of furniture, and a student's ear is assailed by a cacophony of crying children, blaring radio programmes and adult conversation.

Such conditions are not unknown in non-Indian homes. They make it difficult for children to concentrate on their studies. The result is that often pupils are absent from school rather than face the consequences of neglected homework.



Low standards of living and limited education of parents often result in children leaving school at an early age. Uncertainty about job opportunities — even with education — also makes a student feel that there is little reason for him to continue studying.

It has been no easy task, therefore, to provide facilities satisfactory to all Indian families — and to the educationists.

### *Indian Schools*

The three main classifications of Indian schools are: Day Schools, Residential Schools and Hospital Schools.

*Indian Day Schools:* These are schools on Indian reserves and settlements, operated in much the same way as non-Indian public schools. Children attending classes live at home and attend school daily. Of the 55,475 Indian pupils enrolled in school during the 1963-64 fiscal year, Indian Day Schools had an enrolment of 32,331. In addition, there were 1,206 non-Indian students — children of government employees, Metis, and others living in areas where no other educational facilities were available.

*Residential Schools:* These are boarding schools for children unable to attend day schools, either because of isolated homes or family problems. There are 66 such schools, including eight hostels which accommodate pupils attending non-Indian institutions nearby. Approximately 12 percent of the boarders at Residential Schools attend non-Indian schools.

Historically the churches have had a long and fruitful association with Indian education. In fact, a century ago, the churches provided the majority of schools. Today, Canada's Indian Residential Schools are operated by four religious denominations: Roman Catholic, Anglican, United Church and Presbyterian.

In the 1963-64 fiscal year, Residential Schools had an enrolment of 8,277. In addition, 2,033 youngsters lived in the Residential Schools while attending other schools.

A number of Residential Schools also provide part-time instructors for athletics and sports, and teacher-counsellors

who not only assist students with their studies but also help them to adjust emotionally and socially to school life.

*Hospital Schools:* As the name suggests, these provide instruction for children confined to hospital or sanatoria. This supervision includes not only academic study but also instruction in handicrafts — leather work, copper tooling, bead work and weaving.

Such instruction prevents pupils from falling too far behind their classmates in their studies and thus becoming discouraged. It has also a therapeutic value, enabling shut-ins to pass their time more interestingly and profitably. In 1963-64, 238 Indian children received instruction in hospital schools.

A pupil who was admitted to the Brandon sanatorium with tuberculosis some years ago was encouraged to continue his education. By the time he was ready for his discharge, he had his junior matriculation. Since he was anxious, by that time, to continue his education, he was allowed to remain at the institution for another year and a half as an orderly and interpreter. He soon acquired his grade 12 standing. With the aid of bursaries from the Indian Affairs Branch he took normal training and became the first Saulteaux in Manitoba to become a teacher.

#### *Curriculum and Staff*

In Indian schools, instruction is in English or French to provide a common language for the pupils, and to make their adjustment to non-Indian schools and employment easier. Because so many Indian children speak only their own tongue, it is often necessary for teachers to give added training in language instruction.

The courses of studies followed are those prevailing in non-Indian schools of the various provinces. Yukon follows the B.C. curriculum and the Northwest Territories follows the Alberta courses. Wherever possible, courses in industrial arts and home economics are also provided. These follow closely the programmes prescribed by the various provinces, but they are flexible enough also to enable teachers to give instruction especially useful in certain areas.

Industrial Arts' programmes generally include training in woodwork, carpentry, sheetmetal work, drafting, motor mechanics, welding and farming. At Inuvik the Industrial Arts' teacher is preparing students for vocational courses at Yellowknife.

The Home Economics course includes all phases of home-making — home management, good grooming, child care, cooking and sewing.

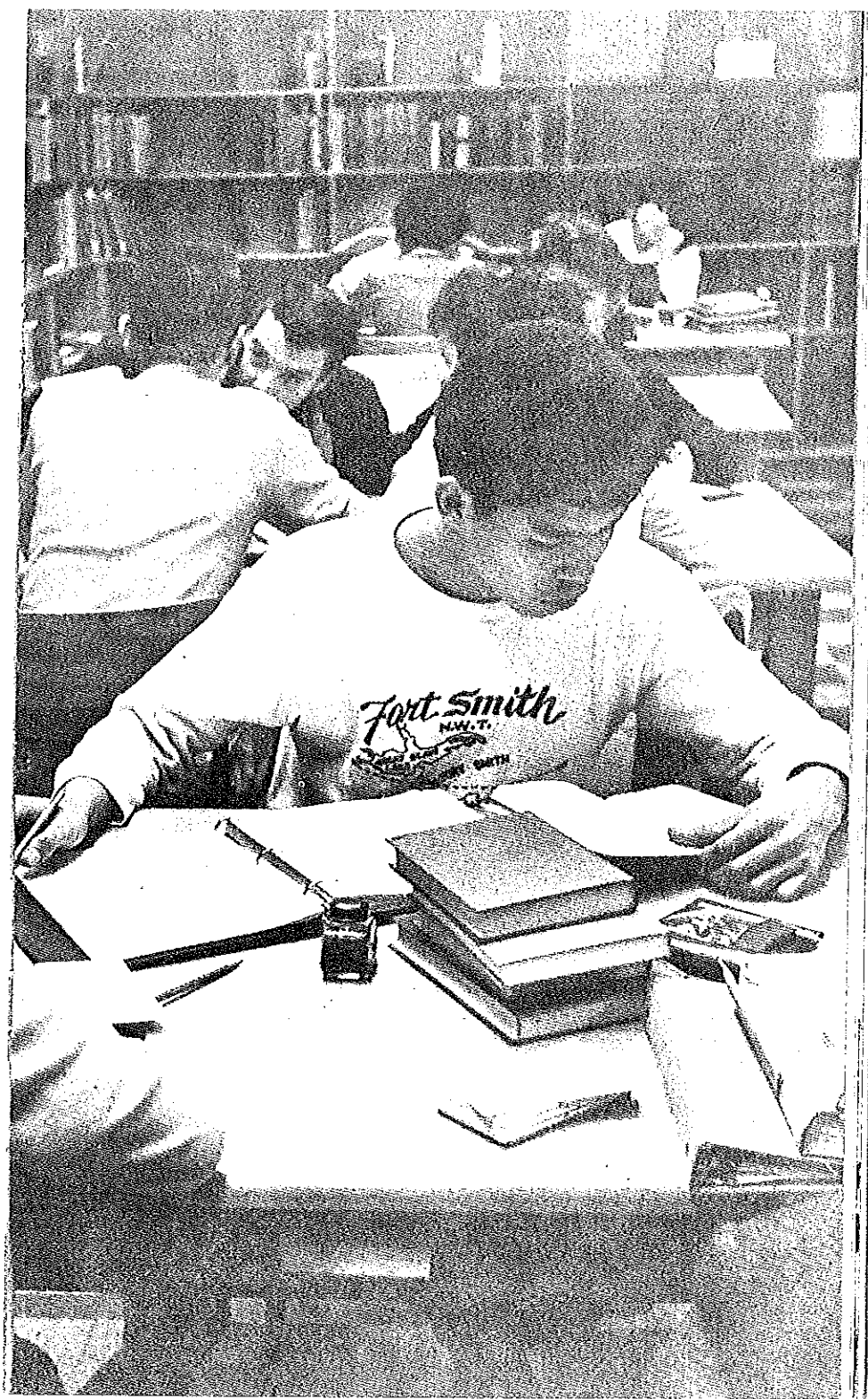
Teachers of these practical arts are employed in all the residential and larger day schools where a sufficient number of junior high school pupils are enrolled. Where there is adequate registration, specialist teachers are employed; where registration is limited, part-time instructors are hired.

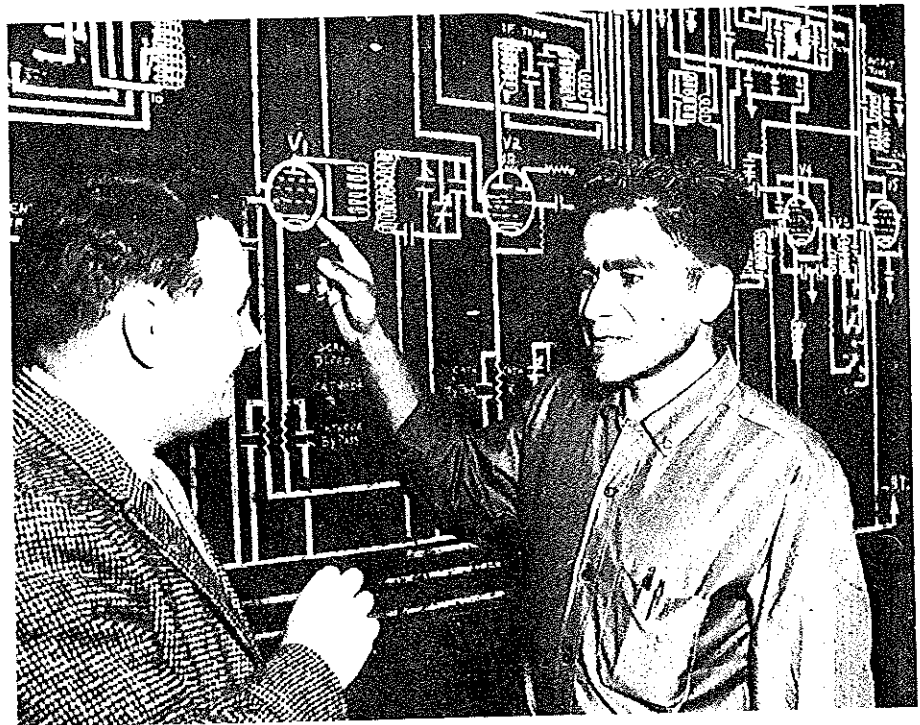
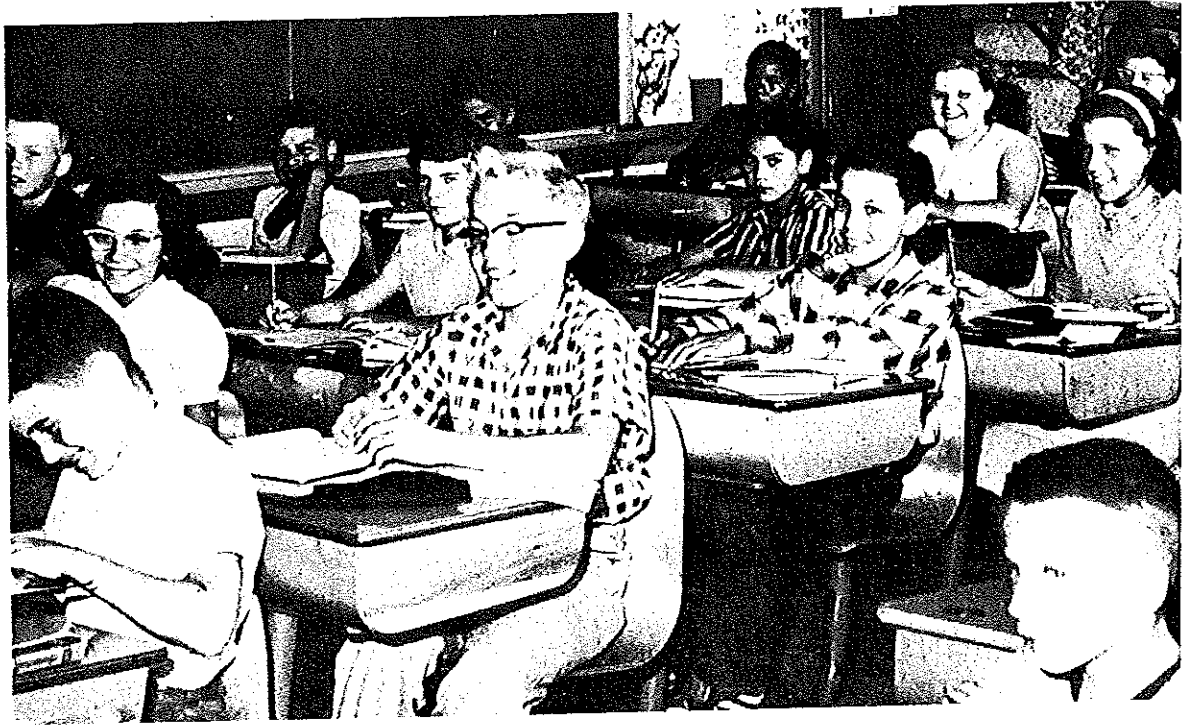
In addition to teachers who engage in purely academic work, there are also welfare or community teachers. The latter not only teach school but also perform various other tasks such as registration of births and deaths, payment of Family Allowances, dispensing of medicines and the organization of various community activities. For this extra-curricular work they receive extra pay.

During the 1963-64 fiscal year, 1,434 teachers were employed in Indian schools. Two-thirds of the total were women; 123 had Indian status, an increase of 47 in eight years.

Ninety-three percent of the instructors in Indian schools were qualified school teachers. Approximately thirteen percent of all teachers were university graduates.

The Indian Affairs Branch provides classroom supplies and lends textbooks. School libraries provide reading material for pupils and adults alike. During 1963-64 some 40,000 library books were distributed and school magazine subscriptions supplied. The Branch also provides playground and sports equipment and has outfitted several gymnasias. Where possible, audio-visual aids to teaching are provided. Movies — even more than still pictures — play an important role in the education of children from remote areas. In northern centres many of the movies which students see in the day time are shown to the parents in the evening. Some schools also have bands. The Branch helps to supply the instruments.











### *Joint Education*

The ways of life of Indians and other ethnic groups are as basically different as their cultures and viewpoints, but mutual understanding and goodwill are bridging the gap between the two groups. In the cases of other ethnic groups, association of children in schools has fostered an understanding spirit of goodwill. Young people, in their turn, have helped their elders. The same advantages appear when Indian and other ethnic groups are in the same classrooms and clubs. As one little Indian girl expressed it: "We girls felt shy when outsiders first came to our school but now we are glad they are here. There doesn't seem to be much difference between us at all."

Further evidence of progress is to be found in Indian employment in such widely diverse fields as radio, construction, medicine and professional hockey; in those who have achieved eminence — Dr. Gilbert Monture, internationally-known engineer and world expert on mineral economics; Ethel Brant Monture, noted authority on Indian culture and traditions; the late Brigadier O. M. Martin, an Ontario magistrate; Senator James Gladstone; Jean Paul Nolet, a prominent radio announcer; George Clutesi and Gerald Tail Feathers, painters of renown; Dr. A. Spence and Dr. Peter Kelly, Anglican and United Church ministers; and other noted Indian Canadians.

In the past decade joint education has moved forward rapidly due to many factors: the examples of other schools where joint education has worked well; genuine desire on the part of Canadians to help Indian progress; satisfactory arrangements for financing the education of Indian pupils; the ease with which Indian and other ethnic groups mingle; the campaign against discrimination coupled with the growing realization of its basic injustice; and finally, healthy public criticism of Canada's treatment of the Indian population.

In the year 1950-51, 2,032 Indian children were attending school with pupils of other ethnic groups; in the 1963-64 fiscal year, the number had risen to 22,764 — two out of every five Indian children attending school. Of 4,033 Indian children enrolled in grades 9 to 12, 3,283 were attending provincial schools.



There are two ways in which joint education is arranged with local school boards. Where local schools have room in their classrooms, and are agreeable to the arrangement, Indian pupils are enrolled. Where space is limited, formal "joint agreements" solve the difficulty. The Indian Affairs Branch not only pays the local board a tuition fee for operating expenses for each Indian pupil enrolled, but also contributes to the capital costs of construction of extra classrooms. The amount is based on the ratio of Indian to other school enrolment.

### *Special Courses*

In addition to academic courses available in Indian and other institutions, Indian children receive other forms of training and education. Blind and handicapped pupils are enrolled in special schools, usually operated under provincial auspices. Where facilities are not available for certain courses in the North, students are transported to schools in southern Canada. These young people have thus received training in commerce, teaching or nursing. Many have been placed in a variety of trades where they learn useful skills while working — oil well drilling, equipment operation, mechanical maintenance, carpentry, and domestic work. During their training period, their wages are subsidized.

### *Financial Aid to Students*

Every Indian child living on a reserve or Indian community, no matter what the circumstances of his parents, or where they may live, can obtain an education nowadays. As long as a student shows satisfactory progress — and requires financial assistance — he is assisted by the Indian Affairs Branch.

This aid varies from the payment of tuition fees to full maintenance costs — including books, transportation, room and board (according to the merit of the students and the financial circumstances of the families.)

Such assistance is not limited to elementary and secondary school children. It is available also to those who want to go on to university, teachers' college, nursing or other vocational schools.

In 1957, a system of scholarships, established on a regional basis, was instituted. These scholarships are awarded to outstanding students for nursing, teacher training, drama, art and music, technical, agricultural and university courses.

In 1963-64, twenty-two scholarships were awarded: seven for university work, seven for vocational training, three for nursing, two for teacher training, two for music and one for art.

In the same period, sixty-eight Indian students were enrolled in various university courses. For example Edouard Cree, a dental school graduate, is taking a post-graduate course in oral surgery at Queen's General Hospital, New York.

#### *Adult Education*

A survey undertaken in 1956 revealed the fact that a considerable number of Indians, particularly those in northern and remote areas, were illiterate. On 25 percent of all reserves, one-half of the adults could neither read nor write. It was noted also that many bands needed assistance in learning how to conduct their own affairs — and encouragement to do so. The result was an adult education programme designed to aid the Indian population in various ways.

The basic aim is the teaching of the "three Rs", followed by a continuation programme for those who need additional education in order to enter trade, technical, or similar courses. There is also a practical vocational training programme to help men earn a better livelihood and women to improve home conditions. Courses have been given in carpentry, agriculture, motor mechanics, handicrafts and homemaking. Courses in prospecting and ore identification have proved particularly popular. The primary objective is to provide the Indian with a remunerative skill, particularly useful to a hunter or trapper. They also qualify him for guiding with survey parties.

In the 1963-64 academic year, 2,800 adults took these courses.

Provision was also made for programmes of a community nature. These projects covered a wide range of activities from physical fitness classes to Home and School Associations. The leadership courses which were held in various centres through-

out Canada proved popular. They provided those attending with useful information and inspired them with confidence enough to try to solve some of the problems encountered on the reserve.

In northern Ontario a training course for Chiefs and Councillors was held, for the first time, in 1960. It was planned to help young leaders develop skills and knowledge for community development. Participants learned how to conduct meetings, the workings of committees, the duties of officers and effective ways to deal with such problems as welfare, recreation, roads and education.

In the Maritimes, "folk schools" are held. Sessions are devoted to fundamental educational and health problems in Indian communities, questions of employment, vocational training, band council government, group leadership and programme planning.

#### *Role of Indian Parents*

It is only a minority of Indian parents who fail to realize the great opportunities that education offers to their children. The majority recognize the progress being made in this field.

They are beginning to understand that there are certain advantages in being bilingual and bi-cultural. This is important in the North where economic expansion has created unprecedented opportunities, and expanded educational facilities have provided residents with training required in skilled and semi-skilled work.

These advantages, however, are of limited value unless they are utilized. If children are to progress satisfactorily, they need to develop an appreciation of their opportunities. This they can absorb most readily from their parents.

Example is the great teacher. Parental participation in civic and educational work — on school committees, in Homemakers' clubs, on band councils, or in literacy, vocational or leadership courses — is bound to inspire emulation in the younger generation.

If, in addition, school children have suitable home and school environments — including proper areas for study, wholesome meals, as well as sufficient rest and exercise — and

are required to attend classes regularly, they should progress rapidly and develop the pride in their ancestry which so many leading Indian-Canadians have advocated.

#### *Role of School Committees*

School committees might be described as embryonic school boards. As such they can — and do — serve a very useful function. Members understand the problems connected with Indian education in their particular areas, and can advise the Department wisely on matters of local educational concern such as transportation of pupils, and the attitude of parents towards integrated education. They often plan after-school activities for children.

Since they are responsible for school attendance, these committees can ascertain the causes — and very often find the remedies — of student absences from classes. Often, they have reported, the reasons for absenteeism range from lack of proper clothing to lack of motivation.

By maintaining liaison with committees in non-Indian communities, school committees acquire useful assistance in common problems, and establish bonds of friendship based on mutual interests.

The majority of school committees very wisely enlist as much support from the communities as they can muster, and rotate the membership so that as many individuals as possible have an opportunity to serve in anticipation of the not-too-distant day when Indians will perform most of the administrative functions now discharged by non-Indians on their behalf.

#### *Role of the Non-Indian Community*

In many areas of Canada there is an increasing appreciation of the Indian-Canadian heritage. Such appreciation has been long overdue.

Indian-Canadians have made a tremendous contribution to the life of this country. Indeed, people could not have lived on this continent for some thousands of years without developing artistic values. Because Indians in the north were constantly on the move theirs had to be entirely an unwritten culture — songs, legends, dances and handwork. Where their people led

a more or less settled existence, as in the southern parts of the continent, and on the Pacific coast, their artistic talents found more tangible expression in totem poles, carvings, masks, ceremonial baskets, and weaving.

Thousands of Indian names designate thoroughfares, provinces and cities. The names of the nation itself, its federal, and three of its provincial capitals, and four of its provinces, are all Indian designations.

After centuries of indifference, the desire of non-Indians to help Indian citizens is finding expression in the establishment of Friendship Councils and similar organizations, in a campaign to eliminate from textbooks biased references to Indian history and to substitute an interpretation of the Canadian story from the Indian, as well as the non-Indian, point of view. Perhaps, in time, there may even be university courses in Indian-Canadian history.

More and more Canadians are beginning to realize that many of the troubles of early days were generated by non-Indians who dispossessed the native inhabitants of their ancestral lands, and decimated their food supplies.

Appreciation and good will, however belated, are welcome steps forward. Much remains to be done, nevertheless, if the Indian-Canadian is to take the place in Canadian society that is rightfully his.

The first essential is a warm welcome — to non-Indian homes and associations, to the opportunities of the business world. Indians are generally too shy to make the first gesture. It is up to the non-Indian to do so.

### *Transition*

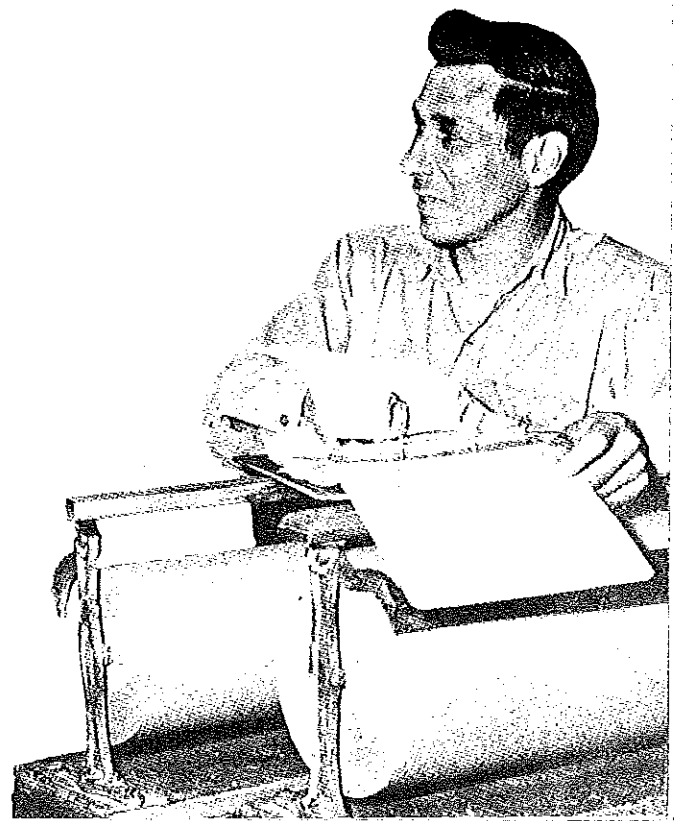
Closer association of the Indian and non-Indian worlds has taken place in the past few decades than occurred in previous centuries of contact. For this progress Canada is indebted to the efforts of thousands of interested citizens and to a score of organizations.

Perhaps most important have been the tremendous contributions made by the joint schools, coupled with financial assistance to Indian students for purposes of higher education. More and more, Indian-Canadians are electing to remain in

the non-Indian community, and those who do return to ancestral reserves are imbued with a richer understanding of Canadian life.

So much remains to be done to bring the Indian and non-Indian worlds into closer association and harmony! But one may take inspiration from the progress that has been achieved in recent years, and from the promise, too, that this progress holds for the future.

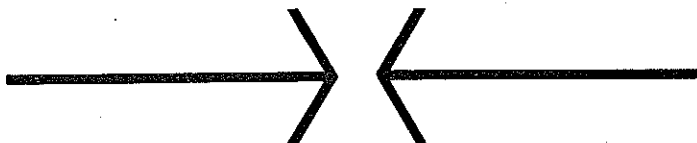








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