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NO one knows for sure where the Indians came from, but if you ask an Indian he will instinctively turn to the north.

Experts say that long before there was any civilization in Greece or Egypt, small bands of hunters moved out of Asia into Alaska and through there to Canada. Every party that drifted across the Bering Strait brought its own customs, and many had different languages. That is why the white men found no fewer than fifty distinct tribes in North America, speaking eleven languages.

The Indians attained a closely knit community life in this new continent because of their loyalty to the tribe and tribal customs, and obedience to their chiefs. This way of living suited a country that was thinly populated, with little personal and no economic connection between groups.

Political structure varied from tribe to tribe. Usually it involved only recognition of a chief or headman, but in some tribes the clan and totem organization formed a fairly elaborate social system. T. R. L. MacInnes, Secretary of the Indian Affairs Branch, said in a paper at the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association last year: "The nearest approach to established government was among the Iroquois, whose League of the Six Nations constituted an effective mutual aid pact with quite modern connotations. None of the aboriginal Indian tribal organizations are really adaptable to the economic and social life of the present era. Therefore an attempt has been made to introduce democratic, local self-government on Indian reserves . . . At the present time practically all the bands in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces are under the elective system. In the West, with a few exceptions, mostly in British Columbia, the Indians continue to follow their tribal methods."

Originally the Indians were hunters. A little corn was grown in New Brunswick and in Ontario, but mainly the Algonkians depended for food and clothing upon deer, rabbits, small game and fish. The Hurons and Iroquois of the St. Lawrence Valley and southern Ontario lived in relatively permanent villages and cultivated extensive fields of corn, but their hunting was important. Wood was used for houses, canoes,

containers and the handles of tools. Working in stone was not very good, but use of bone was highly developed, particularly for awls, bodkins, and punches. Pottery was poor in quality but useful. The prairie Indians depended upon the bison, or buffalo. Its flesh was the most important source of food, its skin served for blankets and as covering for tents, and its bones for scrapers and other implements. The Pacific coast Indians were fishermen, users of wood, and artists. Other characteristics marked tribes of the North-West and the interior of British Columbia, where life was lived according to a pattern set by natural surroundings.

It will be noted that nowhere in this picture of Indian life is mention made of industries, wholesalers, retailers, banks, or the other professions and businesses so necessary to mid-twentieth-century society. The problem of Indian adjustment has not been one merely of meeting a new mode of life, but a mode of life controlled by entirely new principles. The white man changed the whole shape of Indian ways of existence.

Morally, the Indians had high standing. Their system of ethics and code of honour was almost Spartan in its rectitude. They had developed culturally, too. Speaking of the Blackfeet of Alberta, Ven. Archdeacon S. H. Middleton says: "Several of their stories, legends and myths have an equal standing with the ancient classics. It is a little startling to see in the story of the Medicine Pipe a close parallel to the classical myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. In another of their stories is an incident which might have been taken bodily from the Odyssey."

Let us turn from considering the Indians as they were, their culture, economics, ethics and political organization, to look at what the coming of the white man meant to them. When the first Spaniards came to America, human development on this continent was 6,000 years behind the Old World, according to H. G. Wells. This ancient way of living was attacked by many new features: the white trapper, competitive trading, efficiency of modern weapons in war and the chase, natural catastrophes, and the operation of animal population cycles for which the restricted areas of reserves did not allow enough room. Habits of the Indians were broken, and their cultural and

economic patterns were destroyed. Old and noble families lost prestige; whole tribes were degraded to pauperism when white hunters ruthlessly killed off the buffalo and deer. Entire forests fell before the woodsman's axe. Said Mark A. Dawber, Executive Secretary of the Home Missions Council, New York, at the 1939 University of Toronto - Yale University conference: "The economic condition of the Indian is the white man's sin. He has taken everything worth while that the Indian ever possessed and given to him the poorest land, and he is responsible for conditions that have always been an economic handicap."

The British, from the time of their first contact, decided that Indian land should be taken over only by formal agreement. The Magna Charta of Canadian Indians is the proclamation of 1763 which set forth that no Indian could be dispossessed of his lands without his consent and the consent of the Crown. D. C. Scott, then Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, was able to say in 1931: "The sacredness of treaties and agreements with Indians has been respected."

Only 63,238 Indians are receiving the treaty annuity, but all other Indians, with this exception, are given the same services and benefits. By the treaties, groups of Indians ceded to the Crown all their title and interest in the lands over which they formerly roved and hunted, in exchange for the guarantee of residential reserves, education, annual cash payments, and other considerations.

Administration is carried out by the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, except in health matters which were transferred in 1945 to the Department of National Health and Welfare.

There are nearly a hundred Indian agencies looking after 600 bands on 2,000 reserves. The Indian Affairs Branch is charged with controlling education, developing agriculture and other pursuits, administering Indian lands, community funds and estates, and the general supervision of welfare. An important division of the work is collection and expenditure of the trust fund, derived from the proceeds of sale or lease of lands, timber or minerals and various other sources. This fund, amounting to about \$17 million, is spent as capital for public works and community equipment, while the interest is disbursed in cash distribution, medical attendance and relief.

Education, started by missionary enterprise, is now carried on jointly by the government and the churches. There were 346 schools with an enrollment of 18,805 pupils in 1946.

Archdeacon Middleton, principal of St. Paul's residential school on the Blood reserve near Cardston, Alberta, may be quoted as one of Canada's leading authorities on Indian education. Speaking the language fluently, he is guide and friend to the whole Indian band, understands the Indian philosophy, and while he believes in progressive education is also seized of the idea of making haste slowly. Here is what he says today, after 42 years' experience: "Our education emphasis should be: Preparation for the

utilitarian life of earning a living; the development and inclusion of advanced education; and to inculcate the ethics of culture for social progress on the assumption of potential citizenship. The standardized curriculum has not met with the success expected. A more flexible course, allowing full scope for the individual and for natural talent is proving beneficial. Civilized and educated, the Indian of the better class is not less intelligent than the average white man and he has every capacity for becoming a good citizen."

Speaking to the special parliamentary committee, the Director of Indian Affairs suggested that the annual appropriation be doubled to \$14 million for 15 years to provide proper educational facilities to bring the Indian nearer to achievement of rights of citizenship.

Health also demands attention. After their first collision with white men, Indians tended to sicken and degenerate physically. They left their tents and became shack and cabin dwellers. They knew nothing of the sanitation needed for close-living permanent communities. They forsook their diet, rich in vitamins, and turned to bread and lard. They became easy prey to tuberculosis and deficiency diseases.

Statistics are hard to come by, because of the scattered nature of Indian settlements, and such as there are prove to be contradictory. D. C. Scott reported in 1931 that tuberculosis is about five times more common among Indians than among the general population. Dr. E. L. Stone, Superintendent of Medical Services, Indian Affairs Branch, told the 1939 Conference that while the death rate from tuberculosis in all the population, including Indians, in a recent year was 59.7 per 100,000 persons, "The alleged death rate from the same cause among Indians was 769.3 per 100,000." He went on to say: "In our opinion the figure for Indians is exaggerated," and pointed out that about 20,000 Indians live in remote areas where "the registrars of vital statistics lack the knowledge necessary to determine accurately the causes of death, and the tendency is in these and in better organized districts to assign all deaths to tuberculosis unless there is some other obvious cause. We cannot tell to what extent the statistics given are distorted. If the figures are accepted at their face value, Indians are some thirteen times as tuberculous as white persons in Canada."

Whether five times or thirteen times, there were only 990 tubercular Indian patients being given treatment in hospitals of various types, according to the report of the Indian Affairs Branch for the year that ended in 1946.

Infant mortality is another matter about which it is hard to arrive at definite figures. The Montreal Gazette said editorially in May last year: "Indian health is a constant problem. A study by the medical service of the Indian Affairs branch, published in the Canadian Medical Journal in March of this year, said the infant mortality rate among the Indians studied reached the astounding figure of slightly under

400 per thousand live births, as compared with the white figure of 52. Such health conditions in any section of the population menace the whole."

Indians are disqualified from old age pension benefits and pensions for the blind, but they receive full benefits under the Family Allowances Act. The 1946 annual report of the Family Allowances Division said: "It would appear through reports of Indian agents and others that allowances have resulted in considerable improvement in food and clothing available to Indian children." There were 16,215 families registered at the beginning of 1946, representing 47,021 children.

This suggests that the Indians of Canada are not a vanishing race. The best estimate available is that there were about 200,000 Indians in what is now Canada at the time of the European invasion. The Indian Affairs Branch takes a census of Indians every five years, and the latest, in 1944, showed a population of 125,686 Indians. This was an increase from 118,378 in 1939 and 112,510 in 1934, or 11.7 per cent in ten years. Today's population is divided in this way: Ontario 32,421; British Columbia 25,515; Manitoba 15,933; Quebec 15,194; Saskatchewan 14,158; Alberta 12,441; Northwest Territories 3,816; Nova Scotia 2,364; New Brunswick 2,047; Yukon 1,531, and Prince Edward Island 266.

This minority race, amounting to a little over one per cent of the total population of the Dominion, has not the rights and powers of British subjects or Canadian citizens. Indians may become enfranchised, but great carefulness is exercised by the government because Indians who become enfranchised lose the special protection provided by the Indian Act. In most cases those who take up full citizenship are people who have left the reserves, abandoned the Indian way of life, and are living as white people do in settled communities. There were 314 persons enfranchised during the last fiscal year reported.

It is not surprising that many, especially the older people, cling to the reserves which are the only prospect of security open to them. It must be said that the reserves were not intended to be concentration camps. It was thought that they would become training schools in which the Indians could learn to adapt themselves to modern conditions, from which to graduate as full citizens. "By this means," said Hon. T. A. Crerar when he was Minister of the Department of Mines and Resources, "it was thought Canada might honourably discharge her obligations toward the native inhabitants of the Dominion, and, at the same time, by encouraging the Indians to become self-reliant, change a grave financial and social burden into an asset."

There is set aside for use by the Indians 5,571,000 acres, of which only 189,000 acres are under cultivation. This sparse agricultural development is not such a shocking state of affairs as the bare figures might be taken to indicate. According to the eminent Sir John Lubbock in "The Origin of Civilization" the North American Indians seem, as a general rule, to have had no individual property in land. To own

and develop tracts of farm land would, therefore, be contrary to their ancestral custom, and agriculture is not one of their strong points.

Income of the Indians from all sources — agriculture, fishing, hunting, trapping, livestock, and wages earned — amounted to \$143 per person in the fiscal year which ended in 1946. They had 2,300 personal savings accounts with total balances amounting to \$383,894.

It has been remarked that the Indians are natural-born conservationists of game and fish. There is evidence that they trapped, in their aboriginal state, according to a rotating system which maintained the fur population. This was broken down upon arrival of the white men. In recent years a determined effort has been made to assist the hunting Indians toward rehabilitation, and remarkable success has been achieved in protected areas.

The government has undertaken a number of special projects in accordance with needs in various parts of the country. These include fur development enterprises, planned agricultural operations with advice by competent instructors, and promotion of handicrafts.

Practically, Indian crafts are outmoded by modern gadgets: artistically, they are still of high economic importance. Workers are keen to maintain the quality of their products, and are winning world-wide recognition by their unique designs and fine artistry. An official in the Indian Affairs Branch is directly charged with promoting worthwhile handicraft projects and sale of the goods to the wholesale and retail trade. In addition to encouraging basketry, woodwork, carving, pottery, weaving, leather work and wrought-metal work, steps have been taken to promote another industry which has great possibilities, the cutting, polishing and mounting of native Canadian semi-precious stones. Indian women are enthusiastic about the Homemakers' Clubs which have brought noticeable improvement to their living conditions.

There are two schools of thought about the future: one favours assimilation, the other seeks a separate Indian racial life with its own distinctive culture. The most pathetic cases are of Indians who fall between the two — Indians who have been weaned from their ancestral ways and have not gained the place they desire in this new order.

Perhaps it will help if we reduce the problem to a three-pronged choice. The Hon. James Glen, Minister of Mines and Resources, said a year ago, according to the Montreal Gazette: Either the government must purchase at public expense the additional lands and hunting and trapping rights for an Indian population of 128,000 or decide on an educational and welfare programme that would fit the Indian to enter into competition with the white man not only in hunting and trapping but in agriculture and industry. To these the newspaper added a third choice, one that would need time to work out, but one that could be worked out with goodwill on the part of the Indian and the rest of the Canadian population. That is to

Projects for Rehabilitation

Indians are not a Vanishing Race

What Does the Future Hold?

get the Indian off the reservation altogether and give him an opportunity to become a citizen in every sense of the word.

It will be admitted that absolute preservation of native laws and customs is impossible, surrounded as the few islands of Indians are by bustling modernity. Annihilation of native custom, on the other hand, would be too like the things Canada fought the war to destroy. To find out the best course to be taken, a special joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons is now in its second year of investigation. Unanimous and sympathetic interest has been expressed in Parliament, and it may be possible for progress to be made with changes and improvements without waiting for the final findings of the committee and a possible revamping of the Indian Act.

The Churches, which have been active in Indian work since the first settlement of Canada, are urging quick and decisive action. In March this year, the Anglican Church called on the government for "a clear statement of national policy" on Indian affairs. The Catholic brief, presented by a delegation headed by Cardinal McGuigan, Archbishop of Toronto, remarked: "One must not forget that many of the improvements which are now suggested would have been put into effect a long time ago if the people of Canada had been aware of their necessity, and if the Canadian Government had been more generous in appropriating funds for Indian education." Both Anglican and United Churches asked for creation of a separate department to handle Indian affairs, increased grants for education, and modernization of the curriculum in Indian schools. The United Church recommended establishment of Indian education "on a completely non-sectarian basis" and deletion from the Indian Act of sections providing for the segregation of Indian children by religion.

What does the Indian himself want? He is torn between two desires: to be modern, and at the same time to retain his memory and love of his rich ancestry.

Let us hear first of all Buffalo Child Long Lance, a Cherokee Indian, who was made an honorary Chief of the Blood Band of Blackfeet. He passed through school with honours, graduated from Manlius Military Academy, and was appointed to West Point by President Wilson. When war broke out, Long Lance went overseas as a private in the Canadian infantry and retired as a captain after three years' service during which he was wounded at Vimy Ridge and Lens. As newspaper reporter, author of several books, and lecturer he became as well known throughout the continent as he had been in his younger days for his racing and boxing. Then he was given the leading part in "The Silent Enemy", a motion picture on the life of the aborigines. And here is how this educated, travelled and sophisticated man showed the actuality of a dual Indian personality: "All I did in that picture was very real. At times I felt surging within me all the things that had been done to us, and seemingly within me were the Spirits of our people of sixty thousand years ago — simple, true, defiant; assertive of all the loftiness of character which we once possessed. The other Indians felt it too, and at times when I acted they openly cried."

There is something of calm majesty in the language used by Indians presenting their views to the parliamentary committee:

"We, the Hereditary Chiefs of the St. Regis Reservation, members of the Six Nations Confederacy, and the Band, assembled to a Great Council Fire . . . beg to approach the Dominion Government . . . The eightieth belt of wampum may be only strings of cheap coloured beads, but to Indians its long white line parallel to the red one symbolizes JUSTICE in peace time just as the red line means PROTECTION in war time for our red brothers who have buried their tomahawk, now rusty."

One Band asks that industrious and competent Indians should be released from the permit system which hampers their freedom of trading; others want old age pensions; the Cowichan Indians say no objection is taken to taxes on money earned off the reserve "if Indians are given the same rights as white men." Spokesmen for the Six Nations ask for full control of Indian lands and exemption from land taxation, more autonomy, abolition of denominational schools, social services, and more power over the use of their own band funds. In refusing to approve taxation of Indians, the Bloods comment pithily: "The taking of the whole of the Dominion of Canada by the government should be sufficient taxes forever."

If there is something of a lament for the past in what the Indian says today, and a groping aspiration for better days to come, there is behind these sentiments a deep-rooted loyalty to the Crown. Lying side by side with white comrades in the fox-holes of every battle front, the Indian found acceptance on a basis that brave men know. One family of the Cape Croker Agency, the McLeods, has a magnificent record. The father served in the first war and in the veterans' guard in the recent war; his six sons and one daughter enlisted; two sons were killed and two wounded. The latest message of the Bloods to the parliamentary committee closed with this expression of loyalty: "Long may we remain the children of our great white mother, Her Majesty our late Queen Victoria."

Everyone with sympathy for the Indians and care for Canada's obligations will wish success to the parliamentary committee in its search for an honourable and thorough way of discharging the Dominion's responsibilities to these First Citizens of Canada. It is not enough to save the Indian from extinction. If the Indian Affairs Branch can provide a fulcrum to help the Indian reach a new and more satisfying life, it will be a fine demonstration of practical democracy.

The school crest of St. Paul's shows, against a background of mountains and a tepee, a youthful Indian gazing into the distance. Around the crest is a motto whose origin is lost in the antiquity of western Indians: *Mokokit-ki-aeakimat*: "Be Wise and Persevere". That is the spirit of young Indians today, and a motto fit for all who wish to help the Indians to find a better way of life.