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**The
British Columbia
Indian
and His Future**



Rev. R. Whittington, D.D.

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The British Columbia Indian and His Future

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Rev. R. Whittington, D.D.

Industrial Condition

THE Indian population of British Columbia numbers 25,234. The income for 1904, \$1,518,748, or an



REV. R. WHITTINGTON, D.D.,
Superintendent of Indian Missions
in British Columbia.

average of \$60.20 for every member of that population. Grouping them in families of four the income becomes for the family \$240.80. The sources of this income are, catching, curing and canning fish; fur hunting, logging, boat building,

stevedoring, as sailors, farming, mining, etc. The women, of course, assist materially, and also the children, at inside work in the canneries; also in selling various kinds of handiwork. Apart from this the living of the Indians is easily obtained to a very considerable extent along the lines of fish, venison and small fruits, as well as farm produce.

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The Indian is also learning the value of money very rapidly. One does not now see it spent so foolishly, and in such childish ways as formerly. They are also very handy with tools, and many of them are excellent carpenters. The consequence is that they are rapidly improving their homes, and at no great expense, by doing the work themselves. This money earning power puts them in the way of supplementing their former style of living by modern food, furniture and clothing in modern homes.

Social Conditions

On a coast steamer one Sunday in conversation with two very intelligent, gentlemen, one of them was very severe in his strictures on the Indians, and the futility of the work among them. The other, a strong supporter of missions, was unwilling to admit that the Indian work was as much of a failure as it was represented to be. Still he had his doubts. A little later we called at a cannery wharf and found it lined with Indians in their best clothes. They were Haidas, from our own mission at Skidegate. They would not work on Sunday. As they stood there, tall, powerful, fine looking men, I pointed them out to these two gentlemen as a product of missionary work. They noted everything, the polished footwear, the clean, well-brushed clothing, the manly bearing and dignity of the men. They turned their attention to the women and the children, just as clean and as well dressed. When we resumed our journey and our conversation, the latter of the two gentlemen declared that for him the argument was closed; that the comparison of what he had seen on that wharf with what he had seen in pagan villages was simply irresistible evidence of the great and good work that was being done, and that there could be no question for him hereafter of its great utility. He considered that he was most

fortunate in having seen such a sight, and that he had been well repaid in having had his doubts set at rest.

Where the men and women look like this, it is certain that the homes to some extent correspond. This social improvement is not always as marked as in this case, but it is found more or less in every Christian, and in no purely pagan, village. This disproves the



JAMES STAR AND WIFE.
(Christian Indians, Bella Bella.)

statement often made that such improvement is due to the law of the land, and not to Christianity. Pagan villages are as much under the law as Christian, no more and no less. Christian work is present in the one case, but not in the other. The social improvement follows the Christian work.

It is at once conceded that the work is slower among the Indians, and the results not so great as among some other races. There is much wickedness among

them, even in Christian villages, but the same is true among white communities, and in not a few cases the difference would be in favor of the Indian. If we can only get the Indian away from the evil influences of the bad white man the work would be comparatively easy. History shows clearly that in our work with the Indian we are combatting the wickedness of the white man rather than that of the Indian.

If it be a question of living, the Indian of to-day is very much nearer to the civilized white than to his pagan ancestor. Modern homes, modern clothing, modern food, modern education, are, to a great extent, the order of the day, and are rapidly becoming more so. The Indian is in a transition stage from his old-time to his modern environment. I cannot but say that the journey is more than half done.

The white man's vices are the most baneful of all the evil influences at work on the Indian. Another pernicious influence has been the mistaken kindness of the State in helping the Indian instead of simply helping him to help himself. Instead of being auxiliary to, the State became, to some extent, a substitute for the Indian's own self-exertions. The result has been a loss of independence and self-respect. When thus pauperized, either by the Church or the State, it becomes impossible to obtain the best results. He should be made to pay wherever he can. Still another evil in this Province is this: The Indian is the ward of the Dominion, but the administration of the law is in the hands of the Province. It pays the Province to sell licenses to men to sell liquor, and again it pays the Province to fine the Indian for buying and drinking the liquor that it licensed these men to sell. In jail the white liquor seller, or the Indian buyer, would be expensive to the Province. Between the loss and the gain

the decision is easy. It is the dollars, not the Indian, that counts. Send both transgressors to jail instead of fining them, and the Indian problem will be very much simplified; I might truthfully say, revolutionized.

Moral Conditions

Much has been done by the Indian agents, the missionaries, and especially the medical missionaries, to improve the homes, and consequently the health, and the sanitation of the people. The promiscuous rancherie is the exception, and the modern house, as a home for the family, is now the rule in our Christian villages. In many of them the homes



INDIAN HOSPITAL, BELLA BELLA. B.C.
DR. LARGE, Superintendent.

are all modern. To preach right living without the conditions for it is about as sensible as to say, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and fed," without helping to warm and feed. The privacy of the home is now generally respected, and as time passes and habits form, it will be more so. The desire for purer living impels the Indian to purify his surroundings. In turn his purified surroundings augment the desire.

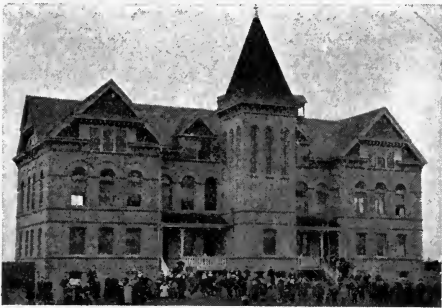
The moral life and sobriety of many of the Indians is a standing rebuke to many of the white men among them—men who seem to think that no Indian has any rights that they should respect. Were these eliminated the Indian prob-

lem would be simple indeed. Much has been said and written about the potlatch. The so-called recrudescence has occurred in very few villages, sometimes under exceptional circumstances, as in the case of the death of a great chief, but always shorn of its most objectionable features. The young people are against it, but the old sway them. The influence is waning, and will soon fall away like many other pagan practices.

Spiritual Conditions

The membership of our church is increasing, not only in numbers, but in higher spiritual living. There is a deepening and widening in the spiritual life of the people. The work of the church, the Sunday-school, and the Epworth League goes on apace, it may be quietly, but all the more persistently and effectually. All these and other educative influences are gradually enabling the Indian to look upon things in their true perspective. The drum and the tambourine are still a power with some, but many to whom such things seemed to be all in all are now looking deeper to the great spiritual principles which alone make spiritual life and living possible. Externals, whilst still used, are more and more being appreciated at their proper value. I am persuaded that a saner view of things is gradually obtaining among this people and this because they are becoming more capable of truly appreciating the spiritual values for them of their surroundings. Much remains to be accomplished, but the outlook, spiritually, is better than ever before. I know of no other way to deepen the spiritual life of our Indian Christians, and to lead others into like precious faith with ourselves, than by being *living* epistles, whilst preaching and teaching in meekness the doctrines we exemplify.

Under this head I shall not refer so much to the good work that is being done by the schools that come under my observation as to the defects in the system as applied to Indian educational work. Before dealing with these defects as they appear to me, I feel that it is incumbent on me to express once for all my high appreciation of the work that is being done by the noble band of teachers, who daily and quietly are really laying the foundations of the future in the souls as well as the minds of our Indian children.



COQUALEETZA INDIAN INSTITUTE
CHILLIWACK, B.C.

The habits of the Indian are nomadic. More than two-thirds of the children of school age in British Columbia never entered a school room at all during the year 1904. The Indian Report for that year gives a total of school age of 3694 ; 1625 were enrolled, 2069 were not. The average attendance of those of school age in all kinds of schools in the Province was less than one-third. The average attendance for the entire Dominion is only 42 per cent. of those of school age ; 9,785 children were enrolled, 4,627 were not.

The Indians are at home here from about the middle of October to the middle of January. The children, where there is no boarding school, must go with

their parents, as they cannot be provided for in the day schools. Day school children, at the best, are, therefore, learning for three months, and forgetting for nine. Is not this a psychological absurdity? To pay a staff for the whole year, when they are really efficient for a very small part of it, looks like an economic fallacy.

The average attendance of pupils in any kind of boarding school is always more than double that of the day schools, and this solely because the children are provided for. To this add the fact that the average number of pupils in the day school is only 13, as compared with the boarding school, 36, and the industrial, 48, and we see that the day school, with less than a third of the pupils, and less than one-half of the average attendance, is not one-sixth as efficient as the others; this along the line of numbers and attendance only.

When we think of the larger range of subjects in the boarding schools, and still more of the home influences along the lines of cleanliness, neatness, order, industry, truthfulness, and honesty, as well as the flood of new thought that becomes possible through a mastery of the English language, and through contact with intelligent and refined English people, there should be no stopping until the boarding-school has taken the place of the day school, except in very small villages.

An industrial pupil costs four times as much as a day pupil, and a boarding school pupil two and a half times as much. Were there a uniform system of boarding schools, and compulsory attendance as among white children, the cost would be reduced to not more than double. A few industrials only would be required, as a kind of university head to the system.

The Indian Department should take over the entire educational system and

make it uniform. This the churches, from the nature of the case, cannot do. Their work at the best is patchy. The churches should have the privilege of nominating the teachers for the villages in which their work is situated. This would insure that the teacher and the missionary would be of the same faith, and so guard against religious differences in the presence of the Indians. For this privilege the churches might well make a contribution to the educational work, which, at the lowest, would be very costly. In every other respect the teachers would comply with the regulations of the Indian Department.



STUDENTS OF COQUALEETZA INDIAN
INSTITUTE.

Strictly speaking, these boarding schools should be simply day schools, with boarding departments attached, so that the pupils might be held whilst their parents are away. For an attendance of fifty a staff of three—teacher, matron and assistant—would, I think, be quite sufficient. If the school should be unusually large, still another might be added. The staple living should be Indian food, supplemented with foreign only to the extent necessary for good health. All should be taught to take care of their own rooms, and, as far as possible, lighten the work of the home.

The course of study for such boarding schools might, in the main, be what it is now for the day schools. The acquisition of the English language, during the first two years of the course, should be made imperative. With it as the medium of instruction immensely greater progress would be made in the latter part of the course than would be at all possible using Chinook or Indian. Industrial institutes should not be in competition with boarding schools. They should do a higher work, and one that is



ONE OF THE KINDERGARTEN GIRLS AT THE COQUALEETZA INDIAN INSTITUTE.

the natural completion of the boarding school system, as the college is of our Public School system. The boarding school would thus become preparatory to the industrial, and a feeder to it.

I might pursue this subject very much further, and in detail map out a course

of study, dealing with the number, the kind and the cost of the schools required for the needs of the Indian school population, together with the cost of the same. Enough, however, has been said to blaze the way if the churches and the Indian Department care to take hold of the matter.

By rearranging and shortening the courses of study, by combining the day with the boarding schools, by making the system articulate and uniform, by compulsory attendance, as in our own school



INDIAN DAY SCHOOL, BELLA BELLA.

system, for, say, eight months in the year, the Indian Department can, with the aid of the churches, and without too serious a financial outlay, obtain enormously better results than are now possible.

The cost of such a system ought to be met not only by the Government, but by the Indians. The latter can and ought to contribute something to the support of their own school system. It would do them good to pay a school tax, and I

am persuaded that they would respond much more readily than is supposed. This has been my experience along other lines. The Indian is now better off, and pauperizing should cease. The churches also could, if they would, aid at least to the same extent as they do now, provided they are allowed to nominate the teachers. Better results would accrue to the churches, to the Indians, to their children, and to the Government, for in a very short time we would have a more intelligent class of Indians, more completely self-supporting, with the prospect of being altogether so before the lapse of a great number of years.

That 38 children of school age, in this Dominion and Province, out of every 100 should not be enrolled at all; that the average attendance for the former should be only 42 out of the 100, and for the latter less than 30 out of the 100, is a terrible indictment of the present system, and also of those who have this matter in hand. The perpetuation of the present order of things is by so much a perpetuation of the ignorance with which the Indian has been so long charged. I do not wish to be understood as blaming either Government or official; quite the contrary, there is much to commend. I simply think that better things are possible, and that it is as much the duty of the churches as of the State to see to it that they are realized.

To this end I think that the churches should appoint a strong committee to take the whole matter into consideration with the Indian Department, and, if possible, arrange for matters as indicated above, and also for the consideration of the vested interests involved.

Church Conditions

When the Committee on Naas Affairs reported there was a recommendation that the Indian District be subdivided into a number of districts, with chair-

men who would be in close touch with the work, and so relieve the Superintendent of the Indian District of the duties peculiar to such chairmen, and set him free for the duties of the Superintendency somewhat like the local superintendents in the white mission work. The Committee were unanimously of the opinion that the Superintendency should



INDIAN GIRLS.

“Irresistible evidence of the great and good work being done.”

be left intact, as most necessary for the good of this work. The Fraser River Indian Work would go into the Westminster District; Cape Mudge into the Vancouver District; the Vancouver Island Work into the Victoria District. There might then be a Bella Bella District, a Port Simpson, and a Hazelton. True, they would be small. The districts of the Conference would then be all on the same footing precisely, and the same might become true of the superintendents; one of them having charge of the Indian Work. A Hazelton District was named, so that there might really be the supervision required during the winter months, when that work is cut off. I am quite satisfied that the work has better supervision, and more care now than it could possibly have from any number of chairmen, each of whom had a station of his own to attend to.

If, however, an arrangement of this sort would satisfy the brethren without sacrificing the superintendency, it would set the superintendent free for work that would be of great value to the Church, and that more or less now goes by default. When this work is done, and the white work in the midst of the Indian has increased to something like controlling proportions, then it would be time enough to drop this superintendency.

The defects that I see in the above arrangement, that with the chairmen in charge, some will say that there is no need for a superintendent, and that the district will be very small. Still another



HAZELTON HOSPITAL, HAZELTON, B. C.

Dr. H. Wrinch, Supt.

occurs to me, and that is that the appointments in the Indian Work, being subject to the Stationing Committee, will, as in the past, be subject to constant change. The alternative to all this, that I consider is the best thing for the work, is to separate it from the Conference altogether, and manage it under the General Board. This would give that permanence to the work which it so much needs. I am quite aware of all the objections that can be advanced, and admit their force. Still I think that the best thing for the work is to remove it from the arena of change and the influence of vacillating opinion. If, how-

ever, there were unanimity in accepting the recommendation of the Committee as above, much would be gained for it. It is this want of unanimity that is injuring the work.

There is another serious defect that is seriously injuring the work, and that is the want of educational provision for the children of the missionaries. All our young men with growing families are looking to the day when they shall leave the work in order to provide education for their children. This provision means cost, and cost in the Indian Work is precisely what is being opposed by so many. It is simply my duty to say that if this difficulty is not met by the Board it will leave the work with its best men dropping out as their need compels them. English Church missionaries get \$1,000; a servant, so that the missionary's wife may be more or less free for mission work, and, in addition, the education of their children is entirely provided for. I have already indicated in correspondence how this need might be met, and cost the Church very little more than is now spent in moving expenses.



Some Interesting Statistics

Indian Methodist Missions, B.C.

Property

Churches 32, parsonage: 24, schools 12, hospitals 4. Total buildings, 72.

Government Grants

Total annual grants, \$21,720. Grants acquired during the last four years: Special, \$7,310; annual, \$7,720.

Total annual grants, \$11,320 (excluding the Coqualeetza, \$10,400).

Annual grants pay 48½ per cent., equal \$269.52, of the salary of every worker.

Missionary Society pays 51½ per cent., equal \$286.43 of the salary of every worker.

Workers

Stations 21, workers 42 (7 of them W. M. S.) as follows: Chairman 1, missionaries 10, medical 2, nurses 5, teachers 15, lay agents 8, Bible woman 1. Total, 42.

Membership and Finances

Average membership for the last five years, 1,549; for the preceding five years, 1,149. Average increase, 400.

Membership for 1904-05, 1,645. Increase, 112.

Average Missionary subscriptions for the last five years, \$1,220.09; for the preceding five years, \$973. Average increase, \$248.

Average expenditure for the last five years, \$20,641.20: amount not increasing. Really lessened as to actual payment by the Society because of increase in the amount of the Government grants.

1904-05 raised for Connexional Funds and Circuit purposes, \$3,088.24.

1895-1900 raised for Connexional Funds and Circuit purposes an average of \$1,761. Note difference, \$1,322.

Educational Statistics for B.C.

(All denominations included).

Of school age, 3,694; boys, 1,870; girls, 1,824: 2,069 out of 3,694 children at no school during 1904.

On roll, 1,625; boys, 875; girls, 750; average attendance less than 30 per cent. of those of school age.

Day school, average attendance, 389; cost, \$16,200; average cost per pupil, \$41.67; per cent., 45.30.

Boarding school, average attendance, 286; cost, \$32,523; average cost, per pupil, \$113.72; per cent., 94.

Industrial school, average attendance, 425; cost, \$70,251; average cost, per pupil, \$165.30; per cent., 92.

Total average attendance, 1,100; cost, \$118,974; average cost, per pupil, \$108.16; per cent., 67.27.

One Industrial pupil costs as much as 3.977 day school pupils average cost.

One Boarding pupil costs as much as 2.47 day school pupils, average cost.

Average number of Industrial pupils to the school, 47.22; average attendance to the school too small.

Average number of boarding pupils to the school, 35.75; average attendance to the school too small.

Average number of day pupils to the school 12.963; average attendance to the school absurd.

For the same plant and staff the average attendance of Boarding and Industrial schools should increase 75 per cent.; for day schools, 300 per cent.

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