

radios, gramophones, guitars, trinkets and even—in isolated districts—motor cars. As an example, on a remote island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, with a trail only three-quarters of a mile long, an Indian after paying his debt at the trading post had sufficient money left to buy and have shipped to the island a motor car. This he drove up and down the trail at all hours during the remainder of the summer. At freeze-up he left the car at the side of the trail without even draining the radiator and returned to his trap lines a hundred miles or more inland. The next year, due to the vicissitudes of the trap line, the same Indian might be destitute and dependent on Government aid for himself and family.

The economic status of the Bush Indians depends almost entirely on the quantity of game, fur and fish available, and the market price of the fur and fish. During the present war many of these Indians have enlisted in the Armed Services and others have made an important contribution to the war as labourers in the harvest fields and lumber camps. This has temporarily augmented their income. While it is impossible to estimate the average income of all the Bush Indians, the yearly income of the adult male before the war in the area where the present study was undertaken averaged \$200 to \$300. This has now been increased to approximately \$400.

Formally the Indians lived in wigwams and still do in some areas. To-day the Indian is copying the white man and lives during the winter months in small one-roomed shacks. Frequently the conditions are almost unbelievable—as many as 10 to 12 people living in a shack 12 feet square. The only furniture may consist of a stove in the centre and a small table or stool. Sometimes there may be one broken-down single bed, but the majority sleep on the floor. The door is seldom more than 5 feet high and is covered by a blanket or old piece of canvas to keep out the wind. Two small windows let in the light, and the sole source of ventilation is the stove and the fairly large hole in the flat roof for the stove-pipe. Their sanitary habits are very primitive. Refuse and excreta litter the snow in the immediate vicinity of the house. With the advent of spring the whole family moves to tents, which they set up a few hundred feet away, and trust to the spring and summer rains to wash away the refuse. During the summer months they frequently change the location of the tents as they move about in their quest for food.

Health Conditions

As is to be expected from their housing conditions, epidemics occur most frequently during the winter months. Influenza, measles, whooping cough and other infectious diseases all take their toll. The infant mortality rate among the Indians studied reached the astounding figure in 1942 of slightly under 400 per 1,000 live births, with a comparable figure for the white population of Canada of 52. The crude mortality rate for 1942 was 39.04 per 1,000, in contrast with a rate of 8.3 for the white population in Manitoba. In Table I is presented the ten leading causes of death with the mortality rates.

Tuberculosis is the greatest single cause of death, with a death rate 14 times higher than that among the white population. In 1942, the death rate for Indians from tuberculosis for all of Canada was 732 per 100,000, with a comparable death rate among the white population of 51.4. However, in certain farming areas, where the Indians are well established, with a higher economic status and comparatively good nutrition, the death rate from tuberculosis is only slightly higher than in the surrounding white population. Among the Northern Indians death rates from 1,000 to 3,000 per 100,000 are encountered. In the area studied the death rate from tuberculosis in 1942 was 1,400 per 100,000. The comparable figure for the white population of Manitoba was 27.1.