

This year we are actually giving a number of young Indian boys short courses in the agricultural schools in Alberta with a view to encouraging them to take employment on farms where they can learn farming in a practical way.

There is, of course, a shortage of farm labour in Canada, and I am convinced that this is a long-term shortage and one that we cannot hope to meet through immigration.

That is why I believe there is an exceptional opportunity here, both for young Indians and for farmers, if we can train suitable young Indians to become farm workers: and we naturally hope that eventually some of the Indians will become farmers themselves.

We intend to take the greatest care to place the young Indians who have taken these courses with the kind of farmers who will guide and encourage them, and be prepared at times to overlook the lack of skill and experience which will be inevitable while they are learning.

The promising beginning we are making this year in Alberta is arousing interest in several other Provinces, I hope that later this year and next year this training in farm work can be developed considerably.

We are also, in Alberta, training Indian girls in the rudiments of household science, with a view to equipping them to take employment as domestic workers or as workers in hospitals and institutions.

Here again we are going to try to place the trained workers in rural areas and small communities, because we believe the transition from nomadic life will not be so difficult as it would be in large cities.

And we are going to take the greatest possible care to select sympathetic employers for these Indian girls.

There is no question in my mind that the most important of all the activities of the Indian Affairs administration, so far as the future is concerned, is education.

Traditionally, Indian education was carried on in residential schools, conducted under the auspices of the churches, and I cannot find words adequate to praise the devotion of the teachers in these schools over the years.

Residential schools still have a large place in Indian education, and they will continue to have a large place as long as many of the Indians live nomadic lives, as long as the standard of living of many Indians is low, and as long as there are many Indian children who are orphans or whose families have been broken up.

And, unhappily, there are far too many of these. I am pleased to be able to say that we have recently concluded an agreement with the Government of Ontario under which the Children's Aid Societies in this Province will assist in promoting the welfare of these children.

And one thing that I hope may be possible over the next few years is to have many of these Indian orphan children adopted by other Canadians.