

Q. Have you any reasons to give us as to why only twenty-four Indian students have graduated from these public day schools and gone into high schools?—A. I think I can give you a few reasons. One is the over-ageness of children when they start school. I think that reflects our failure in getting children into school at the proper age. Second, is irregularity of attendance, which is extremely difficult to control. And the third is, and here I am referring to the residential schools, the half-day system they follow.

Q. I want really the day school defects.—A. Well then, the first two would apply in the case of the day schools.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, before we proceed, might I refer you to the summary of the school statement on the final page of the annual report of the Indian Affairs Branch where you will see the statistics with respect to that.

(See Appendix G)

Mr. HARKNESS: That is what I am referring to at the moment.

The CHAIRMAN: I thought you were, but I do not think the others were following it.

Mr. HARKNESS: Oh, I see.

*By Mr. Harkness:*

Q. Then, as to the residential schools?—A. I might add to those two reasons I gave there the handicap of language.

Q. The proportionate number of Indian children going further would seem terrifically small and I wanted to have the reasons for that, and to find out what could be done to improve them or increase the number going on to high school training.—A. Well, of course, the children from both the residential and the day schools go on and attend high schools, but anywhere you get children in the day schools at the proper age there would be more available to attend high schools, but the half-day system stands in the way in the residential schools, I would say.

Q. Then the chief thing required in so far as the day schools are concerned is getting the children started earlier and on regular attendance. Now, in regard to these irregularities of attendance, have you any means of compelling attendance such as exists for white children throughout the Dominion?—A. Yes, the Indian Act provides for that. But we hesitate to use compulsion with respect to administration in the matter of Indians. I have found it necessary recently to ask the Mounted Police to visit some homes and insist on the attendance of children.

Q. But generally speaking the situation is that if the Indian band does not want the children in school you do not force them to attend?

Mr. GIBSON: You have a lever in the family allowance now, have you not?

The WITNESS: Yes, the family allowance has made an improvement in the situation in the matter of more regular attendance.

*By Mr. Harkness:*

Q. As far as the residential school is concerned, that is right; they spend half time only on academic work whereas your regular curriculum of the province requires a full time attendance. I have heard a considerable number of complaints from Indians, and I think one of the reasons as to why Indian children do not get anything like an education comparable with that given white children was because of the work they had to do. I was wondering if there were anything at your disposal to increase the amount of time devoted to what you might call regular studies in the residential schools in order to correct that.—A.