

APPENDIX HA

*Extension Work At Indian Residential Schools*SUBSEQUENT TO STATEMENT MADE TO SPECIAL JOINT
COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE
OF COMMONS MAY 27, 1947

The first educational needs of the Indians of Canada were served by the establishment of Residential Schools. These institutions, over the years, have contributed greatly to the advancement of the Indian people not only along educational lines but also physically as well in the building up of strong, healthy able bodies among the children of the race. Following the program approved by the Department of Indian Affairs the Residential Schools have proven their worth. From the few suggestions which follow it can be seen that the Residential Schools can be the instrument of still greater progress among the Indian people.

Using the Residential School as a centre of activity extension work along the line of vocational training projects can be inaugurated on the Reserves. What is felt as the greatest need at present is to establish a link between the School and the home life on the Reserves of the graduate pupils. In the School the child receives a thorough education. The boy, besides the full course of academic subjects, is taught different trades which will be useful to him in the gaining of a livelihood in later life. Likewise the girl, in addition to her classical studies, receives a thorough training in domestic science. When the boy and girl graduate from School it is most important that a follow-up system be established to ensure that the training already received be put to good use. The most practical form at the outset, which this system could take would be a manual training project in the construction, by the graduate pupils, of suitable new homes for themselves on the Reserves.

The manner of proceeding with this project would be to erect a sawmill at the Residential School. Logs from the nearby Reserves could be brought in and sawn into lumber. Sufficient materials for a house for each graduating boy could be prepared. Upon his graduation the materials could be taken to his Reserve and under the direction of the manual training instructor he could begin and gradually complete his own home.

While in School select materials from the mill could be chosen and in the manual training classes the boy could be taught to make useful articles of furniture. These should be marked with his name and set aside until the time comes for his graduation. After he has successfully completed his house, as outlined above, the furniture could be given to him for the furnishing of his new home. Likewise the girls, in their sewing classes, could make very useful articles for the adornment of the home. These also would be retained at the School until the girl is prepared to marry. In this way the young couple would feel that, through their own initiative, they prepared a home of their own choosing and a new interest would thus be awakened in themselves and in their surroundings on the Reserve. They would feel that a link had been created between the School and their life on the Reserve and the desired result would be that the teaching and training which they received in School would never be forgotten and would constantly influence their future lives.

With the establishment of the graduate pupils in new homes further activities from the Residential School could be undertaken on the Reserves. Courses in agriculture could be given and trained Agriculturists from among graduate pupils could be employed by the Department to assist in the cultivation