

Mr. FOSTER. What is the number that gets the advantage in the school of each of these now? Would the minister inform the House shortly as to the progress that is being made through the expenditure upon our schools, and the progress that is being made by the Indian children in the way of education? It is a matter which we have often discussed in this House, and it is well to have a report upon it each year. We would like to know what progress is being made, and whether any change is being introduced in the system of education, and generally, as to the results of the money we are expending.

Mr. OLIVER. The average attendance at Restigouche is 42, at Tobique 22. Answering the questions of the hon. gentleman, it is not possible to give an answer that would be considered satisfactory. The difficulties of an Indian's education, the difficulties of making an Indian into a white man, were not thoroughly appreciated at the time the work was undertaken. There have been grave difficulties met with that were not expected, and only recently are coming to be realized. While a great responsibility has been incurred, and a fully considered effort has been made to discharge that responsibility satisfactorily, it must be admitted that the expectations that were entertained when the present system of Indian education was undertaken, have not been realized. It is not that the Indians are incapable or even disinclined to education, as we understand it, but the fact is that the environment, the necessary environment, of the Indian in a large majority of cases after he leaves school, is such that the education which he has acquired in the school is not of that benefit to him that was hoped or expected. It is not that our system of education has failed to educate, but the conditions surrounding the Indians are still such that I think it must be admitted that the education is not so beneficial to them as at one time we had hoped. At the same time the burden of the work of Indian education which was assumed jointly by various churches concerned in missionary effort, and by the government, has been found hard to bear by the churches who have undertaken the enterprise. It appears that in the light of the experience of the past twenty years some readjustment of the conditions surrounding Indian education will have to be shortly made, with a view to lightening the burden and to achieving better results, that is to say, results which will tend rather to improving the condition of the Indian as an Indian, than to making the Indian into a white man.

Mr. FOSTER. What is the average attendance at these schools for which we paid some \$70,000 last year, and how many children have passed through the schools?

Mr. OLIVER. The average attendance at all the Indian schools the last fiscal year

was 6,451, and the total attendance was about 10,000.

Mr. FOSTER. How many Indian children are there altogether in the various provinces?

Mr. OLIVER. As we find in the annual report, the Indian children from the ages of 6 to 15 years inclusive, numbered 7,665 males and 7,252 females.

Mr. FOSTER. Then it would seem that about two-thirds of them pass through the schools, and a little over one-third are in average attendance. Can the minister give us an idea as to the trend of this education now? Is it in the larger proportion tending towards education in the trades, what will be useful in after life, or is it the three R's that are being taught?

Mr. OLIVER. The idea of education in the trades which had such a strong hold a number of years ago is not maintained to-day. If the Indian who had acquired a first-class trade, such as that of carpenter or blacksmith, did not sever himself entirely from his home associations he had no future in that trade as the opportunity to employ the education that he had acquired did not exist. At the present time there is not so much of an effort to inform the Indians with regard to trades as to give them the rudiments of an ordinary education, to teach the Three R's, and where the opportunity exists, as at industrial and boarding schools, to give them education in the line of agriculture. The idea is to make the children acquainted with farm life and farm work.

Mr. A. HAGGART. I understand that the environment of the Indians nullifies the effect of the school in a large measure, that the effect which the school would have depends entirely on the character or qualifications of the teacher or master. Are there any standard qualifications for the teacher or master?

Mr. OLIVER. Some of the schools are under the direct control of the Indian Department, but the large majority of the schools are missionary enterprises which are assisted by the government. As far as our control goes, we require a third-class certificate which we think is a sufficient educational standard for the work that is on hand. Our association with the churches in the work of Indian education is because of the expectation and belief that the character of the people who are engaged in Indian education will be such as it ought to be, looking to the betterment of the character and mind of the Indian.

Mr. BARR. Are the children brought and placed in the boarding houses or are they just gathered in from the wigwams? What is the policy of the government? Have they