

Educating Canada's Indians.

It is not so many decades ago that North America was the property of the freedom-loving, warlike Indian. In those days the lakes and streams fairly teemed with fish, and the thousands upon thousands of acres of virgin forest knew well the voices of all wild animals native to the continent. These furnished food, clothing, and shelter for the copper-colored race to whom the cares incident upon advanced civilization with its rush for gold were not known. Natural conditions made living a comparatively easy matter and the Indians spent most of their time in hunting and fishing, or in tribal warfare, while their more industrious squaws did the minimum of domestic work required during that primitive age.

Then out of the east came a sail, and the white man landed upon his bronzed brother's beach. Gradually he pushed inland and rapidly did his numbers increase. The Indian fell back before him as the giant monarchs of the primeval forest fell before the axes of the newly-landed stalwarts. As the hunting grounds became smaller Indians gradually grew less numerous until to-day the white man holds the major portion of the land, Indians being pretty well confined to reserves.

One of these reserves is situated in Middlesex county, Ontario, and on it is located what is known as Mount Elgin Industrial Institute, a school for educating the young of this and other reserves. Here all the best that is known in the white man's elementary education is being taught the children of Indian parents who as a general rule are apt pupils.

This school, the corner stone of which was laid in 1859, was founded by the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church in Canada. The former building is now used only as a minor structure, and, in its stead, on the north bank of the river Thames, in a fine grove of forest trees and looking majestically down upon thousands of acres of pastures and cultivated lands, has arisen a building complete in every detail—light, well ventilated and sanitary, and surrounded by barns and out-buildings which mark the place as an agricultural school as well as an academy for general education.

It is with the agricultural end of the work that this article is to deal in particular, but in passing it might be well to note that the boys and girls are taught all subjects leading to high school entrance examination, and one year beyond this; the girls are taught to sew, cook, and all kinds of domestic service, and the boys are taught mechanics as well as all kinds of farm practice. Music has recently been added to the curriculum. Children are taken in at the beginning of school age and may remain until eighteen years of age, or such times as the Department of Indian Affairs deems it advisable that they should leave the school.

The farm, as operated, composes about 1,000 acres, between 600 and 700 acres of which is pasture, and about 300 acres being under cultivation. On this part a four-year rotation is operated as far as possible about 100 acres of hay being produced yearly; fifteen acres of potatoes, thirty to forty acres of winter wheat and forty acres of corn being grown annually besides spring grain. All the land is kept thoroughly cultivated, the aim being to teach the boys the better class of farming, and to produce highest crops to meet large expenses.

The farm is operated as a live stock proposition, and the success which has resulted during recent years is but another proof that with proper management cash returns from live stock are sure to far outweigh cost of production. The pig pen will accommodate about 50 fattening hogs. Six to eight brood sows are kept to ensure a good supply of young pigs, and the sows now on hand average ten pigs per litter. They are of the Yorkshire breed, and to produce good-feeding pigs are bred to Berkshire boars. From \$800 to \$1,000 worth of pork is sold each year, besides what is consumed by the 150 people at the Institution, composed of 135 pupils, the remainder being officers. At present there are 250 head of cattle on the farm, including fifty milk cows, forty-four of which are in milk, and one of which, a grade Holstein, has averaged 60 lbs of milk per day from April first until the 20th of June. Several others have averaged 50 lbs per day during this time. One-half of these cows are grade Holsteins, of a very high order, and the other half are milking Shorthorns, four of which are pure bred. After making butter and supplying milk and cream for the entire Institution, this herd produced last year \$2,500 from cream sold, and the buttermilk and skim milk, which went to the pigs, was valued at \$800. The herd is being improved. Records, commencing April first, 1913, are being kept on all cows, and it is the intention to weed out and eventually make the herd one-half pure breeds, and the

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other half grades of the two breeds mentioned, thus dividing the herd into four sections. It is the aim of the management to keep up the herd by breeding, that is, by using the best bulls procurable upon the selected females, and keeping the offspring to form the herd of the future. From eighty to one hundred first-class steers are turned off each year, it being no uncommon occurrence for \$4,000 worth to be sold at once. Three large plank silos built on cement foundations and inside the barns are depended upon to supply the major portion of winter roughage.

on the best farms of this country is not overlooked here, a thoroughly up-to-date poultry-house with accommodation for 100 hens being a feature of the work. It is fitted with chopping boards, and a straw loft, and has a combination glass and cotton front. The breeds kept are Brown Leghorns and Barred Plymouth Rocks. All garden vegetables required by the Institution are produced in the Institution garden, and the boys learn how to grow these from actual experience.

The children rise at six a.m., and have a busy day with lights out at nine p.m. Boys and girls are divided into three divisions and work in

monthly shifts, so many boys going to the farmer, so many to the stockman, so many to the mechanic, etc., while the girls get sewing, laundry work, cooking, etc., in turn. All this is in addition to school work under three competent teachers. After several years of this training the pupils, upon leaving the school, are well fitted to face their life's work, and in most cases they do well, very few of them returning to reserve life.

Such is the work being carried on by Rev. S. R. McVitty, who has been principal or superintendent of the school during the past four years. The extent of his success in agriculture can only be understood when it

is known that from this farm he must be able to make \$10,000 each year, in addition to the per capita government grant before expenses are paid. This, he has been able to accomplish each of the last two years. Farming properly carried on is a profitable undertaking, and with such stock, such methods of cultivation, and such a system of farm management being taught the Indian boys and girls together with all the other education, technical and general, which is offered, a lasting good must be done all those fortunate enough to be admitted. The accompanying illustrations show the main

building, the senior class of girls, and the type of work horses used on the farm. If the white man took the Indian's forest he has given him a vastly more precious gift in return—education and Christianity.

We have just finished hoeing. Our corn is pretty good—a little on the thin side. I think that there was only about sixty per cent of the corn started. Our root crop looks well and the grain is fine, but hay is very light. All the clover killed with the ice in the winter.
JAMES BLAIR.



The Main Building.

Where Indian boys and girls are educated.

The dairy stable is fitted with chain ties, but all the stalls in the large feeding-cattle barn have stanchions installed. Some idea of the size of the latter stable may be had when stanchions are provided for seventy head of steers and thirty-four head of young cattle. All manure is hauled as made in the winter to the fields and placed in large piles to heat. This has been found very satisfactory.

At the present time there are about forty horses on the place, and a good lot they are. All suitable mares of breeding age are bred regularly, and some particularly promising young



Senior Class of Girls.

These girls come from fourteen different reservations, and each is a good seamstress, the dresses worn being all made by the wearers.

stock is coming on. The superintendent is a stockman, and owing to his good judgment some very large profits have been made from buying and selling all kinds of farm stock during recent years.

Silos are filled, threshing is done, and grinding is accomplished by means of an 18-h.p. gasoline engine, which the boys showing an aptitude for are taught to operate. All blacksmithing is done on the place, and boys favoring this occupation are taught all phases of the work.

A sideline which is fast demanding recognition

Lanark Co., Ont.

The kind of man to retire from money-earning labor with the hope of really enjoying life is the man who has really enjoyed life during his period of hardest work. And you will deceive yourself if you imagine that in idleness you will develop virtues or a capacity for sensible enjoyment that you did not have in your working years.—World's Work.