

Now apart from the wages earned in the various activities such as haying, berry picking, hop picking, and so on, the Indians derive their livelihood mainly from four of the basic industries. Agriculture, fishing, trapping and lumbering are those industries.

Let us look for a moment at the picture from the point of view of agriculture. The section of British Columbia lying east of the coast range between the 49th parallel of latitude and the 52nd parallel of latitude to the boundary of the province of Alberta is mainly agricultural and the Indians there are engaged in agricultural pursuits. The Indian by nature is an outdoor man and in my opinion should receive the greatest possible encouragement in endeavouring to make a living out of the land. Part of that section that I have mentioned is what is known as the dry belt of British Columbia and irrigation is necessary there, so that a knowledge of the proper use of water enters into the picture. Now Indians, of course, have to this day felt that the streams belong to them, and that the woods are also theirs and that the range should be open to them without restriction.

The same applies to the matter of trapping. When the province of British Columbia devised the system of water licences the Indians were certainly not the first men to apply for those licences. They opposed it and in some cases they still do. The Indian said, "This belongs to me, why should I have to apply to anyone for the right to use the water?" And the result was, of course, that the white settler recorded water rights that really should have been safeguarded for the Indians in a good many cases, and consequently the Indian in parts of the dry area of British Columbia has not sufficient water for the land that he has the right to claim as his own.

There are two licences issued in British Columbia for the use of water. There is a conditional licence which certainly implies that it is issued under certain definite conditions. One is that certain works will be constructed and that proper use will be made of the water. If the conditions set out by the province are met a final survey is made and eventually the final licence is issued.

It has been very difficult, particularly in the Okanagan division and to a lesser extent in the Kamloops and Nicola agencies, to get the Indians to make proper use of the water, without which, of course, crops cannot be successfully and economically grown. One of the reasons probably that difficulties still exist there is the lack of field supervision.

Mr. MACNICOL: Lack of what?

The WITNESS: The lack of a field officer. An Indian requires constant assistance and supervision. It does not do to suggest certain things to them and leave it at that. You must visit them day after day, or as frequently as possible, and keep track of the progress being made and if there is evidence of non-compliance it behooves the field officer to devote considerable time to these Indians. The Okanagan areas could be made to produce considerably more than they are doing today if the Indians had more water and if we can get them to develop an inclination to use it properly and develop the resources of the land that they have at their disposal.

Of course, many people are under the impression that the department has been somewhat lax in not pushing the Indians into such lines of endeavour as fruit growing, tree fruits and various small fruits. The Indian at the present stage in our province, I am speaking generally, would not make a success in either of those divisions for the simple reason that the nomadic inclination is still strong in them and they do not take intelligently to our ideas of life. When the urge comes upon them to set things aside and go into the woods and other places they long to visit that is all they can do. In that area I should say that it will probably be another generation before Indians can be brought to the state where they will devote the attention that is necessary to the civilized work