

The Indian population of Canada is widely scattered, with differing racial and cultural backgrounds, and in varying stages of economic and social development, from the primitive nomadic hunter to the highly skilled industrial worker or member of the learned professions. Like every other community in Canada, the Indian band or group is subject to the economic, social and geographical influences of the region in which it lives. For general purposes the Indian population may be grouped according to the natural economic zones of the country:

- (1) Atlantic Seaboard - The tribes inhabiting the Atlantic seaboard originally lived by hunting and had no agriculture. Today, however, they are mainly engaged in forestry, agriculture, fishing, and native handicrafts, and face much the same problems as other Canadians making their homes in the same region.
- (2) St. Lawrence Basin, South of the Laurentian Plateau - At the time of European settlement, the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes regions that became old Ontario and old Quebec were inhabited, as now, by two main groups of Indians: Iroquoians, including Hurons, and Algonkians, including Ojibways, Algonkins, and Abenakis. The economy and culture of these two main groups differed widely. The Iroquoians were agriculturalists, being the only aboriginal race in Canada that had developed agriculture to any great extent before the coming of the European, while the Algonkians depended mainly on the chase for their livelihood. Today, those in the settled areas are engaged mainly in farming and industrial and professional pursuits, while those in the more remote areas rely mostly on forestry, fishing, hunting, and trapping for a living.
- (3) The Prairies - In the Prairie Provinces the Indians, who depended upon the buffalo for practically all their needs, had to adapt themselves to new conditions following the near extinction of this animal. An intensive policy of agricultural assistance has been necessary. Many Indians are now successful ranchers and grain growers, a remarkable transition in a few generations, in view of the fact that they had no previous agricultural experience.
- (4) Pacific Region - The Indians inhabiting the coastal areas of this region were traditionally sailors and fishermen and today they are active in the commercial fishing industry. In the interior, fruit growing and ranching are important, while many Indians earn their livelihood in lumbering. In the northern area, trapping is the principal occupation.
- (5) Precambrian Shield - Originally, the Indians in this vast area were entirely dependent on hunting and fishing for their food, alternating between periods of plenty in good game years and periods of privation and starvation when game was scarce. On the whole, they still depend to a large extent upon the chase for their livelihood. But this region has witnessed a remarkable change in recent years with the advent of the airplane. The pulp-wood industry in the more accessible regions provides employment for many Indians, while mining and other projects are changing employment patterns.

#### ADMINISTRATION

As early as 1670, during the reign of Charles II, instructions were given to the governors of the colonies to the effect that Indians who desired to place themselves under British protection should be well received and protected. Later it was found necessary to establish an office devoted solely to the administration of Indian affairs, and in 1755 Sir William Johnson was appointed Indian Superintendent with headquarters in the Mohawk Valley, in what is now the State of New York. The establishment of this office was the genesis of future Indian administrative organization in North America. Following the American Revolution, the Indian office was removed