

number of things; we have imported willow; we have been growing willow in Ontario, at St. Regis, and at Pierreville in Quebec, with the object of producing baskets in beautiful designs. I might say to the committee that the one thing that impresses me about Indians more than perhaps any other is the skill of the Indian hand and the synchronization that exists between his hand and his eye. We whites have lost our skill since the industrial revolution. The Indian has not. Put anything in front of an Indian and he can make it almost overnight. It is astounding the skill he has in his hands. We are not taking advantage of that and we ought to be; and if we could get the staff we would do it.

Mr. BLACKMORE: I wonder if the committee would permit me to raise the question of whether Mr. Hoey would not like to prepare a little talk at some later time as to what would be necessary to provide that activity if he had the staff?

Mr. HOEY: I think you had better take the official who knows about this, Miss Moodie, as she has been devoting a great deal of time to it.

The CHAIRMAN: The subcommittee can consider that.

Mr. BLACKMORE: As I recall it, when I was a small boy, I lived right along side an Indian reservation, the very one that is in my constituency now. The skill of those Indians was most astonishing; the skill they had in curing maladies and in tanning hides, and a wide variety of things. I am wondering if it can be rescued before it reaches an irretrievable point.

Some MEMBER: What kind of hides?

The CHAIRMAN: We were discussing the administration. Have we come to the end of that heading?

Mr. BLACKMORE: I would like to ask one more question before we go forward. We have had seven or eight points this afternoon, which, I think, are good points, and should be borne in mind. I wonder if there is a secretary or somebody appointed to keep track of those points so that they won't get lost?

Mr. BROWN: Our committee clerk makes such notes.

Mr. BLACKMORE: But is there someone whose particular business it is to see that track of those is not lost?

The CHAIRMAN: He is a very efficient secretary.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: There was one point in connection with administration. Major MacKay dealt with suggestions to strengthen his own office. This morning he referred to the fact, I think, that many of the Indian agents were not able properly to cope with their work because of lack of assistants. What has he to say in regard to that?

The WITNESS: There are nineteen agents.

*By Hon. Mr. Stirling:*

Q. And seventeen that count?—A. Seventeen under the commissioner. But what the agent is in need of, in most cases, is a field officer. If an appointment be made where required, it would give an opportunity to the agent to make more frequent visitations to his reserves and to coordinate the field work.

Q. Extra to the seven previously referred to?—A. The only man we would have in our office would be the man responsible for the supervision and direction of the field staff.

Q. There would be seven new ones, you say, you have four now. That would not take care of the seventeen?—A. There are some agencies, really, that do not require field officers. They probably are more in need of enforcement officers; but the responsibility in that respect really devolves upon the province of British Columbia.