

being an apparent increase of 16,042; but the figures as reported each year by the agents vary very considerably, and though there is no doubt that the number of Indians is increasing, there is no reason to suppose that they have increased to the extent the above figures would indicate. The fact that they have increased at all affords the strongest possible evidence of the wisdom of the policy pursued by the Government, and though the increase is at present mainly confined to the tribes in the eastern Provinces, these tribes have passed through experiences similar to those which the Indians of the North-West are now undergoing, and the time may be hopefully looked forward to when the latter, accustomed to domestic life, will increase in like manner.

Difficulties
in making
Indians
become
self-sus-
taining.

87. The difficulty of bringing a race to so completely change its habits as to become self-sustaining by labour, when for centuries it has been unaccustomed to work of any kind, except what was required in the pursuit of game, is not sufficiently appreciated by the majority; but to those who understand these matters it is not surprising that the progress towards self-sustenance is slow, and that the death rate, among many of the tribes, is, consequent on such a complete change of habits, exceptionally heavy. The tendency, however, of the Indians of the North-West to adapt themselves to their surroundings, and to adopt at least the elementary methods of civilization, is steadily growing, and may be attributed in a great measure to the fact that the younger portion of the present generation have not had the same opportunity of acquiring the same taste for a roving life that their fathers had, but have grown up in the midst of scenes and under influences very different from those with which their fathers were familiar, and the same remarks applying with greater force to future generations make the outlook for the ultimate domestication of the Indian very promising.