

137. According to the census of 1881 the Indian or native population of Canada was 108,547, and in 1892, according to the report of the Department of Indian Affairs, it was 109,205, being apparently an increase over 1881 of 6,581, but a decrease as compared with 1891 of 12,433. The apparent decrease during 1892 is due to the fact that only partial returns have been received from some of the most northerly districts, while in Ontario and Quebec the figures have been changed in accordance with the census of 1891. It is not, however, claimed that any of these figures are quite correct, as there are still some places, particularly in British Columbia, where there are at present no resident agents, and the number of the Indians can only be estimated. It is considered, however, that the number of Indians in Canada is now larger than in 1881, though the actual increase cannot be definitely ascertained; but the mere fact of an increase at all affords the strongest possible evidence of the wisdom of the policy pursued by the Government, both before and since Confederation, 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. The Indians, on 30th June, 1890, 1891 and 1892 respectively, were, according to the estimate of the Indian Department, distributed over the Dominion in the following numbers:—

	1890.	1891.	1892.
Ontario.....	17,776	17,915	17,589
Quebec.....	13,599	13,361	11,649
Nova Scotia.....	2,107	2,076	2,151
New Brunswick.....	1,569	1,521	1,511
Prince Edward Island.....	321	314	312
Manitoba and North-west Territories.....	25,743	25,195	23,852
Peace River district.....	2,038	2,038	1,725
Athabasca ".....	8,000	8,000	6,441
Mackenzie ".....	7,000	7,000	
Eastern Rupert's Land.....	4,016	4,016	4,016
Labrador, Canadian interior.....	1,000	1,000	1,000
Arctic coast.....	4,000	4,000	4,000
British Columbia.....	34,416	34,202	34,959
Total.....	<u>122,585</u>	<u>121,638</u>	<u>109,205</u>

138. It is satisfactory to note that the interest taken by the Indians in the education of their children is continually on the increase, and that the indisposition on the part of many to allow their children to enter any of the industrial schools has considerably diminished. The establishment of industrial and boarding schools at various points is of great importance, as these schools are calculated to have a much greater beneficial effect on the minds of the Indians than the day schools, because they remove the children from the deleterious home influences to which they would otherwise be subjected, and bring them in uninterrupted contact with all that tends to change their views and habits of life.

Indian interest in education increasing