

and the lands reserved for them came under the control of the Dominion Government, and in 1873 an Act of the Canadian Parliament (R.S.C., c. 81) provided that the Minister of the Interior should be Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs and as such have the control and management of the lands and property of the Indians in Canada. The aim of the Department of Indian Affairs is the advancement of the Indians in the arts of civilization, and agents have been appointed to encourage the Indians under their charge to settle on the reserves and to engage in industrial pursuits.

The system of reserves, whereby particular areas of land have been set apart solely for the use of Indians, has been established in Canada from the earliest times. It was designed in order to protect the Indians from encroachment, and to provide a sort of sanctuary where they could develop unmolested until advancing civilization had made possible their absorption into the general body of the citizens.

Reserves have been set aside for the various bands of Indians throughout the Dominion, and the Indians located thereon are under the supervision of the local agents of the Department. The activities of the Department, as guardian of the Indians, include the control of Indian education, health, etc., the development of agriculture and other pursuits among them, the administration of their funds and legal transactions and the general supervision of their welfare.

The local administration of the Indian bands on the reserves scattered throughout the Dominion is conducted through the Department's agencies, of which there are in all 110. The number of bands included in an agency varies from one to more than 30. The staff of an agency usually includes various officers in addition to the agent, such as medical officer, clerk, farm instructor, field matron, constable, stockman, etc., according to the special requirements of the agency in question. The work of the agencies is supervised by the Department's inspectors, each inspector having charge of a certain number of agencies. Expenditures upon destitute Indians are made by the Dominion Government, either from public funds or from the tribal funds of the Indians themselves.

The Indian Act provides for the enfranchisement of Indians. When an Indian is enfranchised he ceases to be an Indian under the law, and acquires the full status of citizenship. In the older provinces, where the Indians have been longer in contact with civilization, many are becoming enfranchised. Great discretion, however, is exercised by the Government in dealing with this problem, as Indians who become enfranchised lose the special protection attached to their wardship, so that it is necessary to guard against premature enfranchisement.

Treaties.—In the older eastern provinces, the history of the Indians has been one of slow development with that of the community. In western Ontario and the Prairie Provinces, the situation has been different. There the rapid spread of civilization made it necessary to take prompt and effective measures to protect the moral claims of the Indians, which are recognized by the Government. Accordingly, treaties were entered into with the Indians, whereby the latter ceded to the Crown their aboriginal title and interest in the country. In consideration of such cession, the Crown agreed to set aside adequate reserves, make cash grants, provide per capita annuities, give assistance in agriculture, stock-raising, hunting, trapping, etc., as particular circumstances might require, provide education for the Indian children, and otherwise safeguard the Indians' interest. These treaties have been made from time to time as occasion arose and as new territories were opened up. No treaty has been made with the Indians of British Columbia, but their welfare has received no less attention from the Government on that account.