

An important step in the field of social welfare for Indians was undertaken when positions for social workers were authorized. A qualified social worker will in the near future, be attached to the office of the Regional Supervisor in each province for work exclusively on Indian Reserves.

Reserves.—Reserves, or lands set aside for the use of Indian bands, number more than 2,000. They vary in size from a few acres to 500 sq. miles. Except by special expropriation for public purposes, these Reserves cannot be alienated without the mutual consent of the Indian owners and the Federal Government. All Reserve land is community property and the individual holding, in so far as the land is concerned, is only the right of occupation, although the individual holder owns his improvements. Most Indians live on these Reserves, which were designed primarily to provide them with a refuge where they could live, move and have their being without fear of exploitation or molestation. In the Far North, however, where the lands are unsettled, the Indians are organized into bands and dealt with as band groups for purposes of administration.

Eighty-one parcels of Indian lands were sold during 1949-50 and, of this number, 67 were cash sales realizing \$20,481, and 14 were time sales which will realize \$17,693. Receipts from cash sales and collections on land sale contracts amounted to \$124,527, and of this total, \$110,160 represented principal payments and \$14,367, interest payments.

Oil exploration work by licensees and permittees continued, and during the fiscal year ended Mar. 31, 1950, the petroleum and natural gas rights on 20 Indian Reserves were surrendered by the Indian bands concerned, to be leased for their benefit. At the end of that period, exploration and development contracts were in force on two Reserves in British Columbia, 24 Reserves in Alberta, four Reserves in Saskatchewan, one Reserve in Manitoba, and two Reserves in Ontario; a total of 33 Reserves. Receipts to Indian band funds from these contracts in 1949-50 totalled \$243,054.

Fifty-five timber licences were in force at the beginning of the same fiscal year and of these, 10 were completed. Two licences were forfeited and 41 licences were renewed which, with the 10 new licences issued, brought the number of licences in force at the end of the fiscal year to 51. Receipts from dues and ground rent under licences were \$187,180, and from dues under permits to Indians, \$128,774, making total receipts from timber \$315,954.

Trust Funds.—Many of the Indian bands have community trust funds which are administered for their benefit by the Indian Affairs Branch.

The credit balance of the Indian Trust Fund as at Mar. 31, 1950, was \$19,143,830, being \$14,833,799 in Capital Account and \$4,310,031 in Revenue Account, which at the end of the year showed increased balances of \$200,511 and \$300,678, respectively. Interest paid by the Government of Canada on the Trust Fund, at the rate of 5 p.c., amounted to \$932,928. Other major items of income to the Trust Fund included land leases, \$410,735; timber, \$310,576; oil exploration rights, \$243,054; and land sales, \$124,527.