

## THE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

REV. E. J. STALEY, PRINCIPAL

The first missionary to the Stoney's was the Rev. George McDougall, followed by his son John. During the time of the latter, an orphanage was built and some of the Indian children received some schooling. These children are the parents of some of our children here to-day. They can speak, read and write English and one woman can play hymns on the organ. The Orphanage closed down in 1908 and for nearly twenty years there was no school on the Reserve.

In 1926 the new school was built. Indian schools of to-day are the co-property of the Indian Department at Ottawa and one of the churches. The Mission here is of the United Church.

There is a Residential School, a day school, a manse and a church here. The Residential School is a large three-storied building, having the girls' dormitory and basement on one side and the boys' on the other. The children's dining-room is in the middle of the first floor and is a very pleasant room with long windows facing south. The staff dining-room and living-room are in the west end.

The day school is a modern two-roomed building. The Junior room is for Beginners and Grades I, II and III, while IV to VI are taken in the Senior room. Most of the children in the Senior room have been in school only four or five years, although they are from 12 to 14 years of age. As they ~~grow~~ go on, Grades VII and VIII will be taken also.

There are at present 78 children resident in the school, their ages ranging from 7 to 16. Those who will be 17 this year will go back to the Reserve and new children will be taken in their places. When Indian parents place a child in school, they sign a paper making the Indian Department the Guardian of their child and agreeing to see that the child is in school the first of the year.

One day a month is the children's holiday. On this day their parents come for them as early as they can and take them home for the day. They must have them back by 8 o'clock in the evening. The children look forward to their holiday and if their parents are away or if there is any other reason why they cannot go home, they are very disappointed, even though they knew they will get their holiday the first opportunity. The only time they really forfeit a holiday is in punishment if they run away. This does not happen very often but occasionally when they are disciplined they disappear, but are always brought back.

This is a typical day at the Indian School. I do not live there but as nearly as I can remember it being told to me, I will tell you.

The rising bell goes at 6.35 and the girls who are on duty in the kitchen must be up and doing. Breakfast is at 7.45 and Mr. Staley always takes breakfast duty himself. Morning prayers are held then. After breakfast there are the dishes, making the beds and tidying the dormitories. Certain children are assigned to these tasks. School is called at 9 and runs till 12. Dinner is at 12.15, then, except for the kitchen girls, the children are free till school at 1.30. After school, the girls are taken for a walk, or play games under supervision of one of the lady members of the staff. The boys are free to roam where they wish until the

5 o'clock bell rings for milking time. Supper is at 6 and from then till bedtime (7,30 for the wee ones and 8,30 for the rest in winter and a half hour later in summer) they all play. These are the summer hours. In the winter it is a little later for everything.

Most of the big girls go to school only half a day. They work in the laundry, the kitchen, the sewing-room and in the house-keeping departments. They remain in one department for two months and then change. In this way they get a fairly rounded out training. In the afternoon they attend school. Only a few boys necessary to do the farm work are out of school.

The Indian children are rather sweet singers and except for a lisp in their words can hold their own with white children. A year ago they were entered in the Musical Festival in Calgary and took, I think, a second and two thirds, grading over 80% in all their entries. They form the choir of the church here.

The children are very interested in sports. The boys have an excellent hockey team and are very successful in playing outside teams. They also play baseball. The girls have a basketball team and play against outside teams also. They have one point against them and that is, they are all so short. They play softball also, but are not exceptionally speedy!

Every spring the boys stage a miniature Calgary Stampede. The stamped grounds are about half a mile west of the school, and after they have practised about a month, they stage the show. They have a judges' box, which also serves as the Announcer's stand. There are corrals and chutes all numbered correctly, and I wish you could see the bucking horses that plunge out of the chutes when the gates are open. Really it is better than the actual thing. The branches are the big boys and the little fellows are the riders. They ride with only a rope and get some truly ~~that~~ wicked spills, but you never hear a whimper. Then the wild calf roping is equally good. The ~~the~~ little ones are the calves and the older boys have to rope and tie them in a stated time. Some of the calves are pretty slick and lead the ropers a merry race! I couldn't resist telling you of this. It shows you where the boys' interest lies.

The girls have been in C.G.I.T. since last February 1932, and won recognition in five months last year. This year I am not so sure. We have been terribly interrupted this spring. If you watch your Canadian Girl, you will one of these days see the story of our Mother and Daughter Banquet at which Miss Gilheoley was present. We have just completed about six weeks of beadwork for the members of the Calgary Girls' Council. These girls do lovely beadwork and use no pattern. They make their own designs and do much better work if they are not interfered with.

These children get a great deal of religious training, as they take it in school to a certain extent. Much of their memory ~~work~~ work is from the Bible. There is an organized Sunday School, with eight classes and Prayers are held every morning and night.

The school children are very happy as a rule. Certainly one does not find the quarrelling here that one finds among white children. The little children are very good at amusing themselves and are usually much more contented doing that than if they were made to take part in organized

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games. The older girls always seem to have some sewing or beadwork of their own to do. They make dresses and shirts for their little brothers and sisters on the Reserve. Even the little girls can make tiny mossbags and teepees exactly like the big ones.

All the Indian children are extremely likeable. If one only remembers that they are human as we are and are real children one cannot help loving them. If any of you ever have an opportunity to visit Morley do not refrain from doing so. You will always find a welcome.