

ing in the air and under water is just a scientific matter with you; for many of our more ignorant people these things take on a semi-supernatural aspect.

After a little while, however, things began to take shape in the confused minds of the Indians. Our old men who had seen fighting in the old days were very much against our nation joining in it. They did all they could possibly do to discourage enlistment of their young men, not because they were disloyal, but because they shrank from seeing a thing happen which never happened before, or that an Indian should go and lay his bones to mingle with a soil that is not Canadian. Furthermore, it did not seem to them as if it were altogether England's quarrel, and much less did they think it was Canada's quarrel. England was only helping other nations and not fighting for her own life. "If our own land were attacked," they said, "it would then be up to every man of us to go, but not to this one."

Their gospel of discretion went to the winds. Youth is youth the world around, and we read in the Government report that over 4,000 Indians enlisted for active service with the C.E.F. This number represents approximately 35 per cent. of the Indian male population of military age in the nine provinces, and it must be remembered moreover that there were undoubtedly cases of Indian enlistment which were not reported to the Government. The Indian soldiers gave an excellent account of themselves at the front, and to quote the Minister of the Interior, "their officers have commended them most highly for their courage, intelligence, efficiency, stamina and discipline. In daring and intrepidity they were second to none, and their performance is a ringing rebuttal to the familiar assertion that the Red Man has deteriorated in spirit." The fine record of the Indians in the Great War appears in a peculiarly favourable light when it is remembered that their services were absolutely voluntary, as they were specially exempted from the operation of the Military Service Act, and that they were prepared to give their lives for their country without being compelled to do so or even the fear of compulsion. Furthermore it must be borne in mind that a large part of the Indian population is located in remote and inaccessible locations, are unacquainted with the English language and were therefore not in a position to understand the character of the war, its cause and effect. It is therefore a remarkable fact that the percentage of enlistments among them is fully equal to that among other sections of the community and indeed far above the average in a number of instances. As an inevitable result of the large enlistments among them and of their share in the thick of the fighting the casualties among them were very heavy, and the Indians, in common with their fellow countrymen of the white race, must mourn the loss of their most promising young men.

A few general remarks here I may make as an indication of what I am aiming at. The battalion which should interest us most in the West in this connection is the 107th Battalion, commanded by the late Lieut.-Colonel Glen Campbell of Winnipeg, formerly Chief Inspector of Indian Agencies. More than 500 Indians were on the roll of this pioneer battalion. There were in it Crees, Salteaux and Sioux from the North and West, Mohawks, Onondagas, Suscararas, Delawares and Chippewas of Ontario, and Micmacs from the Maritime Provinces. The Indian com-