

which, from what I have been given to understand, are decreasing to a great extent, this being due mainly to disease of one kind or another. We are all aware that practically every disease to which the white man is subject deals more harshly with the Indian when it attacks him than it does with the white race, probably because the Indian has not become as immune, during a long period of years, as is the white man to such disease. One disease in particular which has been attacking the Indians at the head of the lakes and also in British Columbia, where I understand the Indians are also decreasing in numbers, is tuberculosis. I have watched the progress of these people at the head of the lakes for the last thirty years, and I know that they have been decreasing in numbers to a very large extent from this cause. There are other diseases, of course, which levy a heavy toll on them, even including the comparatively mild disease of measles; and there is another unfortunate evil from which they suffer, which is not perhaps exactly a disease but rather an injurious habit which they have acquired. I refer to the use by the Indians of alcohol. I mention this fact because I fear we have not perhaps been doing enough to protect the Indians against themselves, so far particularly as diseases are concerned. I remember that in conversation once with a Jesuit priest, who lived among the Indians, he told me that they were healthier both physically and morally before they became associated with white people. I believe he was telling the exact truth. The point I wish to make is this. While I understand from the deputy minister that a certain amount of educational propaganda is carried on amongst the Indians to inculcate some of the hygienic laws with a view to preventing tuberculosis or at least the most common forms of consumption, and while through the missionaries of different religious denominations in this country the Indians are being acquainted with the harmful effects of alcohol upon themselves especially—for they are affected to a greater extent by it than are most other races—, at the same time I feel that perhaps we might increase our efforts to educate these people to the importance of protecting themselves, more particularly against tuberculosis. It is important that we should teach them the means to prevent this disease to as great an extent as they possibly can. So far as alcohol is concerned, after all the laws of most provinces, if not of all, protect the Indians, to some extent at least, against the alcoholic evil, so that they can obtain liquor only illegally. As regards tuberculosis, however, while there is a con-

[Mr. Manion.]

tinuous campaign being waged against the disease among the Indians, even in their own dialects, still we might do more for them than is now done. The Indians are really a very inoffensive people in Canada. In the past, it is true, in the early history of the country, they were rather aggressive; but today I think, speaking at least of the Indians whom I have met, and I have grown up in their midst, so to speak, practically in all relations of life they are much less offensive citizens of this country, if they may be so termed, than are the white men. It is for that reason, therefore, that I urge upon the minister the question of considering more active propaganda to be carried on, in whatever ways the deputy minister and the different officials of the department may deem advisable, to educate the Indians to take better care of their health. But there are other reasons besides humanitarian for undertaking work of this kind. For example, there is the point of view of the picturesqueness of Indian life in this country. I believe that the Indian life of Canada is of value to the Canadian people, particularly to those people in this country who have come from lands where Indians, the people we understand that word to designate, have not existed. I wish therefore to impress upon the minister the value that there is in preserving to the people of this country the Indians whom we now have amongst us. They are, as I have said, of an inoffensive character, and from the humanitarian point of view, if, from no other reason, I think we should do more than we are doing at present to take care of them. I think that with a little more money expended in this direction than we are now devoting to the Indians we could protect them against diseases of various kinds; and I should be glad if the minister and the officers of his department would take such steps as would prove in the best interests not only of the Indians themselves but of the people of the country as a whole.

Mr. McBRIDE: I have no complaint to make on behalf of the Indians regarding the minister, but rather I wish to thank him and his deputy for the way in which they have treated the Indians, particularly in the vicinity in which I live. Last year I spoke to the minister and his deputy with reference to the school at Kamloops, which was in a dilapidated condition. That school would have been built years ago had it not been for the war. The minister and his deputy came to the district and visited the reserve last summer. They looked fully into the matter, went through the old school, and were at once convinced