

to see this country grow and rear an adequate structure on the large foundations it is laying down must be in the negative. Our officials must be vigilant and critical, and especially solicitous that bonuses are not paid except for the classes whose immigration is specially desirable, but we cannot hold them responsible for things that no human vigilance can guard against.

### THE IMMIGRATION QUESTION.

In discharging the Grand Jury at Brampton Chief Justice Sir William Meredith had something to say with regard to the admission to this country of an undesirable class of immigrants. A physician had told him that over sixty per cent. of the people "being dumped into this country" are of an exceedingly low mentality and of the degenerated type. His remarks were elicited in connection with the trial of the man Tearse, who is unquestionably an undesirable. It is a long step from a particular case to a statement that over sixty per cent. of the people coming here are of the above description. We should say that Sir William himself must have felt that his informant's statement was an exaggeration. Being repeated by a distinguished man, it will undoubtedly challenge attention.

The criticism of the Chief Justice does not stand alone. Whenever one of the newly-arrived gets into trouble of any kind there is at once a good deal of moralizing on the general shortcomings of our new citizens. There can be no quarrel with such an attitude. We are bound to be vigilant as to the sort of people we are permitting to land on our shores. Unfortunately there is a tendency to jump from criticisms of this kind to the general conclusion that immigration of any kind is objectionable. Such a conclusion, if it had any influence on the Government's immigration policy, could not help but be harmful. It is a matter capable of proof that no small part of the progress and expansion of the past few years is due to the success which crowned the efforts of Mr. Sifton and those of his successor, Mr. Oliver, to attract immigration to Canada. When the Conservative party left office one of the facts that made observers doubtful of the future of the country was the failure of all the efforts to attract immigrants. There was little use in expending large sums in the building of railways and in the opening up and surveying of new lands if there was no one desirous of coming in to occupy them. Every indication by which a young country takes stock of its progress was discouraging. The Government reports of that day declared that: "The whole number of arrivals of immigrants at the ports of Quebec, Halifax, St. John and Montreal, during the year 1896, was 25,478, as compared with 25,788 for the previous year, a decrease of 310. Of the numbers arriving in 1896, 16,835 declared their intention of becoming residents of the Dominion, whereas 18,799 made this declaration in 1895." For the nine months ending March 31, 1907, the number of arrivals was 124,667, and for the preceding twelve months 189,064.

Next to the immigration statistics as matter for foreboding were the figures of the homestead entries in the West. The year the Conservatives came into office, 1879, the homestead entries were 4,068, and in their last year the entries had declined to 1,857. From the first year of Liberal administration they began to improve, until in 1906 they totalled 41,869.

Could there be more striking evidences of the success of Liberal administration? And the very corner-stone and foundation of this success has been the promotion of immigration. To such a pitch of success have we come that, as one of our Australian agents has said, where we formerly begged for immigrants we now pick them. The phrase is not beyond the mark. With the increase of the tide the rules and regulations have become more strict and searching, and that tendency will undoubtedly proceed to higher and still higher tests. Now that our prayers are answered, however, there is in certain quarters a proneness to turn up the nose. Wherever a new-comer misbehaves himself or fails to fit at once into the specifications of the western world there is often a fulmination against immigration generally, and without discrimination. Does anyone think it possible that 190,000 immigrants can come in without some misfits slipping in with the mass? Under no system that it is possible for human beings to enforce can the admission of some undesirables be avoided. Is the whole stream to be stopped because of this disability? The answer to this question of those who want