

## FOREIGN ELEMENTS AND CRIME

From Winnipeg comes the unwelcome announcement of record-breaking criminal dockets for the Fall Assizes in the four judicial districts of the Prairie Province. This is the last thing to be expected in a Canadian farming community, and it emphasizes one of the evils we are courting by the encouragement of foreign immigration. There are almost a dozen charges of murder to be tried, and they are represented in every judicial district, although Winnipeg has the great majority. It is estimated that about seventy indictments will be presented to the Grand Jury in that city, the great majority being of a serious nature. This record is not emphasized to reflect in any way on the Prairie Province, nor to insinuate that the people in the West are in any respect less law-abiding than in Ontario or any of the older Provinces. But it is well to draw attention to one result of the crowding in of foreigners, who form their own local colonies and transplant their language, customs, motives, and habits of thought to the freer atmosphere of the Dominion.

Some of the criminals who make up this record have drifted from across the border. In one murder charge it is claimed that the prisoner came to Canada to carry out a plot. But the majority of the crimes are due to the presence of the foreign element. It is a mistake actively to encourage foreigners of low political and social life to come to the Dominion, for it is certain to attract the most dependent classes. If such people are let alone the best informed and most enterprising among them will seek new homes. We should choose the policy that brings the best, not the worst. We should rigidly exclude criminals, imbeciles, and all who are likely to become public charges, and should let the natural enterprise of the others furnish us with their best citizenship. It would be far better to delay settlement for a generation than to people the West with elements that will retain for many generations an inheritance of low criminality and political incompetence.