

WHY THE SLUMS EXIST.

DR. P. H. BRYCE OF OTTAWA AT THE EMPIRE CLUB.

Greed of Landlords and Weakness of Municipal Authorities Responsible for Slumdom—Care in Admission of Immigrants.

Referring to the inrush of immigrants with their consequent building, first, small houses on the suburbs and then making good homes for themselves, Dr. P. H. Bryce, Ottawa, speaking at the Empire Club yesterday afternoon, proceeded to show that these home-builders were British in origin and British in ideas, who would become, as they now are, splendid citizens, loyal to Canada and loyal to the empire. During the past year 7,000 Italians and 4,000 other foreigners had come into Ontario, and many of them doubtless had settled in Toronto. These foreigners were not responsible for the slums. An inquiry into the slum conditions in some of the United States cities had led one great authority on the subject to declare that the slums are due not so much to foreigners as, first, to the avarice of the landlords, and, secondly, to the incapacity of the municipal authorities. It, therefore, became necessary for Toronto citizens of all classes to unite and work for the elimination of existing slums and the prevention of the creation of others. He read from the reports of Chicago housing conditions to show that, owing to the desire of land-owners to crowd as many houses or tenement buildings as possible on their property, and the weakness of the municipal authorities in failing to regulate the space for buildings, their height and other matters, overcrowded conditions now existed in Chicago, New York and other cities. Toronto had an excellent building by-law, which, if thoroughly carried out, would prevent the creation of slums and gradually eliminate any now existing. There should be added to the by-law a clause clearly defining the number of people who should be allowed to sleep in a certain clearly defined cubic feet area. He gave several instances of serious overcrowding in Chicago and elsewhere and urged that in the best interests of the health of the people as well as their morals steps should be taken to prevent such conditions arising in Canadian cities.