

# NATURALIZATION LAW.

## NEW REGULATION CAUSE OF SOME INCONVENIENCE.

### Aliens Settled in Remote Districts Compelled to Make a Long Journey to the County Court Clerk's Office to Sign the Certificate Required by the Colonial Office.

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

Winnipeg, July 23.—An alteration has been made in the procedure for naturalization, which entails more trouble and expense on the subject than is apparent from a superficial consideration of its nature. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has represented to the Canadian Government that difficulties have arisen "as regards the identity of persons naturalized in the colonies applying for passports in London with the person named in the certificate of naturalization." He suggested, therefore, that it would be of great assistance "if certificates contained the authenticated signature of the holder."

Acting on this, the Department of the Secretary of State for Canada recently issued an instruction to Clerks of County Courts that in future no certificate be delivered to any naturalized alien without the same having been signed by him in the margin in the Clerk's presence, and also signed by the Clerk as witness. The home Government's suggestion was made, no doubt, for very good reasons. International obligations demand a certain amount of responsibility, and it is important that a naturalized subject should be in a position to readily prove his identity. This could, perhaps, be more easily done through his signature. All that would have to be done would be to see that his signature, made in the presence of an official, corresponded with that on the certificate, which, under the previously existing practice did not appear thereon. Applicants for naturalization had simply to take the oath of allegiance before a commissioner, who wrote in the applicant's name, and forwarded the document to the Clerk of the County Court. If it was in order, a certificate was issued at the next sitting of the court and sent by mail to the applicant, no matter where he resided. The person asking for naturalization generally acted through a solicitor.

No man can be naturalized until he has been here three years, and he cannot obtain a patent for his homestead until he becomes naturalized. So the two generally go together. The homesteader gets his certificate, and then his patent. But, in order to get that certificate, he will under the new rule have to go to the office of the County Court Clerk of the division, which is sometimes 100 miles off. He will have to incur an expense which he is often not in a position to bear, for the homesteader is a struggling man, and has as much as he can do to "turn the corner" during his first three years. Foreigners are generally settled in outlying parts, and will feel the full hardship of the long journey to the Clerk's office. For instance, those north of Lake Manitoba will have to come to West Selkirk. Those engaged in the work say there should certainly be some other way out of the difficulty. Probably not more than one in a thousand ever desires to return to his native land, and it is regarded as unfair that the ~~900~~ should be put to all this expense, trouble and loss of time because of the one. It has been suggested that on leaving Canada the traveller should be required to sign before the County Court Clerk, in the presence of a witness who can swear that he is the person referred to in the certificate. Then, when he appeared in London, there would be a signature by which he can be identified.

Complaints have already been made of the new regulation. Foreigners cannot understand why they should have to go to the office of the Clerks of the County Court. An additional point is that a great many never sign at all, simply using a mark, their name being filled in by another. In such cases the new regulation will have no possible virtue.