

THE IMMIGRANTS AND CANADA.

Disquieting reflections are born of the reports from Montreal that a movement is being organized there with a view to assisting the immigration of large numbers of oppressed Polish Jews. It is said that the financial side of the proposition will be handled by those who have initiated or become interested in it, and that it is not intended to ask the Government for monetary or any other material assistance. Such a scheme may have many good points, but it is also fraught with difficulties and positive dangers to this country that should be fully and carefully considered before any further steps are taken toward its consummation. No one who possesses any sympathy for his fellowmen could be indifferent to the sufferings of an oppressed people anywhere. But it would not be a sign of callousness on the part of Canadians if their first thought on hearing of plans for immigration from southeastern or central Europe on a huge scale should be of the effect it would have on the present safety and future development of the Dominion. This is particularly important, since it is the case that many of these people do not settle on the land but crowd into already congested areas of the cities.

Without disparagement of any race, it nevertheless is true that the pernicious doctrine of the "Red" has permeated every section of the community in large areas of Europe, where it carries on its propaganda by fire, sword, and a legislative terrorism no less cruel. Unfortunately Canada is not altogether free of the "Red" element. If it were possible and allowable to bring into this country masses of poor and persecuted people who were ignorant of our language and customs, they would constitute favorable fields for the sowing of obnoxious seed by propagandists and agitators who would like to introduce the rule of the "Red" in the Dominion.

It is not argued that the mere act of barring out European immigrants would be the best policy for Canada to follow as a safeguard against the spread of doctrines dangerous to the individual and the State. This country needs all the people it can get who are willing to work, especially on the land, and who are anxious to become good citizens. That should be the real test of fitness for newcomers, whether of free or oppressed races. Nothing else matters a great deal. If the heads of families or the adult members thereof from European countries are anxious to settle in this Dominion they should be equally desirous of attaining a standard of citizenship in keeping with the aspirations of the majority of the Canadian people. They are not worthy of admission to the full rights of citizenship if by the time they are legally entitled to apply for their papers they have not fitted themselves to read a little English and to give plain answers in that tongue to simple questions on citizenship. To their children the State owes it as a duty to see that opportunity is given for the acquiring of an education with English as its basis. In the past there has been too much concentration on the idea of getting immigrants, and too little on the necessity of seeing to it that from publications printed in foreign languages they shall not imbibe views concerning their obligations to the State that might be harmful to Canada. Nor has there been insistence enough upon their children starting their education in schools where English is taught. It is never too late to mend, even in nation planning and building.

There is room in Canada for millions more people, but there can be no hardship to anyone in the adoption of a policy requiring that the newcomers shall, as far as regulation, legislation, and education can make them, become Canadian citizens in spirit as well as in name.