

*Immigration Act*

speech, religion, thought and action, the right to vote as you choose and the right to be secure in your possessions. The obligations of citizenship are set forth clearly in the oath administered to each potential citizen. Each newcomer repeats the oath of citizenship, repeating the words in groups of 7 or 8, phrase by phrase as pronounced by the judge of the court. The oath sworn is:

I swear to be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successors according to law, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfil my duties as a Canadian citizen, so help me God.

There is nothing automatic about the privilege of uttering this oath and receiving the prized certificate of citizenship. The process of induction really starts in the country of origin, where immigration and visa officers of Canada make a careful selection from among those desiring to enter this country. Before the prospective citizen appears in court for the swearing-in ceremony and the granting of a certificate of citizenship there are procedures designed to check on the suitability of the candidate. I might say here that the department told me that less than 2 per cent of the immigrants who apply for citizenship papers are rejected.

An officer of the court is assigned to assist the applicant in making out a detailed form in two copies, one of which is posted so that any member of the public may make objection if he wishes, and the other sent to Ottawa for scrutiny. Name, place of birth, occupation, arrival in Canada, places of residence since landing, periods outside the country, ability in languages, intention of domicile, are all covered in detail in the application.

The applicant must disclose "if you have been confined in, or an inmate of any penitentiary, gaol, reformatory, prison or asylum for the insane in Canada." The marital status of the applicant is checked, together with children and their ages. A careful description is given and "your applicant humbly prays for a decision that he is a fit and proper person to be granted a certificate of citizenship".

After a lapse of three months, as required by law, the applicant is called back to be examined by the judge of the court, who must be satisfied about the fitness of the petitioner for citizenship. The judge goes into such matters as residence within the past year, legal domicile, service in the armed forces, if any, lawful admittance into Canada, character of applicant, his knowledge of the English or the French language, and whether the petitioner has "an adequate knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of Canadian citizenship."

[Mr. MacKenzie.]

The judge of the court then affixes his signature, approving or rejecting the candidate, with any remarks and observations he may care to make. This copy of the application—the second—is then sent to Ottawa. The citizenship branch at Ottawa completes its investigations and, if the petition for citizenship is granted, a numbered certificate is made out and sent to the court.

The prospective citizen is then notified to appear for the swearing-in ceremony, this being the final goal of his efforts. The complete ceremony requires about an hour. The newcomers first have the procedure explained to them by the clerk of the court, who then calls up the judge who presides at the oath-taking. Both the clerk and the judge usually speak in English and then in French. The potential citizens in the oath-taking procedure place their right hands on the Bible.

At each sitting of the court it is the practice to have a representative of one of a large number of voluntary associations, interested in promoting the welfare of immigrants, speak briefly. It is important that immigrants be integrated into community life. Community organizations thus have an important role to play in fostering good citizenship among newcomers as well as among the native-born. The concluding event at each sitting of the citizenship court is an address of welcome to the newly inducted citizens by the judge of the court, who points to the significance of the occasion and expresses the hope that prosperity and all the other accomplishments of a full life will be theirs.

I sometimes wonder why the new Canadians who are domiciled here for five years in many cases at least are a little reluctant to make out their applications for citizenship. I have here a letter which I received recently from one of the county court judges, from which I should like to read just one paragraph. He says:

I have for years felt that we as a whole do not take sufficient interest in the welfare of our new Canadians, nor do we outwardly indicate our desire to be of assistance to them. Our naturalization courts on the whole are too cold and lack the personal interest and concern in the well-being of our new citizens.

I sometimes wonder whether our own Canadian citizens are too modest in acclaiming our own land, its opportunities, its privileges and the benefits they enjoy in it. I must confess that I sometimes think we Canadians seem to be in an apologetic mood for the fact that we were born in Canada and that we are Canadians. As a matter of fact, I must confess that I myself had to go to a foreign land in order fully to appreciate the value of Canadian citizenship and what it meant to me.