

our part. I do not think we need to disturb ourselves by a comparison between the volume of immigration to the United States and the volume to Canada. If our friends will undertake to make an analysis of the figures, they will find that out of a total immigration to the United States last year of 648,743, there were only 8,168 farmers, and 80,562 farm labourers. Practically all the rest were mechanics and labourers of the common class, people who congregate in cities, and cannot in any sense of the word be held to be persons who will become producers and citizens of a valuable class.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. Does the hon. gentleman know how many homesteads were taken up in the United States last year?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I have not got the figures by me, but I believe a very large number. But if my hon. friend will look at the records he will see that while it is quite true that a large number of homesteads have been taken up in the United States during the last year, they were nearly all taken by natives of the United States, or by persons who were residents of the United States for some years, not by persons who have come in during late years as immigrants.

Mr. COCHRANE. How does the minister know that?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I know it from an examination of the facts I made some time ago. But hon. gentlemen understand that I will not undertake to give exact details from memory at this moment. While I am discussing this point, let me call attention to the fact that out of this total of 648,000 people who went to the United States last year, no less than 178,375 were Italians. Members of the committee who follow these matters at all understand well to what class of people these 178,000 Italians belong. I may say that for myself I have taken special pains that our agents should understand that this particular class of immigration shall not be encouraged to come to Canada. These people are unskilled labourers, a class of people who will not become agriculturists, and who will not live anywhere permanently except in cities. They do rough labour at times, but they drift back to the cities and reside there permanently. If an examination of the returns of the United States is made it will be seen that there is no reason at all that the Dominion of Canada should feel uneasy on account of that comparison.

Turning to our own immigration we find that we have had altogether, according to our exact returns, a total immigration of 121,631 people, and when some miscellaneous returns from outlying districts that have not yet been received come in, they will give a total of 125,000 people. Of these

Hon. Mr. SIFTON.

41,787 were British, 37,891 miscellaneous nationalities, and 41,953 came from the United States. In round numbers we received 125,000 people; and our records show that during the last year, during the twelve months within which we received that 125,000 people, we recorded over 31,000 homestead entries, showing that if the same proportion as last year be maintained in regard to the number of entries made by Canadians as compared with new immigrants we would have about 22,000 homestead entries made by immigrants as compared with 125,000 immigrants of all classes, during the year. It will be seen that 22,000 entries made for farms by new settlers in a year is a large proportion for 125,000 souls. It is a very considerable proportion especially when we remember that there are certain classes of these immigrants who do not take up homesteads at all, but who have come here for the purpose of farming on a large scale and who, in many cases, purchase land upon which they intend to reside. It will be seen that our position in that respect is not unsatisfactory.

Mr. CLARKE. Has the hon. gentleman any tables or statistical statements showing the percentage of illiteracy of those coming?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. No, I do not think we have that information.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. They are keeping track of that carefully in the United States.

Mr. CLARKE. They keep a record of that in the United States. The hon. minister was making comparisons of the quality of the immigration we are receiving in Canada with that which is going into the United States. The United States officials make very elaborate tabulated statements as to illiteracy, nationality and so on. I want to know if the hon. minister is following that practice.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I do not think there is any record kept in regard to the question of the literacy or illiteracy of the immigrants coming in. As far as I am aware there has never been a record kept of these facts.

Mr. CLARKE. In view of the large amount of foreign immigration coming in would it not be well in future to keep a record showing the percentage of illiterates and the different nationalities?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. It might be. It is quite worthy of consideration. A point has been made in the discussion in regard to which I desire to say a word or two respecting the necessity or desirability of doing immigration work in the older parts of the Dominion. I expressed my views last night upon the question pretty clearly, but there is one phase of it to which I did not refer and in regard to which possibly a word or two may not be amiss. I am per-