

As to knowledge of our rights and responsibilities as citizens, it is more difficult to set a standard; but it was considered that some knowledge of our history, geography and form of government should be required.

Not long ago I received a letter from a Judge in the West asking my opinion as to the suitability of a woman who had applied for citizenship. "She has raised a fine family" he said, "Some of whom served overseas with our forces, but she has little knowledge of our historical or political background."

I need scarcely say that I replied that in my opinion the woman had proved her qualifications as a good citizen far more effectively than if she had trained herself to recognize the names and faces of all our politicians.

A minimum standard is set more as a guide than as an actual measure, and it is of assistance not only to our Judges but also to the Citizenship Branch.

Our Act empowers the Secretary of State "to take measures to provide facilities to enable applicants to receive instruction". At the same time, it must be recognized that under the provisions of the British North America Act, education is a prerogative of the Provinces - and some of the Provinces are exceedingly touchy on what they consider to be any intrusion on Provincial rights!

As a first step in providing instruction in Citizenship the problem was taken up with the Canadian Education Council, a body which has in its membership representatives of all the Provincial Departments of Education.

That body considered the best methods of providing a common standard of training throughout the country, and appointed a special committee to study and report on the subject.

A few weeks ago, a joint meeting was held in Montreal - called at my suggestion by the Canadian Citizenship Council - at which 92 national and local organizations including the Canadian Legion, Labour, Chambers of Commerce, Womens organizations and many others were represented. A strong and representative Council was set up, under the Chairmanship of General Crerar.

This Council, which is representative of a wide cross section of our national life, will not only do what it can to co-ordinate the work of the Dominion and the Provinces, but also encourage national and local organizations to undertake their share of Citizenship training.

I would not like to have it assumed that up to the present little or nothing has been done, as great efforts have already been made, and with considerable success in some localities, to assist our newcomers; but the facilities available to-day are by no means sufficient to meet the need.

Pamphlets have been prepared to assist immigrants, and these are being printed in many languages.