

PREFACE

A GREAT deal has been said and much has been written regarding the great national task of assimilating the thousands who have come to settle in Canada from various lands across the seas. There seems to be a too prevalent idea that each and every male and female new-comer may, irrespective of age, after being subjected to some more or less indefinable process, which we call "assimilation," enter the ranks of full-fledged Canadian citizenship. After three years of residence here the foreigner becomes "naturalized," is given the franchise, and over his shoulders the toga of Canadian citizenship is thrown.* His qualifications in other respects are not for a moment considered. It matters not whether he can utter a single word of the English language. It matters not what are his ideas of the Canadian system of government. He must become a "citizen" before he can get a patent for his homestead, and thousands have eagerly signed their "crosses" in order to obtain patents for their quarter sections. Thus are they made

* Since January 1, 1918, five years' residence, an "adequate knowledge" of English or French, and a good moral character, are required before Canadian and Imperial citizenship is granted.