

451. The number of immigrants reported by the agents and by the Custom houses may be taken to be correct as far as they go, but there are not any means of ascertaining with accuracy the arrivals and departures from and to the United States. Where there is such a long line of open frontier, there must always be a considerable movement of population on both sides, of which it is impossible to obtain any record. The nearest possible approximation would be to obtain a record of the *ins* and the *outs* on the principal routes of travel, the differences between which would be the net immigration or emigration, as the case may be.

Difficulty  
of obtain-  
ing correct  
returns.

452. It is only possible to form a general idea of the numbers that yearly settle in each Province ; the agents have no means at their command by which they can follow the immigrants after they once leave the agency, and the subsequent movements of many would probably considerably alter the figures given. The greatest care is taken by the Department and by the agents, that all the returns shall be as accurate as possible, but the only ones that can be thoroughly relied on, except the entries at Custom houses, which are a registration by names, are those of arrivals at the principal sea ports, as Quebec and Halifax, which are also a registration by names and callings, from the ships' passenger lists. No distinction is made in British Columbia between passengers and immigrants, and the figures for that Province can only be arrived at by estimation. The numbers of immigrants reported by the several agents, while correct in themselves, are subject to subsequent unascertainable movements, and should, therefore, be taken as approximate. The figures from which the totals for the Dominion are made up, are those supplied by the agents at the various points of entrance, and are, therefore, of course, liable to similar alterations, for while a record is kept of all immigrants arriving, no account is taken of those emigrating from the country.

Immigra-  
tion re-  
turns.