

to become a public charge the Collector of Customs might exact a bond of \$300 from the master of the ship to reimburse the country for any expenses on his behalf incurred during the following three years.

The most significant innovation was, perhaps, the prohibition of the landing of indigents or paupers unless the master of the ship deposited funds sufficient for the temporary assistance and travel to destination of such immigrant. This provision was not applied until 1879-80, but it contained the principle of exclusion.

Succeeding Acts and Regulations in 1886, 1902, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909 and 1910 extended both the protective and restrictive provisions. Among the more significant developments may be mentioned the requirement of a sum of money as a condition of entry as distinct from head taxes, and in the passage in 1891 (implemented in 1900) of an Order in Council permitting the prohibition of all pauper immigration. An Act of 1905 made it a punishable offence to circulate, in a country outside Canada, false representations intended to encourage or prevent immigration into Canada. Prohibited classes were elaborated in several categories, chiefly medical, in the Act of 1906 and in the Act of 1910 and remain substantially the same today. In 1906 also the immigration of foreigners under contract to perform labour in Canada was prohibited.

#### RESTRICTIONS RELATING TO ASSIMILABILITY

What was probably the first Canadian expression of concern regarding the assimilability of immigrants was the protest of the Nova Scotia Assembly in 1815 addressed to the British Government against bringing in additional negroes from Bermuda. It was stated that "the proportion of Africans already in this country is productive of many inconveniences; and (that) the introduction of more must tend to the discouragement of white labourers and servants, as well as to the establishment of a separate and marked class of people, unfitted by nature to this climate, or to an association with the rest of His Majesty's Colonists".\*

It may be of interest also that the first examination of immigrants on political grounds was applied not to overseas migrants but to Americans. In 1794, after the American Revolution, Commissioners were appointed and given discretionary powers to examine at the border and reject those who seemed unlikely to become loyal and suitable settlers.

When during the latter part of the 19th century the racial and ethnic composition of immigration began to change, doubts developed regarding the assimilability of certain newcomers and the economic and social consequences that might result from too drastic a change in the character of the Canadian people. Chinese immigrants arrived in British Columbia in the 1870's and from 1885 onward they were made subject to increasingly heavy head taxes until 1927 when, with the passage of the Chinese Immigration Act, they were virtually excluded. Japanese immigration began in 1896, chiefly to British Columbia, and was made subject to a series of 'gentlemen's agreements' from 1908 onward which restricted the number of such immigrants until an agreement in 1928 limited entry to 150 yearly. A few thousand East-Indians arrived during the first decade of this century and they too were made subject to head taxes. Their near exclusion was finally effected by an Order in Council under the Act of 1910 which provided that any immigrant who came to Canada otherwise than by a continuous journey from the country of which he was a native or citizen might be excluded. An Order in Council in 1919 created a general excluded class of immigrants deemed undesirable because of climatic, industrial, social, educational, labour or other conditions or requirements of Canada or deemed undesirable because of their customs, habits, modes of life and methods of holding property and their probable inability to become readily assimilated. Since 1923 the restriction on negroes has been effected by limiting the term "British subject" to Commonwealth countries with predominantly white populations. Restrictions on the entry of non-white British subjects has been a difficult problem since it was thought to involve the rights of British subjects to move freely from one part of the Commonwealth to another.

\* J. S. Martell, *ibid.*