

provements and going beyond them in the field of invention.

Is it to be expected, then, that the Japanese workman, for so long held down to a low standard of subsistence, will remain there? On the contrary, the effort to use, to adopt, to discover better contrivances and processes arises, on the whole, from a new desire—the desire to get better and easier subsistence and all the things that belong to the ideals of Western civilization.

Nothing is of more common remark among observant Japanese than this. Not only does the Japanese gentleman endeavor to obtain, for instance, the household conveniences and luxuries of occidental civilization, but the Japanese workman, under the stimulus of the new political and industrial aspirations, strives to give his family better and more varied food; while the country girl, going into a mill or factory and getting what, to her and her people, are munificent wages, puts more or better ornaments in her hair, and in place of cotton obi (outside sash or girdle) she wears a silk one.

And with these new aspirations have come—in the larger cities, at least—an increase in wages. In the building trades in Tokyo, for instance, wages during the past nine or ten years have doubled. And this is so in some other lines.

But with the new standard of living and the rise in wages has come a new cost of living. This is owing to the same monopoly and taxation causes that are operating in the United States.

In the United States the increasing difficulty of getting a living required by an advancing standard and the industrial depressions that occur have resulted in the formation, defensively and offensively, among the workmen of a larger and larger and more and more centralized trades unionism. In Japan little of this has yet appeared, owing perhaps to the long subjection of the workers, as a class, to the government, to whom they still look for direction and aid.

But, just as the rule of the Shogun and the Daimyo had to give way to that of the samurai, or gentleman soldier class, so now the ascendancy of the new commoner is beginning, and a big coal mine strike not long since and several strikes in woolen and cotton mills, with the riot here in Tokyo over an increase of half a cent in street railroad fares, show the signs of class or trade organization, or at any rate, of harmonious action.

But, curious as it may seem, the first effort at trades union organization, as we know it, has proved a failure in Japan. It occurred within recent years, when the demand for laborers was increasing and wages were on the rise. As we know in the United States, during a period of industrial prosperity is not the time when unions recruit, but, on the contrary, they lose in membership and fall heavily into arrears in dues. And since the majority of workers in the respective trades here could make better terms independently in the sale of their labor than was possible by united demand through a union, they lost interest in the union idea.

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They must be ready to act on the ancient principle of the English law that the nation was the ultimate owner of the soil.—Frederic Harrison.

## RESTRICTION OF IMMIGRATION.

### For The Public.

At the last session of Congress the question of immigration was revived. Congress was called upon to enact laws more restrictive than the ones now in force. Its failure to comply with the demand would have been complimentary to the legislators but for the fact that the enactment of the new law was delayed for partisan reasons.

It is, however, well worth while to review both the causes advanced for the necessity of restriction and the manner in which the restriction was proposed to be secured.

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It has been claimed that immigrants coming to this country from Europe add largely to the number of inmates of the prisons, workhouses and poor-houses. In other words, the immigrants are criminal, vicious, improvident or incapable. If this be true, there can be no reasonable criticism of restrictive legislation, for a nation has a natural right to self-protection, and it would not be desirable to invite an addition of such elements, as the country already has got more than enough of. If we wish to meet the proposition advanced, we must consider whether it is true that the immigrants as a rule can be characterized in the manner stated.

It is, of course, evident that amongst a million men and women arriving during one year at the shores of the republic there must be some with criminal tendencies. So there are also amongst any one million native-born Americans we may please to pick out. It is true that many of the foreigners, especially those who come from southern Europe, are uneducated and illiterate. That is equally true of many American-born citizens. It is true that many of the immigrants are improvident and incapable. That, however, is not as true of them as of a majority of the very class which advocates keeping the foreigners out.

Thus we may at least conclude that as to the unfavorable qualities charged to the immigrants, they are not any worse off than are those who arrived in this country a few years earlier. It seems unreasonable to demand of the immigrants that they should be of a higher moral quality than is the native population. This, however, is a usual human shortcoming. We demand of our fellow-beings a state very near perfection before we are willing to admit that they are not inferior to ourselves.

Statistics amply prove that increase of crime is not necessarily a by-product of increasing immigration. In Massachusetts where the influx of immigrants has been very great during the last decade, the inmates in the prisons have decreased in number. This does not seem to prove the rule that the foreigners are any more viciously inclined than the native population. In fact, it would be a curious thing could it be proved that immigrants who are peaceful and industrious in their home country could be so transformed upon their arrival here. Crime is less frequent in Europe than in America, and if the immigrants show tendencies here which they did not prove to possess in Europe, the only explanation would be that the environments into which they are transplanted are more demoralizing.

Let us not just here be carried away by a feeling of false patriotism. Let us admit that in no other civilized country is there so plainly demonstrated to be one law for the rich and powerful and one for the poor and helpless. Let us not be blind to the facts daily before our eyes, that while financially important criminals may be acquitted of even the most hideous of crimes, murder, the poor man is by the same law convicted for crimes which have not been even sufficiently proved by clear evidence. If in the face of such shameful proceedings the immigrants become demoralized, as well as the population at large, they at least should not be blamed for it.

The great majority of immigrants come to this republic with hopeful determination to earn an honest living. They do not plan to come here to commit crimes. All they ask is permission to work. They are willing to fill the meanest positions. They are willing to endure hardships such as few of those who advocate their exclusion would ever dare to encounter. They exert an energy of a kind such as the man who stays forever in the country where he was born cannot fully imagine, far less appreciate. If any portion of the population exerts an influence toward progress, it is the one which has had hardships to overcome in order to secure progress for themselves.

If the immigrants do fill the poorhouses it would be cruel indeed to charge that to their lack of thrift or to their incapability to do useful work. The average foreigner has far more of a saving disposition than has the average American. What could our legislators in Congress say upon this point any way, in face of the fact of the often heard claim that no poor man can go to Congress because it is not possible for a congressman to live upon his salary of \$5,000 a year?

The charge against the foreigners for being thriftless, because three out of every thousand go to the poorhouse, is a most thoughtless and unjust accusation. Although the foreigners in this country number only about one-seventh of the population, they own one-quarter of the homes. To be sure, their homes may not have brown stone fronts, nor do they have summer cottages at Newport or in the Adirondack mountains. But then, they are to be pardoned for this, because they have usually earned by their own labor the money with which they have built their homes.

Those distinguished gentlemen who advocate the exclusion of a larger proportion of immigrants know that the charges as to criminality and thriftlessness are futile. They know that these charges were invented to serve as a cloak for the real reasons. It is easy enough to blame the immigrants for every social maladjustment. As a rule the immigrants cannot reply by stating the facts as they see them. And the soothing influence of the unwarranted charges upon the restless labor unions is remarkable. The wise politician knows that whenever the masses of the people begin to indicate tendencies to want to look into the real facts, to investigate into the actual causes for the morbid competition in the labor market, to inquire about why commodities should rise out of all proportion to wages, then it is time to divert the general dissatisfaction by blaming the influx of "cheap labor" from Europe for the whole diffi-

culty. Should this alone not suffice, he will be willing to slightly adjust the tariff so as to prevent the products of that "cheap labor" from flooding the American market. As a rule this has proved to be enough to quiet the ordinary man. But may we not hope that in the future the American citizen will not be satisfied with explanations so superficial?

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The real reason for the agitation against the immigrants is a deep and subtle one. For, although it seems evident to the superficial observer that an increase of the supply of labor must necessarily be detrimental to high wages, it cannot be denied that those who advocate restrictions are neither men influenced personally by the difficulties due to competition, nor men who have proved by previous acts that the true welfare of American workingmen lay near their hearts. Rather do they represent the interests which would be disturbed should Americans look for a deeper cause than immigration as the foundation of the industrial inequity. They represent the interests of monopoly in this country; and although the influx of cheaper European labor and a consequent increased competition in the labor market is of great value to them, still they are wisely willing to sacrifice a little of this advantage if they can only divert the public mind from an inquiry into the nature of the monopolies they possess.

The proposition that this country has not got employment for all who so far have chosen to come here is ridiculous. It is everywhere recognized that no country in Europe has so enormous natural resources as has the United States. Still the population in this country is more sparse than that of nearly all European countries, and the closest settled countries in Europe have populations ten times or more to the square mile larger than the United States. Yet it is claimed that the country is crowded. In one sense it is. It is crowded in the same sense as our cities are crowded, where homeseekers are forced to go many miles from the center of the city, while between them and the city are lying hundreds of acres vacant, unoccupied and useless to anybody, except to that parasite upon society, the land speculator, whom we have created by our inequitable laws. If the workingmen of America would inquire into the causes of the industrial maladjustment a little nearer home, and not blame their difficulties upon industrious men and women who come to these shores intending to give an honest equivalent for all they receive, they would find that, instead of being too crowded, this country is far too sparsely settled to be able to make the most advantageous use of its abundant resources.

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Having considered the futility of the claimed necessity for restricting immigration let us consider to what extent the proposed means for restriction would fill the requirements.

We must then, of course, assume that what is actually wanted is to keep out the criminal element, and that portion which would be likely by its thriftlessness to become a public burden. Both of these classes are already covered by existing legislation. The lack of earnestness on the part of those who propose new legislation for the reasons quoted above,

is therefore apparent. The comedy is still more apparent when we consider the means by which the desired end is proposed to be secured.

The main provisions are the requirement of elementary education, and the levying of a head tax, a kind of tariff on immigrants, who are thus treated as ordinary merchandise.

As to the educational test, the less said about it the better for American ears. In this country, especially in the Southern part, there is a great deal of illiteracy, and there is in all about five per cent. of the native born population over 16 years of age in this country who cannot read and write. It is not enough to say that most of these are colored. The estimate made by persons well versed upon the subject, that more than a million white men of voting age, born in America, are illiterate, is not easily refuted. Why should a test be applied to foreign-born citizens which is not applied to the native born? On the other hand, because the immigrant can read and write, that is not a proof of higher moral instincts. It is perhaps a proof of his greater capability of taking care of himself, but the immigrants who are illiterate are as a rule employed in such a class of work as does not in the least require knowledge of reading or writing. In the last place it may be added that to test the fitness of immigrants by their ability to read and write, although it may be appropriate to those coming from Southern Europe, is little short of insult when applied by the United States to those coming from the Northern European countries, if we compare the standard of elementary education in those countries with that of the United States.

If we now consider the proposed head tax, or the tariff on immigrants, the unreasonableness of the measure is equally evident if really designed to accomplish the alleged purposes. What guarantee is there that the person who can pay his admission ticket to this country is any more honest or capable than his brother who has got a few dollars less? Shall we go so far in measuring the value of men by the dollar-standard as to impose a tax on immigrants, and consider those who can pay as fit to eventually become citizens? Is it not to deviate to some extent from the maxims on which this republic was founded, to only propose such a thing?

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The very principle which has caused this whole agitation is the principle of monopoly. This principle has insinuated itself into the whole nation, until it has become an accepted axiom that this country belongs to those who incidentally happened to be born here, to the exclusion of all others. The evil of monopoly is at the root of the very sentiment which has demanded the proposed legislation.

When monopoly shall have been overthrown, such sentiments will disappear with it. Then shall again this republic be truly "a land of the free," and shall again welcome those who seek its shores. The establishment of a true democracy, where opportunity is equal to all, will make the country open to all, and there will be no crowding. There will be no infringement on anybody's rights by the admission of the equal rights of others. The establishment of such conditions in the republic should be the sole aim of American citizens, and it would be surprising

to see how many "problems" would disappear in the solution of this one: The problem of equal opportunities.

ERIK OBERG.

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## THERE IS ROOM FOR ALL.

For The Public.

There are over 2,305,913,600 acres of land in the United States. More than 28 acres for each of our 80,000,000 people. The area of Texas is over 167,865,000 acres. If every human being on the globe lived in that one State there would be less than ten persons to the acre. And yet with such vast natural resources we find involuntary poverty in this country; we find the few who have and the many who want; and those who have, own the land.

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Of men who come and will produce  
With willing hands the wealth we need,  
The wealth of merit and of use,  
And not the gold that's piled by greed;

Of men who come prepared to toll,  
Of men who flee from despots' sway,  
Who ask their right to God's own soil—  
Let's welcome them and bid them stay.

Of men like these let come who will,  
Where'er their native home may be,  
From Russian Steppe, or Grecian Hill,  
From every land across the sea.

Our country vast can well provide  
For all who would our number swell;  
On Texas' fertile prairie wide  
All men of earth in peace may dwell.

So need we fear these men who ask  
What is their own, by God's own will—  
A bit of earth, an honest task,  
To live and love, and labor still?

R. E. CHADWICK.

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## BOOKS

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### POLITICAL ECONOMY.

**The Nature of Capital and Income.** By Irving Fisher, Ph. D., Professor of Political Economy, Yale University. Published by Macmillan, New York and London. Price \$3.00 net.

Prof. Fisher undertakes in this book to expound "a sort of philosophy of economic accounting." At the close of the book, in describing briefly the nature of Capital and Income, he summarizes by saying that "we may say that those parts of the material universe which at any time are under the dominion of man constitute his capital-wealth; its ownership, his capital-property; its value, his capital-value; its desirability, his subjective-capital;" but that "capital in any of these senses stands for anticipated income, which consists of a stream of services as its value."

By "capital" Prof. Fisher means, as other economists do, a portion of wealth, but not in the same sense either as to the nature of wealth or the characteristic of capital.

He defines "wealth" far more comprehensively than would seem to be useful for a distinctive term of political economy—so comprehensively, indeed, as to include in one mass everything with which the