

business perfidy. For all business interests, the more complete the exposure of this packing house filthiness the better; complete exposure would the more likely necessitate complete purification.

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Restriction of Immigration.

When one reads the Federal Statutes in restriction of immigration, the memory of historical reading of old British poor laws is stimulated. It would seem as if these statutes might have been suggested by those barbarous laws for keeping every unfortunate in his own parish. Our immigration statutes are framed so as to keep every unfortunate in his own country—or, any rate, out of ours. And what makes our anti-immigration statutes so pathetically comic is the fact that if they had been enacted half a century ago most of the sentiment that demands them now would have been expressing itself in some less despotic way in some more despotic land.

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Nor are the agitators for restriction ever satisfied. With all the restrictive measures thus far enacted, they are still playing in the role of Oliver Twist and asking for more. There is now pending in Congress a bill for what some of its advocates serenely describe as “a finer sifting of immigrants.” It is not easy without a careful comparison to distinguish this “finer sifting” from the coarser sifting which the law already requires. One advance, however, seems to be the exclusion of such immigrants as are mentally or physically defective in such manner as possibly to affect their ability to earn a living. All this is on the old English parish-burden pretense. But we made no such pretense fifty years ago. It wasn't necessary. No matter how defective an immigrant we welcomed him then. Yet these very people and their descendants now want to keep immigrants out of the country.

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This is not because the immigrants are defective. It is not because they cannot work. It is because they might work. If those who advocate these restrictive laws were candid about it, they would not propose to exclude the incapable but the capable. The nearer they can get to excluding the capable under pretense of excluding the incapable, the nearer they are to being satisfied. For it is the working classes, in fear of losing jobs or of having wages forced down, that make these barbarous laws possible. What a commentary on the good will and good sense of the American working classes! Opportunities for work in this country

are as great as ever they were. They are greater. But they have been monopolized, taken out of the market, put out of the reach of labor. The enemy of steady jobs and high wages is the monopolists of the country, not the disinherited workingmen from other countries who seek a home in this once vaunted “home of the oppressed.” Why do workingmen insist upon foolishly fighting one another instead of intelligently fighting their common enemy?

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Race Inferiority.

When one race is so situated with reference to another as to need a reason for excluding, suppressing or exterminating it, there seems to be no difficulty in finding reasons, but much difficulty in finding sensible ones. And there is such uniform absurdity in the reasons usually advanced, no matter how dissimilar the race to be victimized, that one stops to wonder whether reasons for such purposes are not in the market somewhere in job lots. A comical example is a series of resolutions of the San Francisco league for the exclusion of Japanese and Koreans. These resolutions begin with the profoundly “scientific” declaration that “two unassimilable races can not exist perpetually in the same territory.” Observe the characteristic quality. Substitute the more candid term “on an equality” for “perpetually,” and the statement would be in shape for a Negro lynching league. With this “scientific” statement for a basis, the California exclusion league proceeds to argue that contact between two such races results in the extermination of that one “whose physical or mental characteristics are least adapted to the conditions of life prevailing in the given territory;” that these conditions are determined by the conditions of labor; that the surviving race therefore will be the one that most nearly conforms to the conditions of labor; that labor in the United States is a machine process; that therefore the race best adapted to the machine process is in that environment the superior race; that as the Japanese and Koreans answer better than the Americans to this demand, they are in that respect superior; and consequently that immigration of Japanese and the Koreans must be prevented in order to save Americans from extermination by those superior Asiatics. This is a pitiable plea. See what it involves. Either machine processes of production are superior, in which case the Japanese and the Koreans are in very truth our superiors; or those processes are inferior, in which case the

Americans are inferior for tolerating them. But the whole thing is a farce—a bare pretense for expressing race animosity. The grain of possible truth in it is merely this, that the Japanese and the Koreans can survive better than Americans in a territory which is monopolized by a privileged few. But do Americans prove their superiority by keeping out the Asiatics instead of driving out the monopolists?

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The People's Mines.

A Washington correspondent predicts a policy on the part of President Roosevelt as to government mineral lands, which, if Mr. Roosevelt adopts it, may become a landmark in American economic progress. According to this correspondent, Mr. Roosevelt intends to establish permanent government ownership of the coal mines now owned by the Federal government—some 40,000,000 acres. His plan is to seek authority from Congress to lease these lands instead of selling them. The official announcement of this foreshadowed plan will be looked forward to with great interest, even if with some incredulity.

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Mr. Rockefeller and His Press Agent.

In his journey abroad, John D. Rockefeller appears to have taken his private press agent (vol. vii, pp. 417, 475) with him, for all the American newspapers scintillate with sparkling cable reports of Mr. Rockefeller's sayings and doings, his comings and goings, his domestic charm and his philanthropic curiosity. Now he is "carefully studying and comparing means of living and of improving the conditions of the race;" again he is establishing "the most genial relations with every one in the hotel;" anon he questions small boys about how much they earn, and pay for clothes, and give their mothers; and anon-anon at one place he couldn't buy a bath, whereat he "shrugged his shoulders and laughed." Under the deft manipulation of his press agent and at the extra cost of a trifle for cable rates, the saturnine Mr. Rockefeller is fast becoming an affable Croesus.

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THE SUPERSTITION OF AUTHORITY

All men, with a few unimportant exceptions, possess the faculty of independent reflection. This process of arriving at the judgment of a thing is called "making up the mind." Men are presumed to follow this method in forming an opinion on important subjects concerning their moral and material welfare.

But in reality are current convictions so established? Do we follow customs generally in obedience to these rational processes of independent judgment? If so, how then do popular absurdities survive in face of secret but promptly suppressed suggestions of their unfitness or irrational character? Surely we must seek elsewhere for the source of what is erroneous in the customs and opinions of the time.

From whence then is the great body of error derived? On what recommendation is it accepted and passed current? Where shall we look for an explanation of the fact that these errors prevail as customs long after popular conviction has tacitly renounced them? Out of what mysterious respect for what mysterious influences do such errors survive disproof?

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We shall find the answer in what I have termed the "superstition of authority." Men, or at least the vast majority of men, do not reason, they accept; and they accept upon authority. They violently resist not only the assaults upon established political and economic dogma made by the more courageous minds, but they prefer shibboleths to syllogisms. They resist convictions because these entail thought—and most men are too indolent to think. It is easier to quote.

They would rather ask themselves, "What do the professors say? What do the statesmen believe? Are these doctrines written in the books? Or in the laws? Are they authoritative?" How they became authoritative does not matter. It is characteristic of the tory mind to accept them without question, and almost all minds are at first tory.

"Every boy and girl alive
Is either a little Liberal
Or else a little Conservative,"

but mostly conservative. It was the original tory who objected to the scheme of Creation as an unwarrantable interference with chaos.

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Not that there is not a reasonable conservatism. It is well to be conservative of what is true, and it is no defect of truth that it is old truth. But to venerate a thing simply because it is old and long established is like one who would not object to being eaten by a gray wolf if it were old and venerable.

But the worst of all errors is old error—for the new error, simply because it is new, is likely to contain the seed of a truth. But error that is old is tenfold more dangerous because it comes