

CHAPTER IX.

Remedies—2. Restriction of Immigration.*

God hath made of one blood all nations of men.—
Acts, 17:26.

As the employing monopolist shuts off competition by a protective tariff against the importation of foreign goods, so the trade-unionist employe wishes in the same way to prevent competition with his labor by shutting out the foreign immigrant workingman. The two measures are alike indefensible in principle, interfering as they do with the natural laws of trade; but the labor man can say for himself that he is at any rate acting only in self-defence, for protection should, if invoked at all, apply to men as well as to things. We have seen, however, that to shut wealth out of a country is a mistake, and it is equally a mistake to shut out the makers of wealth.

The campaign against immigrants is due, however, not only to the trade unions, but to many other patriotic citizens whose arguments call for consideration. It is not difficult to understand their motives. When things go wrong it is man's natural impulse, inherited from Eden, to throw the blame on somebody else. He will curse the chair against which he stubs his toe, and turn back to look daggers at the inert bit of orange-peel upon which he has had the misfortune to slip. This great American civilization of ours has not been advancing just as it should. We have not realized the Golden Age designed by the fathers and prophesied by such travelers as De Tocqueville. Material wealth without limit has not prevented pauperism, disease and crime, nor has po-

*A part of this chapter appeared originally in *The Arena*, and is here reprinted by permission.

litical equality put an end to class-distinctions or ensured social fraternity and industrial peace. On the contrary, prisons, hospitals and asylums are continually growing, and the social and economic equilibrium becoming more disturbed, and we are forced to take notice of the unsatisfactory situation. The responsibility for this disillusionment must lie somewhere; we are unwilling to take it upon ourselves, and, in scanning the horizon for a sufficient cause, what is more natural than that we should ascribe it to those other nations which, through well-defined channels of immigration, are continually overflowing across our frontiers? Clearly there can be no inherent defect in American institutions, but it is the Bohemian, the Hungarian, the Italian, the Russian Jew, who, totally unfitted for them, have obstructed and prevented their free and proper play.

This is a very comfortable position for the patriot to assume, and it is hardly to be wondered at that most of us are quite ready to accept it without asking troublesome questions. Now and then may come the reflection that all our political assassins were American-born, as were many of our worst politicians, with Tweed at their head, and that our most conspicuous barbarisms—our lynchings—occur usually in neighborhoods the least polluted by foreign intermixture; such considerations may cloud our peace of mind, but we brush away the annoying thought and sink back again into the happy state of self-complacency which has become a part of the national character. To many patriots of this description the article on the "New Immigration," in a recent number of the *North American Review*, by Mr. Austin, Chief of the Bureau of Statistics in the Department of Commerce and Labor at Washington, must have come as a distinct shock; for he has had the hardihood to examine into this cherished illusion of foreign responsibility for our shortcomings, and he finds it to be altogether unfounded in fact, the truth being that those portions of the country to which the immigrants go are prosperous in propor-

tion to their numbers; that "the percentage of immigrants from Russia and Southern Europe who ultimately become inmates of prisons, reformatory institutions, alms-houses and charitable institutions is much smaller than of those from northern Europe"; that "a larger percentage of the children of the immigrants, as a whole, attend school during the years between five and fourteen than is the case among the children of native whites"; and that "there is a smaller percentage of illiterates among those born in this country of foreign parents than among those born of native white parents."

These facts, marshaled by such an authority, seem to be decisive, and they hit the Immigration Restriction League between wind and water. Is it possible that this active organization has mistaken national conceit for economics, and the ancient vice of intolerance towards foreigners for social science? To the Jew of old all other men were Gentiles,—to the Greek they were Barbarians,—to the Chinaman they are "foreign devils." This curious misapprehension rests upon the familiar philosophical principle that no entity is at its best when torn from its customary environment. Drop the Austrian Emperor or the Prime Minister of England in the streets of Podunk, Connecticut, and he will at once appear ill at ease. He will not know how to register at the hotel nor what to order for breakfast, and he will be altogether at a loss as to how he should attack his buckwheat cakes. From these indications the good Podunkers will at once infer that they are far wiser and better informed than their visitors, oblivious of the fact that any one of them might fall an easy victim to the first bunco-steerer who should accost him on Broadway. The Podunker is at his best in Podunk and the Kaiser at Schönbrunn, and either of them may appear ridiculous if suddenly placed in a new environment; and this is perhaps the source of all international prejudices. How hard it is for the wisest of us to understand that a man can think to good purpose without knowing

a word of English! We accept the fact as scientifically proved, but the thing still seems impossible. To judge an animal, human or other, fairly, we must see him in his own habitat. Look at the European peasant in his native fields, in Russia, Hungary, Italy or Roumania, and you cannot fail to admire his physique, his intelligence and his kindliness; and when you recall all that you have heard about the inhabitants of the decadent hill-towns of New England or of the Kentucky mountains, and the "white trash" of the South, you will be modest in drawing comparisons. And in an amazingly short time these incoming foreign peasants cease to be "greenhorns," and adapt themselves to the new conditions of American life.

The chief objection to immigration is that presented by the labor unions, which maintain that it tends to reduce the standard of living and of wages. This objection seems very plausible at first sight, but it is only of force within narrow limits of time and locality. The sudden influx of a large number of workmen into a particular neighborhood may indeed for a short period have a depressing effect, but this soon corrects itself and the final result is a general benefit. Labor men talk of laborers as if they did nothing but labor, but they are consumers and employers too, and they create an immediate demand as well as a supply. If the wage-earner receives the value of his services, he is as efficient as a consumer as he is as a producer, and he really employs himself. He may not, indeed, receive the pay which he earns, and in that case he may form a disturbing element; but the fault then lies not in his admission to the country, but in the measure of his reward,—that is in the distribution of the products of labor. We should not blame him, but our own industrial system; and we must apply the remedy, not to him, but to ourselves. The most superficial view of our economic history shows that our troubles do not depend on the size of our population. We have room for ten times our present numbers. Hence over-population cannot be the cause of economic

friction. Financial crises occur with entire impartiality, whether we have fifty, sixty, seventy or eighty millions of inhabitants. Our economic system seems to require that a certain proportion of the community, within fixed limits, should be unemployed, and that our own country should be unable to absorb a certain proportion of its products. The addition of a million immigrants would not materially alter the terms of this proposition nor accentuate the difficulty perceptibly, nor would the removal of a million workers produce a lasting cure. There is something wrong with the organization of our productive forces and with the distribution of their product. And in addition to all this, the readiness of the immigrant to lower the standard of wages (in case he has the power to do so) has been very much exaggerated. He soon learns to demand as much as the American, and I know of a rural region where Italian contract-laborers were the first to introduce the strike, asking for higher wages than had been usually paid to the native white workers of the neighborhood.

Why is there not room for all comers on a continent not one-tenth occupied? If there is any lack of opportunity it must be due to the fact that the gifts of nature have been monopolized and free access to them denied. The most available openings for labor, the best rights of way, terminal facilities, urban sites, mining fields, privileges and franchises have all been pre-empted and the public shut out from them, while the holders demand tribute for the use of them on their own terms. Trade is hampered by tariffs, taxation and extortionate rates. The public must pay to private individuals rent on unearned increment and dividends on watered stock, and the industrial world is bound hand and foot. The privileges of the monopolists enable them to exact unwarranted prices from the consumer and a "rake-off" on the wages of the worker. The average man's efficiency as a purchaser consequently falls far below his efficiency as a producer. The product of

the worker is held tantalizingly beyond his reach, and our population is unable to buy its own products. The result is "over-production," excessive accumulations in a few hands, pauperism, and many unemployed; and this condition of affairs bears no relation whatever to the density of population nor to the influx of immigrants, but is inherent in the nature of monopoly. With a population of fifty millions or of five hundred millions, the problem would be the same. Twenty years ago, with a much smaller population, we had the same difficulties, and, unless we are wise enough to improve our system, we shall have them twenty years hence with a still greater increase.

Evidently, then, immigration is not a prominent factor in the problem. Here and there it may for a few weeks have some influence, but very soon we attain again the nearest approach to an equilibrium which our monopolistic economic organization permits. No lasting harm is done, and this temporary and local harm is due, not to immigration, but to monopoly. The real fault lies, not with the immigrant, but with us, and the chief objection to our immigration laws is that their whole tone is a false one, laying stress upon the supposed defects of the immigrant, instead of apologizing for those of our institutions. We pretend that we have no room for him on account of his shortcomings, while the fact is that he is unwelcome because of our own. It is surely bad enough to slam your door in a visitor's face, without lying to him about the reasons. I would like to draw up an honest anti-immigration bill for Congress. It would read somewhat as follows: Whereas we, the American people, have made a mess of our great heritage and are incapable of managing our own affairs, be it enacted, that no one else be allowed to come into the country to assist us in managing them. Let us suppose that a hotelkeeper has allowed his house to fall into disrepair. The elevators have broken down and the stairways fallen in. The locks on many of the doors have rusted, and the rooms cannot be

opened. The kitchen is heaped full of rubbish, and the hallways are almost impassable. In short, a great caravanserai, intended for a thousand guests, can hardly provide for fifty, and every available bed is said to be occupied. Now if this statement of the case were absolutely true, he might be justified in refusing to receive new comers; but in what terms should his refusal be couched? Surely he should adopt the language of apology. Now if ever he should be polite and atone for his inhospitality if he can, while showing his respect for his would-be guests and his regret at being unprepared for them. But no. This would be to admit his own fault, and that he will not do under any circumstances. The happy thought occurs to him of throwing all the blame upon the travelers. It is their fault that they cannot get in. They are all swindlers, or uneducated, or sickly, or free-thinkers, or this or that or the other thing; it matters little what, so be it that the reproach can be lifted from his shoulders and placed somewhere else. And he sets up an examining commission in the hotel-office, and as the newly-arrived visitors advance to inscribe their names they are assailed by inspectors and forcibly overhauled physically, mentally and spiritually, and wherever he can find an excuse of any kind, he turns them out of doors, disgraced and discredited, while he hides his own responsibility for it all behind an unctuous smile. Such are our immigration laws—a mass of hypocritical verbiage under which we attempt to conceal the failure of our free institutions. And so the dyspeptic pushes his plate away untasted, declaring that the food is unfit to eat, while it is really his digestive apparatus which is at fault.

In the light of these truths what a huge humbug the whole routine of Ellis Island is seen to be! I have watched the long line of "greenhorns," ignorant of the language and fearful of the coming ordeal, advancing to the receiving officer, herded meanwhile like cattle by rough and callous attendants. I recall one young immigrant

in particular who was so frightened that his hands trembled like aspen leaves, and the uniformed official in charge, who spoke English with a strong foreign accent and had evidently passed through the same mill not so very long ago, instead of calming and encouraging him, mimicked him maliciously, until I felt obliged to interfere. And to think that all this solemn form of inspection was largely a farce; that these people had it in them to do our country quite as much good as it could do to them, and that whatever of evil might result from their coming would be due rather to our imperfect civilization than to any baneful influence of theirs! Each of them brought two arms and only one mouth, and was ready as soon as he landed not only to work but to employ; for the two things go ever together, and if this nice balance of nature was to be disturbed, it would be our monopoly and not his activity that would do it. Ellis Island is the reception-room of the nation, where, if anywhere, we should put on our company manners, but our officials seem to look upon it as a sort of police-station.

When we come to consider the character of the immigrants and the needs of the country, we find that the suggestions which are usually made in the line of restriction are precisely the most harmful ones. We are asked to discriminate against the most desirable class. If there is one thing that we have enough of in America it is reading, writing and arithmetic and average intelligence. We need no great improvement in this direction and we are amply capable of teaching those who come. Immigrant children learn quickly in our schools, and most of them, especially the Jews from Eastern Europe, and the Italians, take high positions, holding their own, as a rule, with our native-born children. Where we do fall short too often is in physique. More of us are hollow-chested, sloping-shouldered and nervous than is the case with the ordinary European, and especially with the peasant. From the purely scientific standpoint of breeding we have every in-

terest to admit the sturdy farmhand, just as we import the Percheron horse or the Southdown sheep. Whether the man can read and write or understand the Constitution is a matter of trifling importance in comparison. His children will learn all that quickly enough. But he will not know how to vote, we are told. When you consider the fact, however, that nearly one-half of our educated Americans vote diametrically against the other half, it is hard to see how the addition of a few uneducated voters can do much harm. Whichever way the ballot of the immigrant is cast, he will have about half of the American people with him, and they should bear the responsibility for the result, not he. Examinations in the three "Rs" let in the anemic crook and sharper and "shyster lawyer," the gambler and the pawnbroker, and all that precious parasitic fraternity which lives by its wits and gravitates to the cities, shutting out the independent, self-supporting, brawny son of the soil whom most we need. The true line of action, in case we wish to diminish the number of immigrants, is not to establish new tests, but to discourage the artificial impetus given to immigration by the steamship companies, whose agents ransack the villages of Europe and grossly misrepresent the opportunities offered by America in the quest of steerage-passengers. It is the thirst for profits, the desire to exploit and make money out of our fellow-men, the spirit of commercialism, which is the offensive thing—our fault again, and not the immigrant's. It would be easy to prevent this artificial stimulation of immigration, and the governments of Europe are beginning to interfere to that end.

But we should shut out less rather than more. The President laments the possibility of race-suicide, and yet at the same time the Immigration Restriction League wishes to prevent Europe from supplying our defect. The evil which our immigrants do to us is lost in the immense benefits which they confer. No one of our States has ever

been permitted to exclude immigrants from other States. The East poured itself into Minnesota and Iowa and California without let or hindrance. No one examined the settlers' eyes, or asked for certificates of schooling, or required a full purse at the frontier; and no harm ever resulted from this wise policy of leaving nature alone. The Five Points of New York were free to populate the valley of the Mississippi and the Pacific Slope, and neither region suffered. We forget the curative possibilities of environment. We might by abolishing unjust privilege and establishing industrial justice create a community in which the criminal instinct would be as likely to atrophy as it is now to develop. I read not long ago an account of a penal settlement in French Guiana, where favorable surroundings had converted some hundreds of desperate criminals into peaceable citizens. The writer visited a couple who had met and married each other there, each of whom had murdered his or her last spouse, and under the plastic conditions of a new country, comparatively free from monopoly of any kind, they had become pillars of respectability. One of the best and most progressive races of the world has sprung in part from the convicts of Botany Bay. We could well afford to open our arms wide to all the world if we were only sure of our own health and the wholesomeness of our atmosphere.

But let us think less of the evil which the immigrant may do to us, and more of the good which we might get from him and yet fail to get. We are still a people in the making. It is the all-sufficient excuse for our defects that we are not yet the finished product, and that we do not yet know what we shall be. America is a great caldron into which the raw material from Europe is poured, and the ultimate outcome depends as legitimately upon the Italian and Roumanian immigration of to-day as upon that of the early Puritan and Quaker. But for some reason or other we look upon the pilgrims of the twentieth century in a very different light from those of the

seventeenth. We boast of the good we have derived from the first settlers, English and Dutch. Is there nothing to be obtained in like manner from those who cross the water now? Do the thousands who come yearly from Germany and Italy bring no valuable contribution with them to our national character, that we should be in such haste to turn them all into indistinguishable Yankees? It is a fine thing to assimilate our new citizens rapidly; but there are two sides to assimilation,—the disappearance of the thing assimilated in its original form on the one hand, and the appropriation of all that is good in it by the assimilator on the other. Are we not too prone to forget the latter half? I hold it against our German fellow-citizens that after over half a century of influence they have failed to turn us into a musical nation. Is there any reason why the children of parents who were brought up on the “Wacht am Rhein” and Luther’s Hymn and who naturally sing chorals with their friends for amusement when they meet, should talk through their noses, have no ear for music, and cherish no musical ideals beyond the “coon-song”? And the Italians who are now coming with their inherited eye for beauty—does it never enter into their heads or ours that they might in time transform our national taste and create a genuine American art and architecture? No, the one engrossing effort on both sides is to Yankify the “dago” as speedily as possible and to make him two-fold more a child of Uncle Sam than ourselves. But these wanderers are the spice for our pudding. Let us be careful how we waste the seasoning which we may never be able to produce for ourselves.

And why this craze to make all men and all things alike? It is doing its sad work all over the world, making another Liverpool of Calcutta and packing the flowing skirts of the picturesque Orientals into awkward trousers. But in America it does its worst. A dozen years and more ago a friend of mine visited Havana—long before we had begun to Americanize the town—and

he was delighted with its quaint and romantic beauty. Returning he landed in some part of Florida, territory reclaimed not so long ago from the same Spaniard, and he assured me with tears in his voice that the first town that he saw in the home country looked exactly like Hoboken. And so do they all. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, we have nothing but countless Hobokens, and we are rejoicing in the prospect of recasting in the same mould the tropical cities of Panama, Porto Rico and the Philippines. For my part I cannot understand this enthusiasm, for I would travel many a long mile to see an American city which should not look exactly like Hoboken, and to discover an American citizen not altogether like myself.

The whole trouble lies in the too great emphasis which we lay upon the comparative value of our own virtues, to which, with a good deal of freedom of language, we have affixed the term "Anglo-Saxon." I am in some respects an Anglo-maniac, and I am proud of my English blood and speech. I like the energy and all-sufficiency of the stock, and I would not exchange my forbears for a good deal. Still I cannot in justice overlook our faults nor be blind to the fact that the good points of other races supply our deficiencies, and I have already hinted at some of them. In the great century of music, none of our blood produced a work of even the third class. We have never had a painter who could rank among the first score or two of great artists. We must go to Germany for our highest philosophy, and to France for the most finished elegance of thought and manners. We know little of the joy of living. We take our holidays sadly, and laugh with mental reservations. The European comes to us with a new capacity for mirth, a genius for joviality and sociability. Are these ingredients to be despised? For a few years he may navigate our streets with his hand-organ or his plaster-casts and frequent his genial café, but before long he must fit himself to our Procrustean bed, and at last we find him

at work in the regulation store or at rest before the rigid bar or at the taciturn dairy-lunch counter. Is it desirable that we should compass sea and land in this way to make a proselyte? Should we reduce the whole world to one dead level? And not content with stifling the originality of the immigrant, we must needs carry our missionary zeal for uniformity to foreign lands in the hope of destroying all individuality. In Anglo-Saxonizing India and Japan we are crushing out the most wonderful of arts beyond a possibility of resurrection. We are the Goths and Vandals of the day. We are the Tartars and the Turks. And the countries which we overrun have each its own priceless heritage of art and legend which we ruthlessly stamp under foot.

I admire the Anglo-Saxon, just as I admire his feathered prototype, the English house-sparrow. He is a fine, sturdy, plain, self-satisfied bird, a good fighter, an admirable colonist, fit for all climates, with no sense of art or music, and a little too fond of rehearsing his many virtues in a hoarse chorus. But so long as he minds his own business I like him, and I do not care to quarrel with him, even when he considers himself a better bird than the blue-bird or the oriole. He has a right to his own opinions. But when he begins to try to make the bobolink adopt his song, and to drive the wrens and buntings out of their haunts, and to break their eggs and tear their nests to pieces, why, then I must cry out against his arrogance. We do not want a bird-world composed of nothing but sparrows. We will not have it, and if the sparrows themselves had any sense they would protest against it; for do not the thrushes sing for them too, and may they not enjoy the plumage of the scarlet-tanager, if they will? Let us hope that the sparrow may learn some day to appreciate the good points of other fowl, even to the point of cherishing them and learning from them. What wasted opportunities of improvement for ourselves Ellis Island affords. We are careful to assure ourselves that each immi-

grant has in his pocket so much money which will find its way into the general circulation, but he bears a greater wealth in his heart, and this we disregard. If the energy which we expend upon keeping him out were devoted to the task of investing this spiritual wealth of his to the greatest advantage for all, the problem of immigration would cease to vex us, for we would all soon learn to hail his advent with gratitude.

One curious objection raised against immigration is that originally formed by Gen. Francis A. Walker, and recently reinforced by Robert Hunter in his admirable book on "Poverty," namely, that it has had the effect of reducing the birthrate of native Americans. It is indeed a notable fact that whereas our ancestors, nay, our fathers and grandfathers, had families of eight to ten children or more, we as a rule have two or three, or even one, or none. It is true that improved sanitation has also diminished the death-rate, and the frightful mortality of infants which every old family Bible exhibits, no longer prevails. But still of the large families of our forefathers a goodly number of children survived, and we fall far behind them in the task of replenishing the earth. General Walker and Mr. Hunter seem to look upon this phenomenon as a sort of mystic or psychic result of suddenly introducing before the eyes of a healthy native population a mass of sordid and unclean foreigners. I am inclined to think that this explanation owes its origin to a prejudice against foreigners which even philosophers and economists find it hard to overcome, and, furthermore, that it does not explain. The reason is much simpler and more natural. A little study of the question among those whom we meet from day to day will show that the falling off in families is due in part to the desire of parents to escape the expense of a large family and also to have their children as rich as possible, and hence to divide up the inheritance which they may have to leave to them as little as possible. In thrifty France this is notably the case, and it is

true of well-nigh the entire saving portion of our own population. In addition to this, we must note the greater weakness of women's nerves nowadays and their growing unwillingness to undergo the pains of childbirth and care of children, with, at the same time, a disbelief in the divine origin of the injunction to have as many children as possible. Parenthetically it may be observed that if the men who preach large families the loudest could experience these pains first themselves, they might be less strenuous in their exhortations.

An artificial life of more or less luxury and a great deal of leisure is responsible in great part for the degeneration of our women's nerves, and the possession of inheritances to hand down to our children depends almost altogether upon our ability to make other people work for us and to pocket a percentage of their earnings. It is just at this point that the foreign immigrant plays an important part. He comes here ready to be fleeced, and we fleece him. He works hard, and we take care to see that he does not receive the full value of his work. There is a rake-off above his wages for us. And so the "native American" population (that is, those of us whose immigrant ancestors came over before such and such a date) has, as a rule, been growing rich "off" the immigrant. It has been laying up money, which it wishes to leave to as few children as possible, and at the same time it has attained a style of living which is bad for the nerves of its women. In other words, the greater part of the hard physical work of the country is done by recent immigrants. Possibly the first railways were built by Americans, but soon they were supplanted by the Irish, and now the Irish have given way to the Italians. Not many years ago our mines were worked by men of the English-speaking races, but to-day Poles, Hungarians and Bohemians have taken their places. The men who have been displaced have for the most part risen in the social scale, and just in proportion as they rise do they cease to have large families. It is a curious fact that as soon as a

man begins to think of "founding a family," just at that moment he begins to diminish his chances of having a persistent posterity. The ideas of heritage and of luxury bear in themselves the seeds of race-suicide. It is only the man who is as careless of the condition of his progeny as is the dog or cat, who can count on being represented on earth in both the male and female line till doomsday. The best way to found a family is to give all your property away. The families of the poor increase in pyramidal progression. It has always been so. The working class of Rome was called the proletariat, that is, the producers of offspring or proles. The families of the rich dwindle—from the base of the pyramid to its vanishing point. As society is now constituted, you must make your choice between making money and making children. The poor have the future to themselves, there is no doubt of that, and it is a law of nature that the meek shall inherit the earth.

General Walker and Mr. Hunter, seeing these facts, would insure the permanence of the native American stock by excluding the immigrant. This seems to me a counsel of cowardice. In the struggle for life the fittest survive, and if the foreigner is the fittest, we ought gracefully to withdraw before him. It is not because he is a foreigner that he is fitter than we are, mind you, but because he is poor, and because he is ready to do the hard work of the country, and has not yet absorbed the idea of exploiting the rest of the population for his own benefit. When we have civilized him to that extent, he will begin to die out too. To force ourselves to do the hard work by shutting him out (and that is what Mr. Hunter's advice amounts to) is surely a round-about and unmanly way of attaining an object which can be much better attained otherwise. It is the ability to exploit others that makes us comparatively rich, and if we are only willing to give up the special privileges which have given us this power of exploitation, we shall fall back into a situation of equality of opportunity, which will give the law

of the survival of the fittest a fair field to work in, and in such a field we need not fear the competition of foreigners. It is our successful greed that handicaps us. In the last analysis race-suicide is a matter of monopoly. Cease to permit the monopolists to keep for themselves the natural resources of the earth,—the mines and rights of way and land-values,—and to buy our laws for their own aggrandizement, such as their tariffs, and very soon all men will receive what they earn, and there will be no fear of the future to make men reluctant to increase their families, and no excessive luxury or fashionable idleness to unfit our women for motherhood.

Possibly my sympathy for foreigners arises from the fact that I was a foreigner myself for four or five years of my life. During that period I came to the conclusion, upon what seemed to me sufficient evidence, that a foreigner was as good as a native; and I do not see why the mere fact that I happen to have returned to my home should have the effect of changing this rule. There are many who would apply a different rule to the Chinese and the so-called yellow races from the one which they apply to Europeans. I believe on the contrary that no harm would be done if we allowed the laws of nature to control both cases. I know from personal observation that the Chinaman is just as intelligent as we are. It would be a confession of weakness for us to admit that he thrives better than we can. Remove the possibility of exploiting him by abolishing all privilege, and he will not be brought here in large numbers, for it is the exploiter of labor who is responsible for the major part of all immigration. The same criticism may be made of the legislation against so-called "contract-labor." Such immigration would be insignificant if the abolition of special privileges prevented the making of undue profits from it. There is plenty of room for all who wish to come, and it is still possible to lose one's self in the backwoods within the limits of Greater New York. It is claimed that it is pa-

triotic to shut out foreigners, but I challenge that position. Is it patriotic to announce to the world that our institutions are a failure?—to hang out the sign “Standing Room Only,” when our house is full of empty seats?—to cry, “Men not Wanted,” when our soil is itching for the spade? They tell a falsehood who tell mankind that there are no further opportunities for the immigrant in our great and wealthy continent. They wish to put up at the entrance of the beautiful harbor of New York the notice, “Leave hope behind all ye who enter here.” That inscription may be suited to the infernal regions, but it is out of place on the gates of America. The Immigration Restriction League is engaged in fighting windmills, it is “barking up the wrong tree.” And the worst evil that attends such a mistake is that it draws attention away from the right tree. Economic ills confront us which are our own fault, and so long as we cast the blame on others we are not likely to set to work seriously to reform ourselves. There is a chance that, if we humbly acknowledge our failures and undertake to seek out their causes in our own institutions and customs, we may be able to find and obviate them, but these restrictionists are deliberately drawing a herring across our trail. Let us not follow them in their error, for the true scent leads elsewhere, and the real goal is the extension to the sphere of economics of that principle of equality of opportunity which we recognize already in politics.