

What are OUR IMMIGRANTS WORTH in DOLLARS and CENTS?



In many circles throughout the country there is in progress a serious discussion as to the advisability of curbing the immigration flood. This naturally has led up to the question of the immigrant, his value or his menace, and his position in the social machine. The New York Herald has invited opinions on the subject, and presents the views of three men who may reasonably be said to have studied the situation. We reproduce them below:

By Sidney A. Reeve.

Former Professor of Steam and Hydraulic Engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Lecturer at Harvard.

Current conversation and the periodical press are full of condemnation of our lax restriction of immigration. All the evils to which our country is heir are explained by the "undesirable horde" of aliens which is pressing into the land with ever increasing volume. The steady increase in criminality which has now become unquestioned is attributed to this "overflow" of the undesirables from the older countries, and these countries are accused of collusion with the steamship companies toward a promotion of the volume of migration. That portion of our citizens which is interested in the labor market is in chronic rebellion against this influx of cheap labor, destined to compete upon an un-American basis with American labor. Those of us who are interested in purity of politics see in the inflowing torrent a current supply of corruptibles upon whose votes political machines may be reared and supported.

Upon every side arises this denunciation of immigration. Nor is it a recent phenomenon. Look up the literature of immigration, and you will find the decade of 1840-1850 supplying its fair quota of "kicks." In goodly proportion to what our increased population puts forth to-day. For 60 years we, as a nation, regardless of whether our continent yet contained undeveloped territory, as in 1847, or undeveloped possibilities, as in 1907, have been objecting strenuously to immigration.

Meanwhile the immigration has been steadily increasing, except during the period of the civil war, and at the end of the 60 years we enjoy phenomenal prosperity.

There is an inconsistency here somewhere between the theories of the pessimists and the facts, and a big one, too.

What are the facts?

Question of Criminality.

As to criminality, we can find none supporting the theory that in general immigration is of a criminal sort. Here and there may be found minor facts and figures on that side, it is true. The southern Italians, without question, are unusually illiterate and addicted to the settlement of differ-

ences by stiletto. We even identify the Italians roughly with the Black Hand system of blackmail. The south Italians are but a small fraction of all immigration; the class of crimes to which they are prone is a minor one in our criminal records; the blackmail extorted by the Black Hand is but a drop in the bucket compared with the volume of extortion currently practiced by American business men, within and without the law, against American-born victims.

Viewing the situation broadly, there is no decisive evidence pointing to the criminality of the average immigrant. There is much pointing to his superiority over the average native American to industry, sobriety and the patient toleration of adverse conditions without outbreak. Indeed, the most decided evidence on this point comes from Great Britain, which country complains that of all her immigrants the Americans are the most criminal, being three or four times as bad as the average of the rest and ten times as bad as the Poles and Hungarians.

We do not conclude from this too hastily that America is ultra criminal. But we quote it to signify that he who seeks statistical support for anti-immigration views, doing it in sincerity and breadth, is apt to meet with sour comfort.

Standard of Immigrants.

Our own conclusions are that the vast majority of immigrants are slightly above our American standards in industry, sobriety and patient self-restraint, though they are undoubtedly below us in initiative. They come from countries where unceasing toil is the price of life, and where the get-rich-quick microbes is virtually unknown. In their fatherlands drunkenness is a minor crime, whereas in Great Britain and America it is a major one. And as to patience under conditions inviting to revolt, America is proud of standing first among all the non-Latin peoples of the temperate zones in her promptness to resent publicly, by the passive rebellion of the strike, if not by actual violence, the presence of conditions unnecessarily hard. Our complaint against the immigrants must be that they are too patient and submissive for American standards, rather than that they are too violent and resentful.

As to illiteracy, it is true that the immigrants are below our standard. What of it? Education is a thing of itself, neither conducive to nor antagonistic to morality and happiness. It may be a powerful tool to both. But it is often used as an equally powerful tool against both. Our educated classes are not always the happiest ones. Our worst and biggest crooks are the educated ones.

In short, a man is of value to a

country solely according to whether he produces more, of material or of morality, than he consumes. He may produce very little, yet if his wants are less than that little he is still a profitable investment for the nation. He may, on the other hand, apparently produce millions; yet if he consumes more than that, or if he undermines our standards of morality, or if he is found to produce actually much less than he apparently produces, he may be a great source of loss, in spite of his prominence and power.

The people understand this well. It is their habitual application of this new economic trysquare to men in the public eye which is now making millionairism so uncomfortable.

What is Immigration Worth?

To which class, then, belongs the average immigrant? Is he a producer or a dissipator of net wealth and morality? If the former, what is our immigrant worth, net, to the nation?

The law says that a dead male adult constitutes a loss of \$5,000 to his family. In this it strikes a rough average and draws no distinction of any sort between individuals. So it is hard to get at it in that way.

The average adult male immigrant (and half of our immigrants are of this sort) earns at least \$300 per annum soon after his arrival. Rather, that is what he is paid. My estimates have led me to state, elsewhere, that his actual productivity is from three to four times that amount, the balance going to pay the cost of doing "business" with what he produces and consumes. But the benefit of this doubt will be left, for the present, to the opposition.

The right will be reserved, however, to class all immigrants under this figure, for the majority of them have been here long enough to expand their income beyond \$300. That is to say, most of those who were classed as children at the time of entry are now adults. Of the women some are offset in their unproductivity by the men who earn more than \$300; the rest are producing more than that value in the form of children.

\$5,000,000,000 Per Annum.

During the last 20 years some 16,000,000 or 17,000,000 immigrants have arrived. The exact figure does not matter, for all we wish is an estimate of the number now alive and working, and many who came before 1887 are that. If these people are producing an average of \$300 worth of goods and children apiece their current productivity is now \$5,000,000,000 per annum.

This is 200 times as much as our new automobiles cost us last year. This enormous fund of current income we should have lost had we rigidly excluded immigration in 1887.

How much capital do these immigrants embody, not in their pockets or bank accounts, but in their strength of body and character?

Assume that out of the 17,000,000 aliens arrived since 1887 10,000,000 are now adult males. For each of these that you kill his family can collect from you, by law, \$5,000. He must be worth at least half that. That is to say, we have got from Europe during the last two decades, for nothing, a working machine which capitalizes at from 25,000,000,000 to 50,000,000,000.

This figure agrees fairly well with our estimate of the animal productivity of this great human machine. But the exactness of the figures does not matter. It is plain that, however they may be modified in detail, they will still remain enormous. Our crops have certainly been enormous of recent years, but it has already become plain that they cannot stand alone as an explanation of our remarkable prosperity. We not only grow hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of corn, wheat, and cotton at the cost of much labor each year, but we also imbibe from another continent, without a cent of cost to ourselves, upward of a billion dollars' worth of human live stock per annum.

We do not hesitate to assign a solid value to every other form of live stock which the land needs for its working. Why should not our immigrants be figured as a similar asset?

By Robert Watchorn.

Commissioner of Immigration.

Public opinion is all wrong, or nearly so, upon many phases of the immigration question. With more than a million immigrants a year we cannot supply the urgent demands for labor. The army of workers adds enormously to the wealth and prosperity of the country.

It is not the scum of Europe we are getting, but the pick of the most earnest and hard-working of its population. As to the morality of the immigrants of to-day, it seems to me that it compares favorably with that of our native born population.

All this is not a matter of mere opinion or sentiment. It is borne out by the actual statistics. Mr. Reeve's figures, it seems to me, in some respects, understate the facts. He mentions \$300 a year as the earning power of these immigrants. As a matter of fact, these men will earn more, on the average, than a dollar a day. I think the figure may safely be increased by at least 50 per cent. Within a few days Mr. Charles Lorhn, the New York state commissioner of labor, came to me in search of men I could not supply. He estimated that New York state alone needed 100,000 men, to whom he would pay \$25 a month and board on the farms alone. Now, that does not look much like overcrowding or the impossibility of assimilating we hear so much about.

Of the million, or, to be exact, the

1,001,756, immigrants last year more than ten per cent. were over the age limit and a great proportion brought their wives. About 50 per cent. may be classed as workers. But in another sense they were all workers. There were no idlers, scarcely one who would shirk his duty. And as to their morality, the average is certainly good. These immigrants are placed upon a probation for three years. Should they get into trouble in this time they are liable to be deported. Last year there were for all causes less than 1,200 deported. I question if our native born population can show a better record.

The modern immigrant of to-day, it seems to me, is greatly misunderstood. We have a great deal of talk about the menace of the immigrant from the south of Europe. A few decades ago most of the immigrants came from Ireland, while Germany ranked second and Great Britain third. Italy and Russia sent comparatively few. To-day the situation is practically reversed. Last year we received 267,000 from Italy, 192,000 from Russia and but 24,000 from Ireland and 30,000 from Germany. From Austria and Hungary some 292,000 reached our shores. It is unfair to say that the north of Europe is no longer represented. But are the immigrants from the southern countries dangerous or undesirable? The statistics of crime do not prove it. The Italian is a hard worker. We should remember that the Latin people were highly civilized when the north of Europe was peopled with savages. The southern countries may not have progressed of late, but the impulse is still there, and with unlimited opportunities of America before them who can tell what they may not accomplish in the future?

As to Pauper Labor.

A great deal of the misunderstanding is due to the use of that term pauper labor. I have estimated that every immigrant in coming to America spends on an average from \$80 to \$100 for transportation. This includes his fare from his home to the point of departure, the crossing of the Atlantic and the railroad fare to his destination. In other words, they spend upward of \$100,000,000 a year in search of work. Let us suppose, for sake of argument, that Russia suddenly held out great opportunities for money making so that Americans by the million were attracted there. It seems to me that 1,000,000 native born citizens might have some difficulty in raising \$100,000,000 for transportation. And in addition this army of incomers carried with them more than \$20,000,000 in cash.

There is, of course, urgent need of the restriction of immigration, but such restriction is already in force. The laws governing the situation are very rigid; they have been devised by intelligent men, familiar with the situation, working in sympathy with these people as well as in the best interests of the country. And the laws are being enforced. As the need for further restriction occurs it will receive due attention. Meanwhile the demand for laborers throughout the country is very urgent. The immigrants are adding hundreds of millions of dollars to the wealth of America, while they help themselves to a broader and more prosperous life.

By Emerson McMillan.

Chairman Conciliatory Committee of the Civic Federation.

Decidedly I favor an intelligent restriction of immigration on both our eastern and western seaboard. Without being an alarmist, I venture to say that the problem grows more difficult each year and must ultimately demand a solution. America has accomplished wonders in assimilating great hordes of immigrants from many different countries, but it is a very serious question how long at the present rate of increase she can continue to do so. Now it seems to me that when foreigners come to us in such numbers that they form separate and distinct communities, preserving their language and traditions intact, they constitute a menace. When such a colony is formed it is difficult to break up. Assimilation goes on very slowly.

As a rule, the immigrant of recent years differs from us widely in his ideas of morality, his attitude toward the law and in his general point of view. When we read of the violent crimes committed, the names are usually foreign. The Black Hand outrages, for instance, have doubtless been greatly exaggerated, but such as they are they are a foreign importation, and of very recent years.

It is undeniable, of course, that the coming of these millions of laborers has contributed much to the wealth and prosperity of the country. But should this army of workers be increased indefinitely? We have a population to-day in excess of 80,000,000 very active and alert people. It would seem that the natural resources of the country could be developed and the great business of the land carried forward very well with our present population and its natural increase. And I am not among those who have any fear of race suicide. The increase in the number of immigrants from year to year is astonishing. Can we continue to receive this army indefinitely without some day reducing our scale of income to that of Europe? Does it seem probable that the Slavs, the Russian Hebrews, the Sicilians and others who are coming to us in such numbers to-day will in a few years have risen as have the Irish, and have become as good Americans? And if these foreigners with traditions and manners very different from our own are not assimilated, the problem becomes a very serious one.

The State Capital

Matters of General Interest FROM Nebraska's Seat of Government

The Case of Harrison Clarke.

Street railway employees of Omaha, to the number of 210 have petitioned Governor Sheldon not to disturb or commute the sentence imposed upon Harrison Clarke for the murder of Edward Flury, a street car conductor. The petitioners say: "Clarke had a fair trial; no just man denies it. Under the verdict and the law Clarke should be hanged. No just man denies it. Under the law it was left to the jury to fix the penalty. They fixed it at death. It matters not what has been done in other cases. Other murderers may have been acquitted. Other murderers may have had their sentences commuted. This cannot affect this case. It must be presumed that the authorities have done their duties under the facts and the law. There is no reason for interfering with the sentence. All reasons exist for sustaining it. For ourselves and for the street railway employees generally, whose lives are imperiled while on duty by the robber and the murderer, and for their families and in memory of Edward Flury we ask you to let the sentence stand and the law take its course."

Portrait of Gov. Magoon.

A fine portrait of Charles E. Magoon, governor of Cuba, and formerly a resident of Lincoln, has been framed and hung in the office of the mayor in the city hall. The portrait is an excellent likeness of Mr. Magoon. It was presented to the city by him upon request of Mayor Brown. The mayor wishes to secure the portraits of all former Lincoln men who have become prominent in national affairs, and he has sent out requests to several individuals for their portraits. The arrival of one portrait which has been promised to the city is looked forward to by the mayor with considerable expectancy. It is one of Abraham Lincoln for whom this city was named which has been promised to the city by Robert Lincoln of Chicago, son of the ex-president. Mayor Brown expects this picture soon.

County Exhibits at Fair.

In the county collective exhibits Washington won first money in the eastern division, Kearney in the central and Brown in the western. The counties scored and received money as follows:

EASTERN DIVISION.		
Counties.	Score.	Purse.
Washington	1,155	\$258.00
Douglas	1,139	200.35
Franklin	906	152.82
Saline	842	147.93
Nemaha	876	130.70
Lancaster	78
CENTRAL DIVISION.		
Kearney	1,102	238.65
Red Willow	854	147.61
York	828	140.82
Franklin	817	137.75
Webster	805	134.82
Howard	743	117.44
Franklin	713	119.60
Antelope	617	86.55
Furnas	485
WESTERN DIVISION.		
Brown	617	197.45
Perkins	456	105.48
Scott's Bluff	453	104.60
Keya Paha	567	84.50

The Battleship "Nebraska."

Judge and Mrs. C. B. Letton have returned from a trip through Canada to the western coast. At Seattle they visited the battleship "Nebraska," and were received with much courtesy by Capt. Nicholson and took tea on the ship with him and the other officers. As an officer of the state branch of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Mrs. Letton wished to ascertain when the stand of colors to be presented by the Nebraska women, would be desired. Capt. Nicholson stated that he had suggested some minor changes in the ship which would require several months to complete.

Agricultural Board Meeting.

The semi-annual meeting of the board of agriculture took place in the executive building at the fair grounds. It was decided to push the work of extending the grounds that has been partly finished. The reclamation where the swine barns are will be completed this fall. Delegates to the American association of state fairs to be held at Chicago in December were appointed in the persons of W. H. Mellar and Peter Youngers. O. P. Hendershot will be delegate to the Shorthorn Breeder's association at same time.

Railroads Must Answer.

The railway commission refused to grant more time to the railroads in regard to a hearing on freight rates on grain. The hearing will begin this week with the Burlington. The railroads coyly asked that the grain rate proposition be deferred for two months.

The State Fair.

The 1907 state fair is over. The fine horses and cattle and hogs and poultry and exhibits have been started homeward. The big whistle sounded the finish of the fair promptly at 4 o'clock Friday, and then the dismantling began. The general opinion of the visitors is that the fair was a magnificent success. The visitors looked more prosperous than heretofore and the premium winners scored higher points. Financially the fair is almost up to the record of former years.

Dobson Inspects Irrigation Work.

Secretary Dobson of the state board of irrigation has returned from a trip to the government diversion dam for the interstate canal at Whalen, Wyo., forty miles from the Nebraska line. This work is in the charge of Bert Forbes, formerly assistant to Mr. Dobson, who has developed into quite a water witch, having found water at a depth of twenty feet where all others had failed, including old settlers who had gone there in prairie schooners. The canal is completed with the exception of the dam at the head to control the water. By the beginning of next season it is estimated that there will be sufficient water in the canal to irrigate 40,000 acres of land, and before the season closes 80,000 acres, most of which is in Nebraska. The dam is 700 or 800 feet long and will be made of concrete and cost about \$200,000. The contractor began work by driving sheet piling across the river just above the proposed site of the dam to shut off the water temporarily to permit construction. When this work is complete a large ditch will be dug to divert the flow of the stream around the proposed dam.

To Establish Quarantine Line.

State Veterinarian McKim has asked Governor Sheldon, to fix a north and south quarantine line in Nebraska to prevent scabies from spreading. The western part of the state is greatly affected with the disease, and Dr. McKim believes that he can clean up the eastern part of the state only by a vigorous quarantine. This line will run along the eastern boundary of Boyd, Holt, Wheeler and Greeley counties, the southern boundaries of Greeley and Valley counties, the eastern and southern boundaries of Chase and Hitchcock counties. When this line is established, no cattle will be permitted to be taken from the western half of the state to the eastern for feeding purposes without inspection or dipping. They may be taken direct to the slaughter houses without either.

Poultry at the Fair.

The state poultry association held its semi-annual meeting at the state fair grounds, the chief business transacted being preparatory to the annual meeting and exhibition of the association which will be held in January. It was decided to hold the show in Lincoln provided it was found that the city auditorium could be secured for that purpose. The winter exhibition promises to be larger than ever before in the history of the association, owing to the probability that the National White Wyandotte association will hold its show in connection.

Looking for Lost Son.

John G. Millekin of St. Joseph, Mo., came to the state fair thinking it would be a good time and place to secure some tidings of the whereabouts of his son, L. D. Milleken, of whom he has lost track. He says his son has been away from home for about twelve years, but that a year ago he had a letter from him, written from Havenlock, where the son was then employed as a telephone lineman. In this letter he directed his father to send the response to him at Greenwood. This was done.

Grain Rate Hearing.

The state railway commission will listen to the protest of the railroads on Monday in the matter of the order reducing rates on grain an average of 10 per cent the state over. The railroad men tried to get this hearing postponed, but were unsuccessful. They intend to bring in a lot of evidence, and testimony will be taken showing the cost of hauling the grain, if that is possible. Chairman Winnett and Rate Clerk Powell went to Iowa on Friday to investigate grain rates in that state and to look over the schedules.

Secretary of State George C. Jinkin

is in receipt of a letter from E. T. Roemer, a civil engineer of New York, in which a request is made for copies of the laws governing incorporations in Nebraska, together with information about franchises and charters. Mr. Roemer gave the information that capital is in sight in the east to finance the long projected north and south railroad running from Nebraska to the gulf. He did not say which company was being favored or the prospective route.

Argument on Sibley Law Case.

The motion to remand to the state supreme court from the federal court the suit to test the constitutionality of the Sibley law will be argued this week. This is the case where Attorney General Thompson, acting for the state railway commission, filed a petition for an injunction to prevent the express companies from violating the Sibley law, and which the express companies transferred to the federal court.

Dinner to Mr. Bryan.

The Bryan dinner, notice of which was published some time ago, will be held at Lincoln, Sept. 24. The democratic delegates to the state convention called by law to prepare the party platform will be in attendance, as well as Gov. Campbell of Texas and other prominent democrats from various states. While the announced intent of the dinner is to boost the election of the democratic nominee for supreme judge, Mr. Bryan will be here and will tell what he thinks should be done to secure democratic success.