

WHY IMMIGRATION OUGHT NOT TO BE RESTRICTED.

To the Editor of the New-York Times:

The fear that immigrants may bring cholera with them has naturally created a desire to close our ports against them, and at the same time it has revived the old spirit of the American Party. This was a secret organization, formed about 1853, for the purpose of checking the influence of foreigners. It became temporarily powerful, but was short-lived for want of support. The present movement will probably last no longer. It is true we have made material progress since, and it would seem natural that we ought to be able soon to assert our independence of foreign assistance.

We have received among us persons in all stations of life with open arms and without asking indiscreet questions. No other people has ever welcomed strangers with more generous hospitality. Napoleon and Garibaldi, Hecker and O'Donovan Rossa, were greeted with the same cordiality. They all enjoyed the protection of our free institutions when they landed on these shores. Some immigrants became so useful that they have made a lasting impression on our history—Thomas Paine, who fought for our independence; Carl Schurz, who assisted to abolish slavery; John Ericsson, who improved our locomotives; John A. Roebling, who spanned our rivers, and many others.

Immigrants have not alone assisted in the formation of American civilization; it owes its very existence to them. The first settlers were immigrants. As the Puritans found and reclaimed New-England, the Germans Pennsylvania, the English Virginia, so have their successors from all parts of the world colonized the wild West and created there that empire of new States which holds now the balance of power of this country. The readiness with which strangers assimilate themselves with us is simply a proof of our own superior intelligence. The immigrant of yesterday becomes a good citizen to-day, and his children will be native Americans to-morrow. Where shall we draw the line of demarkation?"

From time immemorial patriotism has been the natural instinct of all freemen. The civis romanus exacted the homage of the world. We have more reason to be proud of our country; the desire to keep it for ourselves is a natural outgrowth of this pride. But we will have to repress it as long as we need a larger population. During the seventy years from 1820 to 1890 some 15,000,000 immigrants have come here:

From Germany.....	4,504,128
From Ireland.....	8,481,074
From England and Scotland.....	2,754,203
From Scandinavia.....	1,067,348
From Austria-Hungary.....	434,438
From Italy.....	388,558
From France.....	366,346
From Russia and Poland.....	324,892
From China.....	290,653
From Switzerland.....	171,269
Total.....	13,783,161

The remainder came from the Netherlands, Spain, Africa, and other countries. The carriage of these passengers has stimulated our foreign trade, which received large subsidies for bringing them here. The tonnage of ships engaged in transatlantic commerce never would have attained the present proportions without. When free immigration is hindered the number of vessels will be reduced and the cost of freight and cabin passage increased. The Guion Line of steamers has already given public notice of withdrawal from business, and others are expected to follow.

Under the policy which the new Administration is expected soon to inaugurate our industries can make rapid progress, when they will be no longer fettered by duties on raw material. Shall we retard this advance by putting obstacles in the way of obtaining the additional labor which they will require?

This is of lesser importance, however, than the necessity for the development of our Western States more rapidly than the natural increase of our population alone would admit. According to the census we number 65,000,000 people, while our territory can furnish ample subsistence to more than 200,000,000. We want to see our railroads in the far West build up the adjacent land as they have done in the East. We would like coal, iron, ore, and metals extracted from the mines of Colorado, the barren lands of Arizona irrigated, and all our territories developed. This cannot be done so readily if we shut out the foreigners who have been so useful in these occupations heretofore.

Certain Know-Nothings claim that foreign influence degrades the American character. The large body of our immigrants generally represent the best elements of the nations from which they separated to cast their lot among us. The Germans were the young men who wanted to escape from military duty; the Irish were tired of the tyrannical exactions of the lords of their realm. All came to better their fortunes by their own exertions, without the fetters of tyrannical laws or feudal prejudices. The energy of these ambitious men has developed our own. We have inherited their thrift, and we owe as much to them as they owe to us.

We require no further laws to hinder them from coming. The present acts are stringent enough against the undesirable element among them. All that is required is to see that they are properly enforced.

LOUIS WINDMÜLLER.
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