

immigration is assisted it begins to include the dependent and least desirable class—the people who would stay at home if left alone and are not fit for citizenship when they come. The same result develops if the encouragement is prompted by steamship and railway companies. The demand for cheap labor is another disturbing factor leading to the importation of large crowds of Asiatics in control of agents to whom they are in virtual slavery. The developments of recent years have greatly lessened the assimilative power of the republic and has lowered the standard of immigration—two changes which work together toward injurious results.

#### AN IMMIGRATION PROBLEM.

The American people are showing signs of uneasiness over the continuous and increasing volume of immigration. During the last fiscal year the total recorded immigration was 857,046, the largest number ever applying for admission in a single year. The highest previous record was 789,000, admitted in 1882. The subject was discussed at the conference of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, and the views expressed by Mr. Frank P. Sargent, Commissioner of Immigration, were anything but hopeful. He declared that the character of the arriving aliens during the last year differed greatly from that of 1882 and the years previous. Since the foundation of the Government until within the last fifteen years practically all of the immigrants came from Great Britain and Ireland, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries, and was very largely of Teutonic stock, with a large percentage of Celtic. Fifteen millions of these immigrants have made their homes in the republic. They have been the pathfinders in the west and northwest, and are intelligent, industrious, sturdy people. They have contributed largely to the development of the country and its resources, and to them is due, in a great measure, the high standard of American citizenship. How much of this success is due to the quality of the immigration and how much to the conditions they found here is a problem that has not been fully considered. In the earlier years there were excellent opportunities for all, and the new arrivals became useful citizens. Now conditions are little or no better than in the European countries from which they come, and they form colonies in which their former ways and habits are perpetuated.

Mr. Sargent lays special emphasis on the change which has taken place in the character of the arriving immigrants. During the last fifteen years the country has been receiving a very undesirable class from southern and eastern Europe, which has taken the place of the Teutons and Celts. These constitute nearly 70 per cent. of the entire immigration for the last fiscal year. In discussing the problem of their disposal, Mr. Sargent says it is necessary, as a measure of public security, to devise and put in force some means by which alien arrivals may be distributed throughout the country, and thus be afforded opportunities of securing homes for themselves and their children. The problem of the quality of immigration is complicated by the influences which continuously interfere. If the matter were left judiciously alone, the only immigration likely to arrive in any considerable number would be made up of the best-informed, the most enterprising, self-reliant, and industrious of all European countries. No one would have sufficient courage to come to the western continent unless he were of the class likely to develop good citizenship. In fact, that was the class which largely made up the immigration of the earlier years. But as soon as