

THE CENSUS AND IMMIGRATION.



THE question of foreign immigration has of late engaged the most serious attention of the country, and in a constantly increasing degree. The race changes which have begun during the last decade among the immigrants to this country, the growth of the total immigration, and the effects of it upon our rates of wages and the quality of our citizenship, have excited much apprehension and aroused a very deep interest. The result has been a strong and growing feeling in favor of restricting immigration, or of endeavoring at least to exclude the most undesirable elements among the immigrants. There has been as yet very little practical legislation as an outcome of this popular feeling; and although something has been accomplished in this direction, it is not pretended that enough has been done by law to meet the perils arising from foreign immigration in any adequate way. The movement against indiscriminate and unlimited immigration is in fact still in the tentative stage. There is a strong public sentiment in favor of it, but the objects, purposes, and legislative methods necessary to give this sentiment practical effect are still vague and undefined.

It is therefore of the utmost importance to bring together and to publish as rapidly as possible all facts which throw light upon this question, and which will enable us to deal with it intelligently and efficiently in practice; for it is a grave and difficult problem, requiring both wisdom and patience for its proper settlement. The movement in favor of restriction proceeds on two grounds: first, that immigration is not only excessive, but that its quality is deteriorating; and second, that there is a large body of very undesirable immigration, which in any event ought to be shut out, because it tends to lower the quality of our citizenship, and, by the introduction in large masses of a very low class of labor, tends also to reduce unduly and dangerously American rates of wages.

Upon the points which touch the quality of the immigration to this country, the census of 1890, now practically complete, although not yet published in its final form, throws a good deal of light, and affords some interesting and suggestive comparisons.

The total white population of the United

States in 1890 was 54,983,890, divided as follows:

Native parentage	34,358,348
Foreign parentage	11,503,675
Foreign-born	9,121,867

Expressed in percentages of the total white population in the United States, the division is as follows:

Native parentage	62 per cent.
Foreign parentage	21 "
Foreign-born	17 "
Foreign birth and parentage	38 "

The proportion of undesirable elements in these divisions can be shown in part by a comparison of these percentages with those of like divisions in the criminal and pauper classes. An examination of the statistics of criminals, juvenile delinquents, and paupers ought to disclose the same proportions in birth and parentage as the total population, provided our immigration is equal in character to the inhabitants of the United States who have been here for one or more generations. The result of such an examination, however, is widely and even alarmingly different, as the following figures prove.

Of the convicts in penitentiaries 48 per cent. are of native parentage, while 52 per cent. are of foreign birth and parentage; or, in other words, while persons of foreign birth and parentage furnish a little more than one third of the total white population of the country, they furnish more than half of the criminals.

Of juvenile delinquents 39 per cent. are of native parentage, and 61 per cent. of foreign birth or parentage. That is to say, persons of foreign birth or parentage are a little more than one third of our population, and yet they furnish nearly two thirds of our juvenile delinquents, the inmates of reformatories.

Of the paupers in almshouses 41 per cent. are of native parentage, and 59 per cent. of foreign birth or parentage. Again it will be noticed that while persons of foreign birth or parentage furnish only one third of the population, they supply nearly two thirds of the paupers in almshouses. In this last case, however, it is proper to go a little more into detail. Of the 59 per cent. of paupers of foreign birth or parentage only 8 per cent. are born in this country, while 51 per cent. are foreign-born. These last figures are startling. The foreign-

born constitute only 17 per cent. of our total white population,—in round numbers about a sixth,—and yet they furnish *over half of all the paupers in almshouses throughout the country.* This fact of itself certainly shows that an immigration which supplies more than half the inmates of our almshouses might, to say the least, be sifted with great advantage.

The census of 1890 unfortunately has no statistics in regard to the defective classes, so that we are unable to get any light from it upon the physical conditions of our immigrants during the past ten years. The census of 1880, on the other hand, although it gave full statistics of the defective as well as of the delinquent classes, did not classify the population or the criminal, delinquent, and pauper classes according to parentage, but merely divided them into native and foreign-born. It is therefore possible to make comparisons only between the foreign-born of 1880 and the foreign-born of 1890 in the criminal, delinquent, and pauper classes. Even these limited comparisons, however, are well worth making, and are very suggestive.

In 1880 the foreign-born furnished 15.4 per cent. of the total white population, while of criminals (classified in 1880 as prisoners, and including both convicts in penitentiaries and prisoners in county jails) they furnished 30 per cent.; of paupers in almshouses they supplied 38 per cent.; and of juvenile delinquents, 10 per cent.¹ The following table gives the comparison between these percentages and those of 1890 in the same classes:

	1880.	1890.
Percentage of foreign-born to total white population.....	15.4	17
Prisoners in penitentiaries and county jails	30	28
Paupers in almshouses	38	51
Juvenile delinquents.....	10	14.5

It will be seen from this comparison that the percentage of criminals of foreign birth has fallen off slightly in the last ten years, owing probably to the improvements in immigrant legislation and the better enforcement of the immigration laws, which have taken effect, so far as they have had any effect at all, almost exclusively against criminals. The number of juvenile delinquents of foreign birth, on the other hand, has increased somewhat (four and a half per cent.) since 1880. In these two classes, therefore, there has been, comparatively speaking, no marked change of percentages; but when we come to paupers in almshouses we find a very different result. While the percentage of

our foreign-born inhabitants to the total white population has increased only about two per cent., the number of paupers of foreign birth in our almshouses has increased thirteen per cent., from 1880 to 1890. This fact shows in the most unanswerable way that the immigration to this country has deteriorated very decidedly during the last ten years, and that the race changes which have begun in that period have been accompanied by a far greater change in the general quality of the immigrants.

There seems to be little need of comment upon these facts and figures, which speak for themselves only too plainly. Something certainly ought to be done, and done at once, to restrict, or at least to sift, thoroughly an immigration which furnishes more than half our paupers, while it supplies only one sixth of our total white population. The undesirable proportion thus disclosed is too dangerously large. The census figures indicate that even the very inadequate legislation which has thus far been obtained, together with a better enforcement of the laws, has succeeded in preventing any increase in the proportion of the criminal class among our immigrants; but the law is evidently utterly helpless as it now stands in shutting out paupers, who are coming here in greatly increased numbers, far beyond the natural increase of the total immigration. There can be no reasonable doubt, moreover, judging from these facts, that if we had the means of comparison, it would appear that the defective classes, the insane, and the physically disabled among the immigrants had increased during the last decade in like ratio with the paupers.

These are facts which may well give us pause, and they disclose conditions which, if continued, will have graver and worse effects upon our people and our future welfare than all other public questions now engaging public attention would have together. It is not my purpose here to enter upon the wide field which would be opened by any discussion of the general restriction of immigration on the grounds of excessive numbers, illiteracy, or low forms of labor. I have confined myself merely to a consideration of the effects of recent immigration in adding disproportionately to the crime and pauperism of the country, and of its exact share therein. Beyond that it is not necessary to go. The census figures bearing on this point are certainly alarming, and deserve the most serious consideration of the American people and of their representatives in Congress. Whatever may be said on the general question of foreign immigration, it is beyond question that it is not only our right but our plain, imperative, and very immediate duty to protect ourselves against the immigration of criminals, and also against this steadily swelling stream of pauper-

¹ The percentage of juvenile delinquents is of course relatively small, because the proportion of juvenile immigrants is small compared with the whole body of immigrants.

ism which fills our almshouses, places upon our taxpayers burdens which should be borne by other nations, and introduces among us an ever-increasing element of deterioration in the general quality of our citizenship. More legislation is needed, and needed at once, to exclude, if nothing more, the criminal and pauper

classes now being thrust upon us in large numbers by Europe. We should not, in my opinion, think for a moment of stopping there, but at the point where we are confronted with pauperism, disease, and crime we ought certainly to make a beginning in the work of restriction.¹

Henry Cabot Lodge.

1 The following tables give in detail the figures and percentages which have been used in this article. A word of explanation is necessary in regard to those relating to convicts in penitentiaries, juvenile delinquents, paupers in almshouses, and prisoners in county jails. They have been taken from the bulletins of Dr. Wines, the well-known expert in such statistics. They are reached by throwing out all persons whose parentage is unknown in whole or in part, and then dividing those persons who had one native and one foreign parent equally between the foreign and native parentage. Dr. Wines's figures obtained in this way give as accurately as is possible the proportion of foreign or immigrant blood among the criminals, juvenile delinquents, and paupers according to the latest and best official figures.

Paupers in Almshouses	53,695	21,993	4,054	27,648
Prisoners in County Jails	12,392	5,579	3,048	3,765

THE SAME BY PERCENTAGES.

	Native of Native Parentage.	Native of Foreign Parentage.	Foreign-born.
Total Population	62.5	20.9	16.6
Convicts in Penitentiaries ..	48.2	26.2	25.6
Juvenile Delinquents	38.9	46.4	14.7
Paupers in Almshouses	40.9	7.6	51.5
Prisoners in County Jails ..	45.0	24.6	30.4

CRIMINAL AND DELINQUENT CLASSES, FROM THE CENSUS OF 1880.

	Total White of Known Parentage.	Native-born.	Foreign-born.
Prisoners	42,563	29,756	12,807
Paupers in Almshouses	60,570	37,603	22,967
Juvenile Delinquents	10,220	9,213	1,007

THE SAME BY PERCENTAGES.

	Prisoners.	Native-born.	Foreign-born.
Prisoners	60.9	30.1	
Paupers in Almshouses	62.1	37.9	
Juvenile Delinquents	90.1	9.9	

CRIMINAL AND DELINQUENT CLASSES, FROM THE CENSUS OF 1890.

	Total White of Known Parentage.	Native-born of Native Parents.	Native-born of Foreign Parents.	Foreign-born.
Total Population ..	54,983,890	34,358,348	11,503,675	9,121,867
Convicts in Penitentiaries	28,439	13,715	7,457	7,267
Juvenile Delinquents	9,577	3,726	4,446	1,405

THE HEAVENLY CHERUBS.

(MADONNA DI SAN SISTO.)

NURSLINGS of peace, ye babes with luminous brow
 And eyes still deepening with sweet, holy calm,
 What far-off radiance, what mighty psalm
 Breathed through unnumbered hosts, has rapt your look
 Fast on the brooding skies, as on some charmed book!

Heart-flowers of heaven, could earth but reach ye now!
 Oh, could our speech, in such celestial wise
 As angels talk in, ever you apprise,
 Then should I learn, white souls, the grace ye see
 (But at your glance must die) — yet give that glance to me!

Cherub of silence, with your warning sign
 Of beauteous gesture and bright lips congealed,
 Out of a glory pondering glories sealed —
 Dreamer, I 'd wake thee though the heavenly eyes,
 Rising on me — frail life — should to sweet death surprise!

With what clear grace of innocence divine,
 Finger on lip, the sinless Child attends!
 The Holy Mother with his vision blends:
 Love's star adumbrate in the Sun of Love,
 Orbed in his steadfast eyes, shine all the choirs above!

John J. Shutterly, Jr.