

TIME

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IMMIGRATION

Pro and Con

The N. I. C. B. (National Industrial Conference Board) called an N. I. C. (National Immigration Conference) in Manhattan. To this meeting came representatives of many occupations and many organizations bringing divergent opinions.

There were the charitably inclined, and the representatives of alien organizations, who advocated taking down the bars to admit large groups of refugees and the down-trodden people of the world.

There were business men, advocating increases of quota and selection of immigrants to increase the labor supply.

There were labor representatives and officers of patriotic societies proposing further restriction on the flow of immigrants.

There were others, less directly concerned, who spoke from inclination or by invitation.

Most of the speakers advocated restriction and selection, but as to the degree and variety of each there was no consensus of opinion. Especially, there were two different methods of attacking the problem—from the industrial standpoint, and from the standpoint of the welfare of the race and of citizenship.

¶ E. J. Henning, Assistant Secretary of Labor, told how he had sent a man from the employment department of a large corporation to see for himself at Ellis Island. The man reported that not more than 20% of the immigrants were candidates for industrial positions, that not more than 10% would qualify, that probably not more than 5% would give satisfaction if employed.

¶ Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn, President of the American Museum of



PROF. HENRY FAIRFIELD OSBORN

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Natural History, spoke from the standpoint of anthropology: "In cold-blooded, scientific language our best stock is threatened with extinction." Nevertheless, he opposed the "bias of this country in favor of the Nordic immigrant. This is a mistake. Selective immigration would prevent such a mistake and take from healthy, sound families the type we want. I believe that in Italy and in the Balkans there can be found desirable types of future Americans."

¶ Major General Henry T. Allen, former commander of the Army of Occupation in Germany, told of the pressure which will soon be exerted to force emigration from Great Britain and Germany. "It is inevitable that Germany must renew her exportation of human beings as she did in the 80's . . ."

¶ A silk manufacturer contributed these phrases: "We have a tremendous reservoir of labor in this country. We used to say, 'Let George do it.' Now we say, 'Let Giovanni do it.' We can do it ourselves. Those who demand an unlimited labor supply have upon them the burden of proof not only that they need labor but that they need to get it outside the country."

¶ A member of the Liberal Immigration League declared that we need illiterates "to fill the places of Irish track walkers we have now raised to Congress."

¶ An impartial record of the proceedings is to be sent to Congress.

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