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THE PROBLEM OF AMERICANIZATION

(Grover G. Hubner, University of Wisconsin.)

"Americanization" is assimilation in the United States. It is the process by which immigrants are transformed into Americans. It is not the mere adoption of American citizenship, but the actual raising of the immigrant to the American economic, social and moral standard of life. Then has an immigrant been Americanized only when his mind and will have been united with the mind and will of the American so that the two act and think together. The American of today is, therefore, not the American of yesterday. He is the result of the assimilation of all the different nationalities of the United States which have been united so as to think and act together.

Again, Americanization is very different from amalgamation. Amalgamation is but one force that appears in the Americanization process and that an unimportant one, as it usually occurs only after the immigrant has been at least partly Americanized. Furthermore, "to think and act together" does not necessitate that race ties are wholly lost. That is its usual meaning, but nationalities such as the Jews, Italians, Bohemians and even Scandinavians often settle in practically exclusive settlements. Such settlements are Americanized in as much as the immigrants learn to think and act like Americans. "To think and act together" in some cases is, therefore, to think and act like Americans, and in others it is the actual uniting of the minds and activities of the immigrants with those of the Americans by actual, permanent association.

Finally, it is essential to recognize degrees of Americanization. Some immigrants will adopt certain American methods, customs and ideas, but will refuse, or prove themselves unable, to adopt others. Some will quite fully adopt the industrial methods of American industry and yet be unable to speak the English language. While they are not fully Americanized, they are at least to a greater or less degree.

The Forces of Americanization

The question now to determine is: What is being done to meet this growing difficulty in the problem of Americanization? What are the Americanizing forces? How do they affect the immigrant? Are they the same for all nationalities? Are they the same for the city as for the country? To what extent are they successful with the various nationalities? What forces are doing most to meet the problem?

The School

The importance of the school as an Americanization force lies chiefly in its effect upon the second generation; yet indirectly it effects the adult immigrant himself, in as much as his children, consciously and unconsciously, influence him in the same direction. A considerable number of immigrants, also, come as children and can and do attend school.

What Does The School Do To Americanize The Immigrant?

The following are some of the main Americanizing activities of the schools: It at once throws the children of different nationalities into mutual relationship. This inevitably breaks up the habits of any one of the foreign nationalities. The next step is, then, to adopt a common way of thinking and acting, which practically means the adoption of the American standard. This does not, however, apply to exclusive foreign colonies where schools may consist of a single nationality.

In many cases it not only means the forced association of different nationalities, but of an immigrant child with children who are already Americanized. It is evident that in this case, which is the normal one, the immigrant child necessarily loses its foreign ideas and unconsciously adopts the thought and activities of the American companions. Even in the so-called foreign colonies, where schools are filled with practically a single nationality, the un-Americanized will be obliged to see the customs of their own nationality who are already partly Americanized.

The school teaches the children the English language. This en-

ables them to associate with various nationalities in their community, even outside of the school. It is probably necessary that a distinction be drawn here between the country and the city. The testimony is universal that the English language is essential for Americanization in the city. Yet in the country it is quite plain that the English language is not necessary in order to secure a very considerable degree of Americanization. There are many farmers in the Northwest who can not speak English and yet they are acquainted with the American methods of agriculture. There are settlements of Bohemians, Germans and Scandinavians in Wisconsin and Michigan who cannot speak English, but they are Americans in practically every other sense.

The school tends to break up hostility between nationalities. Not only is the natural consequence of the close association between the children of different nationalities in the school, but the teacher prevents its open appearance and teaches the existence of common interests.

It teaches American traditions and the history of our institutions. This again means breaking up of race ties and the building up of social solidarity. Under this comes, also, the growth of American patriotism, which, while important industrially, is a step toward the assimilation of minds and wills. The school is the first and chief trainer of the immigrant child's mind to fit it for originality and inventiveness. It enlarges the child's capacity. The American characteristic of aspiration to reach a higher plain of production is transmitted to the immigrant child. This Americanizes the thought of the immigrant.

WHAT INADEQUATE HOUSING MEANS

(Issued by the United States Department of Labor.)

To the City.

Bad reputation.
Loss of industries seeking a new location.
Inability to attract the better types of men and families.
Unsanitary and unsanitary streets and alleys.
Rapid depreciation of property.
Increased fire risk.
Over burdened public utilities and hence poor service.
Lack of city enthusiasm for city improvements.
A migratory spirit un conducive to civic pride and to the acquisition of American ideals.
Juvenile delinquency.
Increased immorality.

To the Employers.

Difficulty in securing labor from outside the city.
Less desirable class of labor.
Definite check on expansion of plant.
Large labor turnover.
Lowered vitality of workers.
Frequent absences of laborers.
Weakened morale of labor forces.
Strikes and labor trouble.
Reduced capacity of plant.
Uncertainty of complete contracts.
A subletting of contracts.
Reduced production through inefficiency.

To the Worker and His Family.

High rentals.
Overcrowding.
Sickness.
Loss of wages due to above and frequent moving.
Inconvenient location.
Strained family relations.
High infant mortality.
Blighted development of children.
Immoral associates for the entire family.

To the Nation.

Reduced efficiency.
Waste of man power.
Waste in transportation.
Waste in national wealth through the above and through more rapid deterioration of house and increased fire risks.
Lowered vitality of citizens.
Industrial discontent and social unrest.
Poor citizenship.

Rheims Restoration Fund.

Cardinal Lucon has addressed a letter to all the French bishops recommending a plan for the raising of a fund for the restoration of the Rheims Cathedral.

Corning Glass Works

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