

FROM FOREIGN SOIL

COMMISSIONER POWDERLY'S ANNUAL REPORT ON IMMIGRATION.

About the Same Number of Male Immigrants as During the Year Before, But of a More Desirable Class—Some Excellent Recommendations to Prevent All Naturalization Frauds.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 11.—Commissioner General T. V. Powderly, of the immigration bureau, in his annual report to the secretary of the treasury, gives the total number of immigrants who arrived in the United States during the last fiscal year as 229,229, a decrease as compared with the fiscal year 1897 of 1,533. Of the whole number 135,775 were males and 93,521 females; 105,730 came into the United States through Canada.

During the year, 3,683 were debarred and of this number there were 12 insane, one idiot, 2,261 paupers or persons likely to become a public charge; 258 diseased persons, two convicts, 79 assisted emigrants and 417 contract laborers.

One hundred and ninety-nine were returned within one year after landing. Of the whole number over 14 years of age, 1,056 could not write; 43,057 could neither read nor write; 37,063 over 20 years of age had \$30 or over and 96,203 had less than \$30. The total amount of money shown by immigrants during the year was \$3,875,077, but the actual amount brought over was probably greatly in excess of this amount. Of the whole number of arrivals 58,613 came from Italy; 27,221 from Russia proper; 25,128 from Ireland; 17,111 from Germany; 16,619 from Hungary; 12,210 from Galicia and Bukowina in Austria-Hungary; 12,398 from Sweden and 9,987 from England.

Of the total number of steerage passengers arrived during the year 54 were actors; 59 artists; 587 clergymen; 12 editors; 43 engravers; 37 lawyers; 223 musicians; 81 physicians; 136 sculptors; 288 teachers; 47 accountants; 1,460 bakers; 1,072 barbers; 1,173 blacksmiths; 150 brewers; 1,071 butchers; 2,904 carpenters and joiners; 706 dress-makers; 2,635 mariners; 1,551 masons; 1,604 miners; 741 painters; 52,531 laborers; 4,429 merchants, and 23,655 servants. These figures, however, the report states, are not to be relied upon as indicating what pursuit they will follow in this country, for it is evident that many of the new arrivals did not engage in farming and it is reasonably certain that more than 1,604 miners found their way to the coal regions. The total arrival of male immigrants during the present fiscal year are slightly in excess of those for the year next before it, and it is fair to assume, the report states, represents a more desirable class, since those from European countries show an increase of 2,730 while those from other sources, principally Asiatic, exhibit a decrease of 2,662.

It appears again that although there has been a diminution in the total immigrations, yet in respect to their means of immediate self-support the arrivals of this year are more desirable for they exhibited to the examining officials \$3,875,077, an amount in excess of that shown in the fiscal year ended June 30, 1897, of \$310,836.

The commissioner suggests an amendment to the laws excepting immigrants shown to be afflicted with a loathsome or a dangerous contagious disease from the right of appeal or of a hearing before the board of special inquiry.

He also recommends that the amount of the tax be increased from \$1 to \$2, "so as to furnish," he says, "a fund sufficient to equip the bureau to its full capacity in protecting the American people from disease; taxpayers from unjust burdens, the hospitals and penal institutions from an influx of diseased persons and criminals from other countries."

Mr. Powderly states that the naturalization laws of the United States have been repeatedly violated, and in his opinion each arriving immigrant when admitted to the United States should be provided with a landing certificate setting forth the name, age, sex, birth place of the immigrant, government to which allegiance is due, the port from which the vessel sailed, the name of the vessel, the name of the line it belongs to, the port it arrived at and the date of landing. The immigrant should be instructed by means of a circular to retain the certificate for presentation when applying for naturalization papers.

A record setting forth such facts to be known as an immigrant directory should be kept for information of the department. An act of congress authoriz-

ing such a course of procedure and requiring an alien presenting himself for naturalization to present such a certificate or a duplicate from the immigrant directory would facilitate the work of the department and go far towards preventing fraud in securing naturalization papers.

The commissioner expresses the belief that the figures given of the arrival of immigrants through Canada represents only in part the actual immigration through that country and he suggests as a remedy the enactment of a law authorizing the secretary of the treasury to designate certain points along the border separating this country from the dominion to be the sole points of entry for trans-Atlantic of Pacific immigrants and of all Canadians who have not resided in Canada at least five years prior to their migration to this country.

It would be possible, he said, under such a system to abandon the offices stationed on Canadian soil and to transfer them to the points designated where buildings could be erected for the accommodation of immigrants pending examination as at the seaports of the United States.