

Foreign Born Builders of America

NATIVE AMERICANS, even those not very far removed from their foreign born immigrant ancestors are placing too little value on the contributions to the building of America coming from the foreign born and written to their credit on the page of America's history of progress.

The thing however that should be clearly distinguished is that those of foreign birth who have left the deepest imprints are those who set out to become Americans and take their places among the people of this land and **not** among those of their nationals who are content with their foreign standards, the nationality center and the foreign tongue.

The example these foreign born builders of America have set should be the guiding star to good American citizenship for every foreign born, lighting the road of true Americanization leading to the goal of a worthy ambition.

The nationality group tied and group bound American citizen of foreign birth who harkens to the nationality tongue appeal, consciously or unconsciously, places a handicap in his own path while he works tediously at the unprofitable task of cultivating himself in a foreign tongue that offers no field of advantage in America, where the soil never will yield a commensurate compensation for diligent toil and where the keenest intellectual talent can produce but a meager interest on the investment. His physical strength may return him a fair competence before it is spent, but he will never feel that this is his country. He never made it so—only a place where he could earn good money—and when youth flies and age sets its imprint upon his bent shoulders and furrowed brow he feels that here he is but a stranger and in his heart he yearns for the imaginary shores of childhood, the dreamland that all through life had had his attention and love, while he forgot his obligation and his duty to the new homeland and denied it a place in his heart.

Quite different is the story of the immigrant who set out to become an American. While he cherished fond recollections of the old homeland, he cultivated a new love growing in proportion as he learned to

think and speak as an American, at the same time cultivating American friends and neighbors.

Interesting indeed are the chapters of America's history that deals with the Americanization and progress of the true-blue foreign born who came here with an honest intent, hued out their future and have left their descendants an inheritance of moral fibre that none but ingrate native born will repudiate.

* * *

A current news item tells of the recent death in St. Louis Missouri, of N. O. Nelson, founder of the N. O. Nelson Manufacturing Company of that city and one of the largest producers of plumbing fixtures in the world. He had of recent years become known as a millionaire philanthropist and as one of the first large employers of labor in this country who began experimenting in profit sharing with his employees.

Nels Olson Nelson was born in Lillesand, Norway, in 1844. While he was only a young boy he came to America with his parents, the family settling in Texas and later moving to Missouri, where they located on a farm near St. Joseph. In 1869 he was married to Almeria Posegate of St. Joseph, and four years later he moved with his family to St. Louis.

After a few years as bookkeeper in a plumbing concern, he founded in 1877, a plumbing business of his own. In a few years his company grew to be one of the largest in the world. In 1885 he introduced the profit sharing system in his factory, and in 1890 he established a manufacturing plant near Edwardsville, Illinois, founding the co-operative community of LeClaire. The company paid dividends from four to ten per cent on the wages of the employees, and in 1905 Nelson decided to divide the entire profits of his business between his employees and customers.

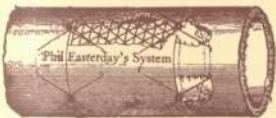
A few years ago Nelson established a number of co-operative stores in New Orleans, in an attempt to relieve poverty which he found there, but during the period of rising prices brought on by the war, the project encountered great difficulties and the chain of stores finally were discontinued.

He also established a hospital for poor people in the mountains of the west, but this project also he was forced to discontinue on account of the imposition of many unworthy people.

Nelson, while intensely American, retained throughout his lifetime a deep interest in the people from which he had sprung and was always proud of his Norse blood.

Dr. Mark A. Mathews of Seattle is modernizing the Bible a bit by finding some reference to automobiles in Nahum's description of motors(?) in Nahum, 2nd chapter, 3-4 verse: "The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightning."

Concrete Pipe Company



Culvert Pipe
Irrigation Pipe
Drainage Sewer Pipe
Gravity Water System

Office: 827 Board of Trade Building
Phone Marshall 1632

Factory: 410 River Street
Phone East 4588

Portland : : : Oregon

"Everything for the Office"

Commercial Stationary



Printing
Engraving
Bookbinding

Seals and Rubber Stamps

Phone Broadway 6081

Fifth and Oak Streets Portland, Oregon

Place Your Orders With The Western American Advertisers—and Tell Them Why