

# THE UNITED American

A MAGAZINE OF GOOD CITIZENSHIP

Devoted to the Cause of

*Americanization, Assimilation and Group Elimination; Pointing the way to a Constitutional Americanism, to Equality in Citizenship, and a better understanding between Native born and Foreign born.*

Vol. 2 Continuous  
Volume 20

January, 1924

Number 4

## QUALIFYING ALIENS FOR AMERICAN LIFE HAPHAZARD AMERICANIZATION COSTLY TO AMERICA

**I**S THE concept of real and true Americanization, the welding and molding process to good American citizenship for foreign and native born alike, such a difficult thing to comprehend?

If we base our conclusions upon the common expressions of misconception, prevalent among people who assay to "Americanize," we should hold to the affirmative.

America's alien problem has been aggravated and enlarged upon in every way because of the common ignorance of the inherent values which the people of foreign birth have brought to America.

Much of this could have been prevented if the Americanization of the alien people in America had been given sufficient and serious attention among the American people in a general way. Only a few have from the start considered it in its proper light and sought to arouse general interest also for the purpose of eliminating the mentally and educationally deficient people who in the very beginning attached themselves to the Americanization movement for the social and political attention thereby to be gained on a new plane, in some undisputable altruistic cause.

Too many people have attached themselves to the Americanization movement with the false notion that the chief requirement of an "Americanizer" is native birth. The erroneous conception of Americanization — common among the foreign born and prevalent in many circles among our finest native Americans — is undeniably due to the mischief done by people who sally forth to transform the foreign born into that kind of "Americans" they are themselves. Their hoity-toity opinions of themselves and their naive notions about the foreign born as a whole, as expressed in their activities and their "missionering" speeches on occasion, are the specific factors which in this movements formative period unfortunately

has served a purpose reacting negatively to the Americanization cause.

\* \* \*

Only recently we listened to a speech by a man who without any special training for Americanization work had taken upon himself the task of preparing a number of foreign born for citizenship. His remarks gave conclusive evidence that he approached his duties, in a new field, with the idea that it was so easy that to use his own words, he "expected to put it over — big." In a field where there are no trained teachers and instructors to be had, the willingness on the part of one man, with some general teaching experience, to help men and women who apply for citizenship to study the essentials in history and government to a point where they are able to answer a few questions and pass a limited naturalization test, should be duly appreciated. Under these conditions it is safe to say that the government representatives in naturalization matters: examiner and judge, occupy trying positions. Anyone carefully watching the proceedings would draw the conclusion that they admit applicants into citizenship half heartedly and at times because of pity and out of consideration for the applicants' earnestness and the evident struggle they have made to gain the intelligence held necessary to citizenship, instead of on the ground of the applicants' satisfying intelligence.

The period of citizenship training is the most vital period in the life of the foreign born in America. Due to the new standards required he becomes conscious of his actual unfitness and takes up his preparatory study with considerable apprehension. Again for a period he becomes openminded and willing to learn. If the teacher is one of special training, who knows the mental reservations, the racial or nationality background of his pupils, who understands how