

can government will shoulder the responsibility which properly belongs to it — that of supplying Americanization Schools for the immigrants.

Evening schools for aliens were first established in Astoria about seven years ago; however, their largest growth has been within the last two years. Last year, I think it is fair to say that fully ten percent of all adult foreign-born people of the city were enrolled in these institutions and showed a deep interest.

These adult students are divided into three classes or groups.

The first group includes those who know very little or no English, mostly recent immigrants. The work of their teachers is the teaching of the reading, writing and speaking of the English language. Little else is attempted altho no opportunity is lost to inculcate certain fundamental American ideas of social and political relationship. A very direct, conversational method is used. Certain objects are brought into the room and named, certain acts are done and described. These words are used over again and again until the alien has learned to pronounce and use them. Although we believe it desirable that the teachers of these classes know the native tongue of their students, we insist that only English be spoken. During the instruction period, the student must depend absolutely upon the tongue he is to learn. And so the time is spent in naming familiar objects and acts, in writing the names on the blackboards, and in simply worded conversational exercises. Much time is given to the effort to bring about correct pronunciations. To do this the teacher personally demonstrates how lips, tongue and teeth are placed and drills individually and collectively until the correct sound can be given. Through such methods we have secured from these people very rapid and very excellent progress. In fact, some in three or four months are speaking English with considerable fluency. It is very important, however, that the classes be small. Hence, we insist that no class be above twenty and prefer that there be about twelve or fifteen. This is because we feel that the success of our work depends very largely upon individual teaching, a condition which is impossible in a large class.

The second group includes those who can speak and read the language. To these students, we give a considerable variety of work, that is, we give them more difficult lessons in English, and we attempt through the lesson to teach them something of the history and geography of our country. One of our greatest purposes is the arousing of an intense pride in America. To reach this end, we tell of our greater historical accomplishments, of our eminent men and women and what they have done for the service of the nation, and of the magnitude and wealth of the country. They learn about our great railways and manufactories, our mines and forests. We stress the opportunities before them and their children and call attention to the many foreign-born Americans who have risen high in our country. In short, we do all we can to build up such a pride and love of our country as will lead them to portray America in their letters to their home land as a wholly desirable place in which to live. We believe that the producing of this pride is an indispensable step in the Americanizing of these people. I

believe it safe to say that our greatest aim in dealing with the second group is, and should be everywhere in the adult schools, the building of such a mental attitude. For such classes, we prefer as teachers the children of the foreign-born, men and women educated in our normal schools and colleges who appreciate most fully what America has done and can do for the immigrant. It seems to me that such teachers impart the needed lessons more efficiently than those whose parents have been long in America. Possibly they feel more deeply the attitude which we would give.

The third class is the citizenship group. It is made up of men and women who have been in America long enough and have learned the language well enough to prepare for naturalization. These students learn of our government, how it was originally built, how it has developed, and the part all citizens should play in it. We urge that they frankly express their criticisms of America; there is no other way for us to find out and explain away their doubts. And we find many of them. The governments of their native countries are not alone so very different, but many of them believe that the ideals of government they have formed in their old countries are much more nearly perfect than we have been able to attain in America. Then again their foreign language papers in America are very often mildly or severely caustic and politically of a socialistic tendency.

For these reasons we find among the foreign-born much condemnation of America's government. The wise teacher does not condemn his students for these doubts; he knows full well that placed in a similar position he too, might easily get the wrong point of view. It is the teacher's business to explain, to discuss, kindly, fairly, intelligently. He must make clear the great fundamental ideas upon which our government is founded; he must show clearly that it is so constructed as to depend absolutely upon its citizenship, that it cannot rise higher than their level and that the only way America or any other free country can even approach ideal political conditions is by building an active, loyal, intelligent

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