

West Shore

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Saturday, June 7, 1890.

FROM one end of the country to the other the air is burdened with cries of discontent by the mechanics who do the manual labor of the land, and not without reason. Strike follows strike, and when each and all are settled, the great cause of the trouble still remains. The trouble with us is that we protect our manufactured products but not the men who make them. European goods are kept out of our markets by a high wall of tariff they can not surmount, but a steady stream of cheap labor is permitted to flow into our labor markets and crowd out the intelligent American mechanic, the man who is the head of a family, who rears his children in a spirit of patriotic love for their country and infuses them with the true spirit of Americanism. It is upon these the perpetuation of our free, democratic government by and for the people must depend. Thousands of men are coming to America yearly whose only idea of liberty is personal license, who have not the faintest conception of what a government by the people means in its broadest and truest sense, who do not even learn to speak or read the English language, who form a mass of ignorance and political corruption that, swayed by demagogues and bribe givers, threatens to overthrow the virtue of the ballot as a means of ascertaining the true will of the people in the matters of government and public policy—nay, even does do it in some localities.

Why do we want more labor in America? We already have enough to develop our resources as rapidly as it can be done to advantage, and we already have more than can be thoroughly Americanized and converted into healthful and safe members of the body politic during the next generation. To be sure, we receive many very desirable men and women from Europe. It is possible in every community to point to

some whose coming to this country has been a blessing to it in some particular, while thousands of industrious immigrants can not be said to be objectionable in any particular save their ignorance of American institutions; yet, if the bars could be put up for a generation, it would give the heterogenous mass now composing our population time to become assimilated, infused with true Americanism and be converted into loyal, patriotic citizens of a country they have learned to love as their own. Then, if we need more aid to develop our wonderful resources—and there does not seem a possibility that we shall, for as a people we are increasing in numbers at a remarkable rate—we can again take down the bars with a reasonable degree of safety.

Granted that to stop all immigration is an extreme and somewhat impracticable measure—though we have done it from China and can, by the passport system, do it almost as effectually from the rest of the world—yet we can certainly stop the most undesirable portion by proper legislation carefully carried into effect. There is, however, a necessary measure that can at once be taken that will have a wonderful effect in purifying the politics of this country. The naturalization laws can be repealed entirely, or so modified that a man can not become an American citizen until he can read and write English, can explain our system of government, can tell who George Washington and Abraham Lincoln were and what they did, and has been here long enough to feel that this is his country and that he has an interest in perpetuating its free institutions unsullied. "America for Americans" should be the motto of every loyal citizen, provided the word "Americans" is intended to include every man who believes in true American principles, is anxious to conserve our democratic institutions and loves the country in which he lives, regardless of what corner of the earth may have been his birthplace. Strike, then, if you will, you discontented bone and sinew of the land, but strike where your blows will count not only for yourselves but for your children yet unborn.

Michigan university, at Ann Arbor, is rapidly acquiring the reputation of being the most disorderly and poorly governed institution of the kind in America. Every few days the telegraph is burdened with an account of a riot by students at a theater, a prize fight, a circus or parade of some kind. A dozen years ago the trustees dismissed an entire class because some of its members had been guilty of an act deserving dismissal and the class declined to divulge their names. This heroic measure had a wonderful effect for a few years upon the discipline of the university. Now, it seems, the government of the school has fallen into less competent and weaker hands, and the uni-