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Synopsis of Miss Gage's Address

I have just returned from my first visit to New York City. Nothing there interested me more than "Ellis Island"—the gateway through which all the immigrant population comes to this country. Since this time last evening at least 3000 people have been added to the population of the United States from this source alone. More than 1,000,000 people have passed through this gateway during the last year. A million people doesn't mean much to us, but you must often stand in front of your gate to let a freight train go by before you can cross.

Supposing the procession of immigrants should be passing tonight when you want to go to your home, how long should you need to wait?

141 days and nights for the Russians and Austrians to go by, 84 days for the Italians, and then 41 days more for the Irishmen, and 32 days for the people from Norskland and after that all the people from Asia would crowd before you.

If all these should go into the Willamette Valley to live, they would settle 100 cities the size of Salem. You could make a whole State of Oregon,

out of people who know no trade and the State of Washington out of people who can neither read nor write.

Tonight I am not troubling myself about what we can do with all these people, because all the people of the United States could move to Texas and every man, woman and child could have room for a house 30 feet square and living room around it.

But I am asking myself why they came. There are many influences that bring them here but the one underlying reason is that they believe they will be "better off." What are the conditions at home that made them want to change?

I have seen a buffalo and a woman plowing a field together in Turkey, I have seen a woman and a donkey working side by side in France, I have seen a woman in Austria struggling up the steep ladders carrying brick to build the palaces for the kings. And these all tell a story that gives the good reason for the rush of immigration. The civilization and prosperity of a country or a people is always indexed by the condition and position of its women. But the foundation of our prosperity must be looked for in more fundamental than these external conditions. In our christian faith, it was