

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF IMMIGRATION: SECRETARY DAVIS REVIEWS INFLOW OF ...

By JAMES J. DAVIS, Secretary of Labor.

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF IMMIGRATION

IMMIGRATION will be the next big subject before Congress, after the tax legislation has been disposed of. In the main the issue to be settled may be summed up in these two questions: Shall the present law be extended? Shall a more drastic or less drastic bill be passed? The Johnson measure, reported out of committee a few days ago, provides for increased restrictions; it reduces the present 3 per cent. quota to 2 per cent. In view of this situation at Washington the following article by the Secretary of Labor in which he tells the story of a century of immigration and presents the policy he advocates, has an especial timeliness.

By JAMES J. DAVIS,
Secretary of Labor.

BETWEEN now and June 30 Congress must decide one of the most momentous questions which ever faced the American people. Upon that date expires the Three Per Cent. law, which limits the number of aliens entering the United States in a fiscal year to that percentage of the foreign-born persons of such nationality in the United States as shown by the census of 1910.

If that body fails to re-enact the present act or does not pass a new law making some such numerical restriction of aliens entering the United States, then the flood gates will be open and undoubtedly there will be the greatest inundation of foreigners through the portals of our immigration receiving stations which this or any other nation has ever known. For there are literally millions of aliens in Europe and the Near East eagerly and anxiously waiting for an opportunity to migrate to this country.

Generally speaking, then, the only checks upon unlimited immigration will be the laws excluding the Chinese and Asiatics living within the barred zone, the acts excluding the importation of women for immoral purposes, and barring idiots and other mentally deficient and likely to become public charges; criminals, polygamists, contract laborers, anarchists, diseased; the understanding with the Japanese Government whereby laborers will be discouraged from emigrating from Japan to the United States, and people unable to pass a literacy test, reading understanding about forty words in some language selected by the immigrant.

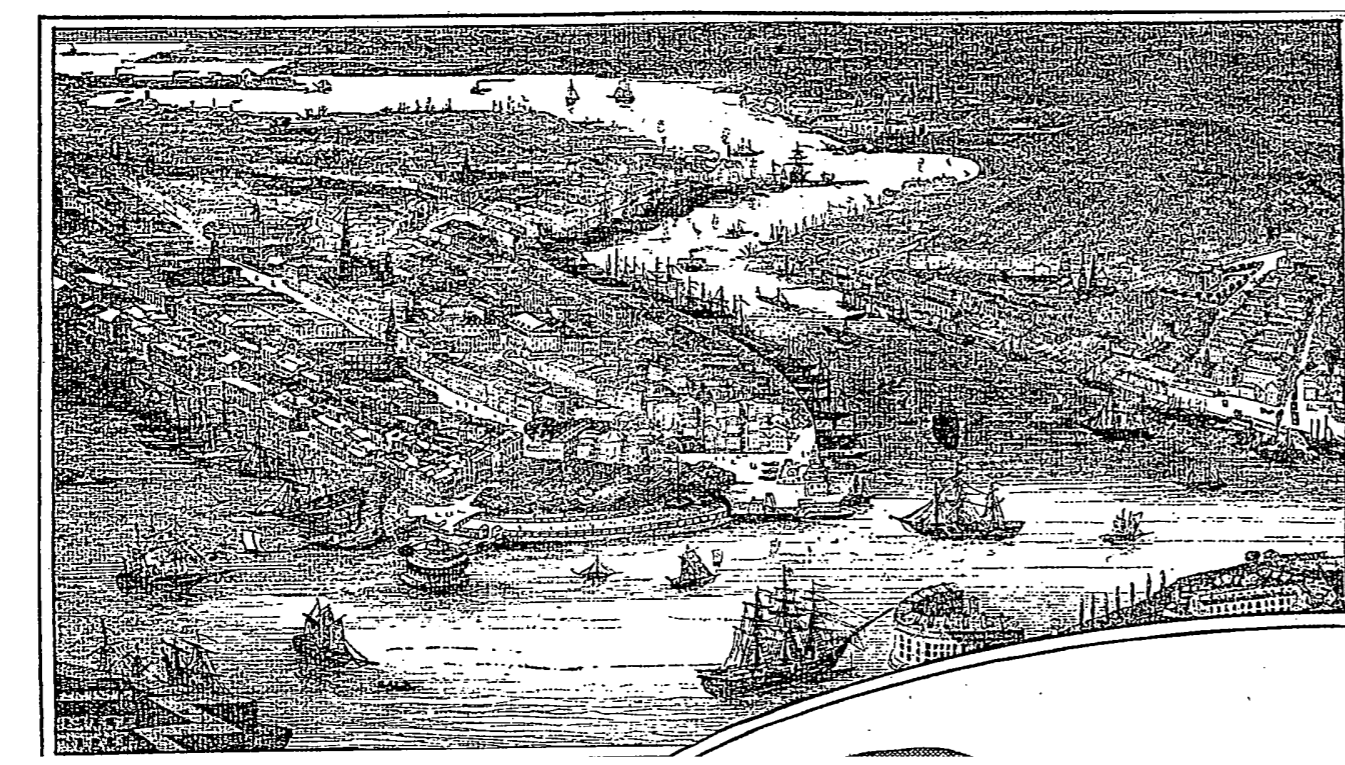
The fact that nearly a million aliens came into the United States during the fiscal year 1923 shows how rapidly the number of aliens who desired to get into this country. How much less effective would they be today, with many millions of unemployed men and women in the countries outside the United States anxiously waiting an opportunity to go where the wages are much higher and the work more plentiful.

Millions Not Assimilated
What such a tide of unlimited immigration would do to American ideas and ideals, customs, manners, government, economics, business, labor, art, religion and education is a matter of debate. Whether such vast throngs could be assimilated as Americanized or would constitute a subrace and absorb the American people, as the old Roman civilization was completely submerged by the hordes which once immigrated into that fair land for peaceful purposes, is also a matter for much argument. Nevertheless, by analyzing the figures in this article, that the United States did not assimilate or Americanize many millions of the 35,000,000 who have come within our borders since the year 1820.

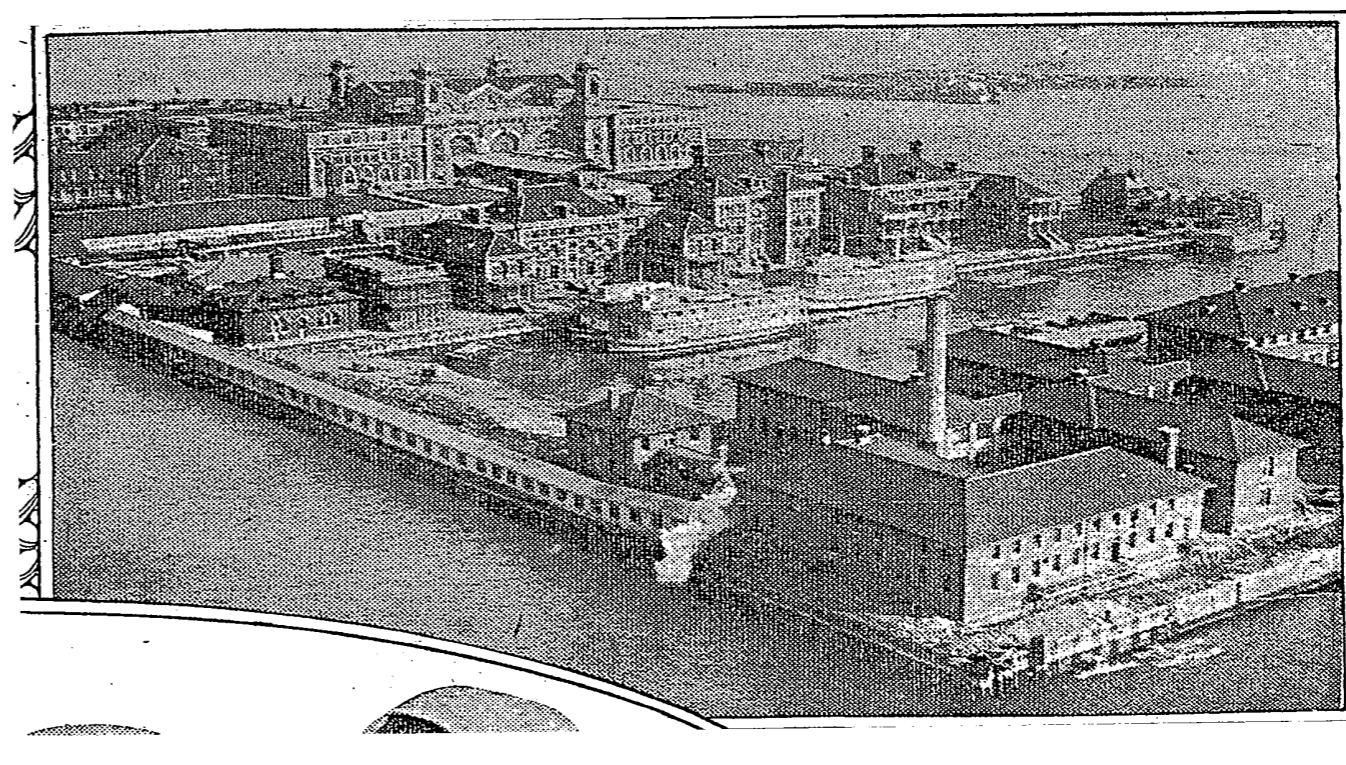
Recently I had prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics a number of tables, charts, and figures, demonstrating the growth of immigration for a century. This compilation showed that the number of immigrants migrating to the United States did not reach 100,000 in any one year until 1842, when 104,065 were admitted, of whom 92,869 came from Northern and Western Europe. This number included 73,347 from the United Kingdom, constituting 70.1 per cent. of the total of immigration for that year.

The next year the number dropped to 32,496. Then it increased and rose to 47,833 in 1854. This wave of immigration brought 272,740 from the United Kingdom in 1851 and 215,009 from Germany in 1854. In 1851, 368,565, or 97.2 per cent. of all the 379,466 immigrants arriving, came from the Northern and Western Europe and these 345,222 were from the United Kingdom and Germany. In 1854, out of 427,833 immigrants, 402,354 or 94.2 per cent., were from Northern and Western Europe.

Secretary Davis Reviews Inflow of Century and Presents His Solution of Alien Problem—Not Half of Immigrants in 1920 Assimilated



Castle Garden, New York's Gateway for Immigrants From 1855 to 1890.



The Huge Ellis Island Immigration Plant, in Striking Contrast to the Quarters at Castle Garden.



Types of Immigrants of Today.

Northern and Western Europe and 84,973 from Southern and Eastern Europe. In 1886 immigration dropped to 334,203. In the next seven years, from 1887 to 1893, immigration varied from a little above to a little below 500,000 each year. Moreover, changes were taking place in the class of immigrants coming. In 1888, out of 516,880 immigrants, 300,782, or 51.5 per cent., were from Northern and Western Europe and 270,084, or 46.8 per cent., from Southern and Eastern Europe.

1901 Brought the Greatest Number.
From 1894 to 1901 immigration was under 500,000 a year, but the year 1896 is important, however, in the history of immigration, because in that year, for the first time, Southern and Eastern Europe furnished more immigrants than Northern and Western Europe, 195,684 as against 137,522. In 1901 out of 475,918 immigrants, the Northern and Western European countries supplied 115,728, or 23.7 per cent. of the total, and the Southern and Eastern European countries 257,291, or 73.6 per cent., of the total. Each year from 1898 on, Southern and Eastern Europe has sent more aliens to us than Northern and Western Europe, save in 1919, when fewer than 125,000 came from all Europe, and in 1923, when the Three Per Cent. law was in effect.

In 1902 immigration went above the 500,000 mark, and in 1907 it reached the highest point in any year, 1,285,349 entering the United States, of which number 979,861, or 76.2 per cent., were from Southern and Eastern Europe, and 272,538, or only 17.7 per cent., from Northern and Western Europe. In the years 1905, 1906, 1907, 1910, 1913 and 1914 immigration was above 1,000,000 and it dropped below 900,000 in any intervening year. The year 1914 saw another high water mark of immigration when the number admitted was 1,218,480, of which 915,007, or 71.1 per cent., were from Southern and Eastern Europe, and only 161,186, or 13.5 per cent., from Northern and Western Europe.

The World War reduced immigration from Europe to small numbers. The year 1917, however, brought in 105,329 immigrants from British North America and 42,380 from Mexico. Central and South America and the West Indies. The high wages and ample supply of work were an attractive stimulant during that period.

The year 1920 started a new tide of immigration from Europe. The total reached 430,001, with 162,595, or 37.7 per cent., from Southern and Eastern Europe, and 267,406, or 62.3 per cent., from Northern and Western Europe. The next year, 1921, brought 803,228 immigrants, including 320,654, or 61.7 per cent., from Southern and Eastern Europe, and 482,574, or 59.9 per cent., from Northern and Western Europe. America, with her more than five millions of unemployed in 1921, could not stand this oncoming flood of immigrants, which could only swell the number of unemployed, to 10 per cent. of the population, going into effect on June 3, 1921.

This law, still in effect, applies mainly to Europe, but also covers Africa and Northern and Western Asia. The Oriental countries—China, Japan, India, Java and others of Southeastern Asia—remained restricted as they were under previous laws and treaties. Moreover, no numerical limitation was placed on immigration from our sister countries in America, so that foreigners in those countries can be admitted to the United States regardless of the quota, provided they can show they have been residents of one of those American continent countries for the period of five years previous to application for entry to the United States.

Under this new act immigration in 1922 numbered 309,859, with 135,911, or 44.8 per cent., from Southern and Eastern Europe and 79,842 from Northern and Western Europe. The fiscal year 1923 brought in a total of 522,919 immigrants, with 150,879, or 30 per cent., from Northern and Western Europe and 152,224, or 29.2 per cent., from Southern and Eastern Europe, 117,011, or 22.4 per cent., from British America and 82,961, or 15.8 per cent. from Southern American countries, Mexico, Central and South America and the West Indies.

United States, other than to say they were due in a large measure to wars, political changes, economic depression, good times and hard times. But, starting with the above statements, we note that the first wave, which was mainly British but also largely German, reached its height in 1851 to 1854. The second movement extended roughly between 1865 and 1875, and was composed mainly of British and German immigration, with a little Scandinavian.

The third wave reached its effect in 1882, but was high in 1888 and 1892. It, too, was composed mainly of British and German aliens, while quite a proportion of Scandinavian, and—for the first time of any importance—of people from Italy, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Poland and other countries of South and East Europe. Classification of aliens by countries indicates the racial stock in these immigration waves except as it relates to those of Hebrew origin, who are represented largely by the immigration from Russia and Poland.

The fourth wave extends roughly from 1903 to 1914, with the few immigrants from Northern Europe entirely submerged in the total inflow from Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia. The fiscal year 1921 started a fifth wave of immigration, which undoubtedly would have been a completely overwhelming flood but for the 3 per cent. law.

So much for the numbers that came into the country during the century. It is true that while the vast majority to our shores did not intend to remain. The largest racial group to be passed

through our gates in the last fifteen years was the Italian, but they also represented the largest number to return to their native land in that time, for 40 per cent. of those admitted went back to sunny Italy. The best record for permanent residence was established by immigrants of the Hebrew race, who did come to abide permanently, for from 1908 to 1923 only 5 per cent. as many departed as came into the United States.

Natives Outnumbered in Cities
During these fifteen years the Chinese occupy the other extreme, for of the 36,693 legally admitted 47,607 left our shores. These arrivals, however, do not count the many thousands smuggled in from Cuba, Mexico and Canada each year. On the other hand the number of Orientals from all parts of Asia admitted under one provision or another, during the last twenty-five years, total 323,592. All in all, during the last fifteen years 9,849,740 immigrants were admitted and 3,498,183 aliens left the United States.

Fewer Than Half Natralized.
The census of 1920 worked out statistics touching on this phase of the problem, showing the number of naturalized and un-naturalized immigrants in the United States. Of our nearly 14,000,000 white people of foreign birth less than half are naturalized citizens. Our records indicate that the average alien in this country ten years before he assumes the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

The following table shows the ten nationalities having the highest percentage of naturalized American citizens among their foreign-born:

Country	Per cent. naturalized	Per cent. un-naturalized or not reported
Wales	74.4	25.6
Germany	72.4	27.6
Denmark	70.5	29.5
Sweden	70.0	30.0
Norway	68.2	31.8
Ireland	66.7	33.3
England	65.4	34.6
Scotland	62.9	37.1
Canada (other than French)	61.7	38.3

What, then, are the lessons to be learned from this century of immigration, during which approximately 35,000,000 aliens have been admitted to the United States? Have these millions, whom we have admitted to our fire-side, who have eaten of our food, who have slept in our houses, who worked side by side with us, accepted our customs, our manners, our ideas and our ideals of government, of cleanliness, of right conduct and the other things that go to make up a good American citizen in the sense that actuated the men who framed our Constitution, made our laws and lived and died to defend them? How many of them have accepted American standards of living? How many of them have become American citizens?

But fully as important as the quantity of the immigrant body coming to this country in its effect upon the life of America today and tomorrow is the quality of the individuals who go to make up this great group in our population. During the past forty years our laws have made every effort to bar from this country those who would lower our mental, moral or physical standard. For the past twenty years the law has denied admission to every diseased person, every imbecile, idiot, feeble-minded person, insane person, criminals and all of those likely to become public charges. Despite every effort to enforce the law we find an

extraordinary representation of these classes in our alien population. A recent survey made for the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization of the House of Representatives covered our jails, almshouses, insane asylums and other public institutions. The scientist who made the survey investigated State institutions housing the feeble-minded, the insane, the criminal, the epileptic, the inebriate, the chronically diseased, the blind, the deaf, the deformed, the crippled and the dependent. He found that while the foreign-born make up 14.70 per cent. of the nation's population they furnish 20.83 per cent. of the population of these institutions housing our social inadequates. He calculated that 44.09 per cent. of the inmates of these institutions were either foreign born or of foreign stock.

In this connection there are also available the intelligence tests applied to our soldiers during the World War, which have been worked out to index the intelligence rating of our whole white population, including the foreign born, and of the white foreign born as a separate group. The net result of these tests indicates that there are in America today 6,233,016 white foreign born persons, or not much less than half of the total foreign born white population, who are classified as inferior or of very inferior intelligence. If we included the low average class, the estimated total would be increased 8,515,620.

Thousands Smuggled In.
Of course, not all of the alien social inadequates who find their way to our shores are admitted as legal aliens to our asylums and our homes for the feeble-minded come from legitimate immigration. It is certain that many of them come through the underground network of devious paths by which aliens are smuggled into this country. We have found them coming by every means of transportation and in every guise. Our thousands of miles of land border and our vast expanse of coast line, with its myriad harbors, offer wealth of opportunity to the hardy outlaw who, tempted by the vast profits in this traffic, engaged to pour the poison of illicit immigration into the life stream of American civilization.

The actual number of surreptitious entries is difficult to determine. It has, however, been conservatively estimated that 100 individuals a day come into the United States in violation of the law, and many well-informed people place the figure at three times that. We find them waiting by the thousand in Cuba for an opportunity to make a dash by motor boat for the coast of Florida. We find them waiting in the thousands at our ports on the Mexican border by the hundred and losing themselves in the great Southwest. We find them coming by automobiles, by railroad and by steamer. We find them running side by side with the illicit traffic in rum and with the vile commerce in outlawed narcotic drugs. There is no means of entering the United States which is not utilized in this illegal traffic.

Seamen's Law Aids Illicit Entry.
One means of smuggling immigrants is devised as an evasion of the law enacted to protect the rights of American seamen. Under this law a foreign sailor entering an American port and leaving his vessel may remain in the United States sixty days while he seeks a berth in an outbound ship. Now over a million alien seamen touch our shores each year, and during the fiscal year 1923 23,194 were reported to have deserted their ships in United States ports. It is likely that there are thousands of so-called "foreign" seamen in the United States today working at any grade but the sea. They simply leave their ships and are lost sight of. Hundreds of them were found not long ago at work in an Eastern industrial plant. It is easy for any alien to come to the United States to obtain a berth as a sailor and to forget that he is a seaman when the vessel reaches this country. It is estimated that 25 per cent. never leave this country once in.

The immigration authorities estimate that there are between 2,000 and 3,000 Chinese in the City of New York alone who are in this country illegally and who came as shore leave seamen. At times the figure has been placed as high as 5,000. With the present immi-

DURING the thirty-five years from 1855 to 1890, when Castle Garden, now the Aquarium, was the New York Immigration Station, the record year was 1882; when 788,000 immigrants were admitted to the United States all told. Since the immigration station has been transferred to Ellis Island there have been several years when the flood of aliens rose above the million mark, but the highest point was reached in 1914, when this country received a total of 1,218,000 immigrants.

It is almost impossible to round them up. It is also estimated that there are 30,000 more in Cuba waiting to be smuggled into the United States. What kind of an American can be made out of an individual whose first experience of America comes through the defiance of her laws and the evasion of her authority? He is an outlaw from the day he lands. Now do not misunderstand me. I am not against all immigration. Indeed, no. As a naturalized immigrant, who came over in the steerage with my mother and five other children more than forty-two years ago, I can look at this problem through the eyes of the immigrant as well as with the eyes of a patriotic American who has a deep interest in the future of our common country. No one will dispute the high character and the important services to America of the great majority of immigrants who have come to us in the past. Their record is written clearly in our political and economic history and their blood has stained all the battlefields of our Republic.

But I, for one, am confident the foreign-born citizen or the native-born citizen of foreign stock will be quick to join me in protecting our present and future population from the evil mental, moral and physical influences of those whose influences come from abroad or develop from within. The undesirable immigrant who comes to us from the older countries of the world lessens the opportunity of the worthy immigrant as well as the opportunity of the native-born. The mental, moral or physical demoralization which he may represent is as great a menace to the worthy immigrant and his children as it is to the citizen whose progenitors have been in this country for generations.

Secretary Davis's Plan.
I am, therefore, for an immigration policy truly American, drafted by Americans, administered by Americans, for the benefit of America of today and in the future. I would not, as some people advocate, lower the bars and return to the former unrestricted immigration. Indeed, I would increase the restrictions. I would bar the individual who is physically, mentally or morally unsound or whose political or economic views constitute a menace to free institutions of any kind.

I am, therefore, for a system of selective immigration, to be made effective before the alien law is amended, and for a system of very inferior intelligence. If we included the low average class, the estimated total would be increased 8,515,620.

Definite, clean-cut provisions as to citizenship consistent with our laws, exclusion, as permanent residents or immigrants, of all non-naturalizable aliens of all races, since under the present law only two races, the Caucasian or white race and the African negro, can be naturalized.

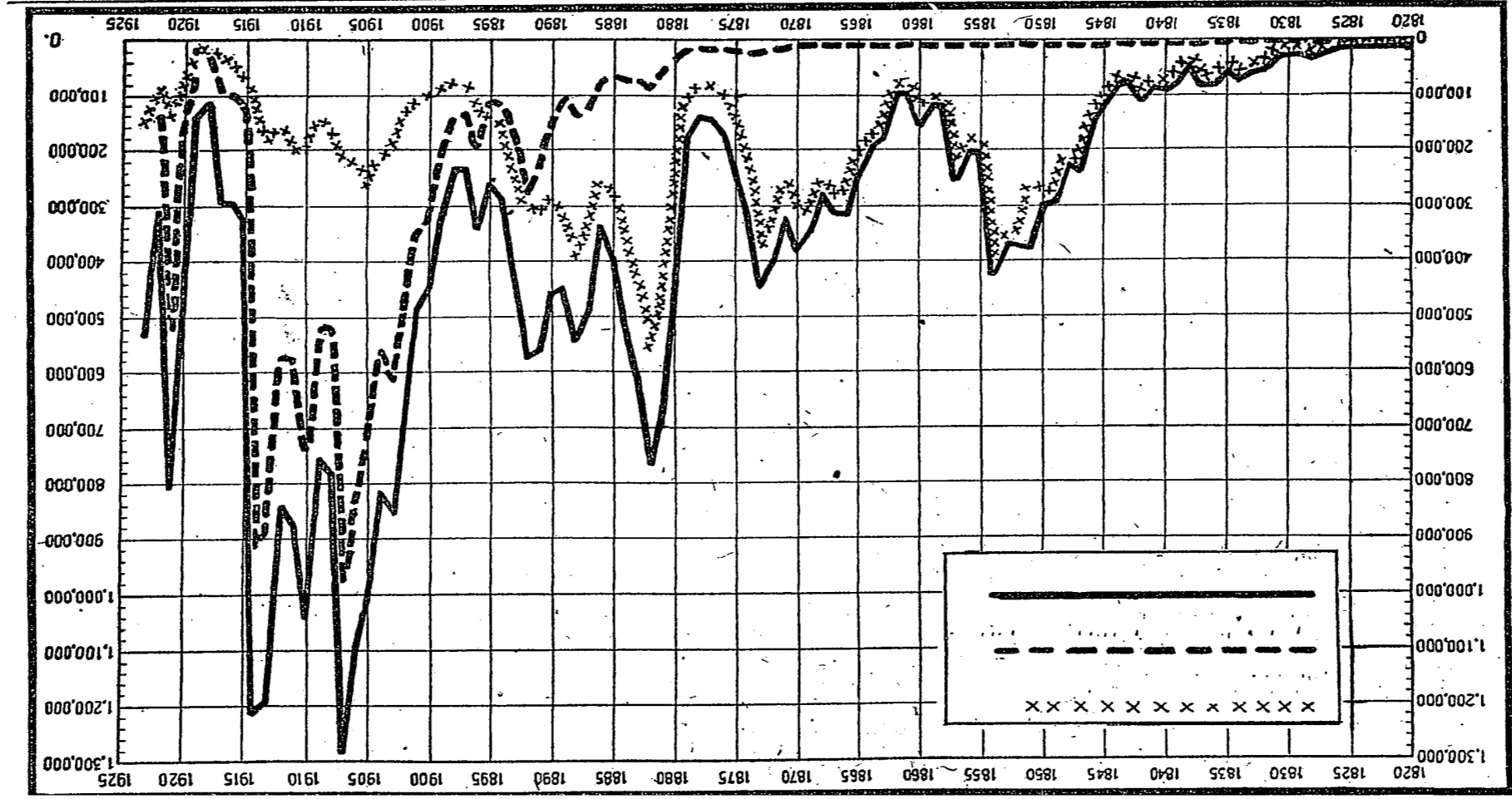
The requirement that aliens admitted at our ports under our immigration laws, must maintain their exempt status while here, and must when that status is lost either qualify as immigrants under our immigration laws, if of the admissible races and classes, or depart.

Selection and qualified classes on the basis of our needs as a nation and economically. Selection and inspection abroad sufficient to avoid the return to the land whenever they came of large numbers of prospective immigrants after their arrival at our ports with the attendant heartache and anguish.

The annual enrollment of all aliens so long as they remain alien, so that we may be able to the more easily get hold of the aliens who have been smuggled into the country or are here in some other unlawful way, such as taking advantage of the provisions of the Seamen's act.

The speedy and efficient Americanization of all naturalizable aliens within our gates for America and a better life for both aliens and citizens. I am convinced that an alien code based upon those broad principles and carefully framed would make for better citizens for America and a better life for both aliens and citizens. These laws would increase the quality of immigrants to the United States and at the same time reduce the number who had to be admitted through the turnstiles of Ellis Island and other points of entry and allow more time for finding a helping hand to those who were welcome to our land.

THE IMMIGRATION BAROMETER FOR A CENTURY



The Chart Shows the Flux of Immigration to the United States From 1820 to 1923, and the Contrast Between the Flow From Northern and Western Europe and That From Southern and Eastern Europe.