

Millions of women have been made widows by the war, many of them in the first days of their marriage; millions of others, who could have expected



Photograph by Brown Brothers.

marriage in normal times, have lost their future husbands on the battlefields. Will these turn to America? Will we be flooded with immigrants after the war?

**H**OW will the European War affect immigration to the United States? Will the disbanded soldiers return peacefully to their former vocations, or will thousands of them seek new fortunes in the United States? Will all of them start to rebuild their ruined homes, or will a large proportion prefer to establish new domestic establishments in a new country? Thousands of women have lost their husbands, and thousands of young men and women their fathers. Are they not likely to turn from the scene of their miseries and begin life anew with us? Should the war end at the present moment, the combatant nations have already piled up indebtedness that will mean annual interest charges of at least \$2,000,000,000. The hard-earned money of the working classes must pay this enormous tribute, which means taxation on a scale that the world has not hitherto known. There is only one way the harassed workmen can escape this frightful burden; that is, by settling in the United States. Is it not likely that many millions will seize this opportunity?

The extent to which the war will accelerate immigration depends entirely upon the effect that it produces in Europe. Students generally agree that the greatest stimulus to immigration is economic.

Religious and political persecutions have done their part in sending alien peoples to these shores. The coming of the Puritans and the exodus to America of Germans from the devastated Palatinate in the eighteenth century are cases in point. Political considerations played a large part in sending multitudes of South Germans to the United States in the '40's and '50's of the nineteenth century. Religious persecution explains, to a great extent, the more recent influx of Russian and Rumanian Jews.

Even in these cases, however, economic motives have so mingled with the others that we can not exclusively assign religion and politics as the impelling causes. In Russia religious intolerance has found its expression in economic persecution; consequently the average Jew comes here, not primarily to worship God in ways of his own, but to find work.

#### Depends on Our Prosperity

**N**O; a glance at immigration figures makes one point clear. A period of distress in Europe, and a corresponding period of prosperity in the United States, mean a large influx to these shores. A statistician's "curve," showing these economic facts, will correspond identically with the "curve" of immigration through a hundred years. Our greatest period of prosperity comprises the fifteen years from 1900 to 1915. Likewise our greatest period of immigration is found in that same era. The year 1907 brought more immigrants than any other in our history; but there was a great drop in 1908, the reasons being the financial panic of 1907 and the depression that followed.

To decide, therefore, how the war will affect immigration, we must first answer two questions: How will it affect

## Shall We be Flooded with Immigrants?

By BURTON J. HENDRICK

economic conditions in this country? We shall get some light upon the problem by studying the effects of other great war periods. Only twice in the nineteenth century did Europe undergo experiences comparable to the present cataclysm.

The Napoleonic Wars, extending from 1797 to 1815, essentially duplicated the present European situation. The period from 1864 to 1870, though not so conclusive as that in which we are now living, was a time of great wars. In that period Germany fought the three great campaigns—that against Denmark in 1864, that against Austria in 1866, and that against France in 1870—that made her an empire. What then were the reactions of these two struggles, so far as peopling the United States is concerned?

The Napoleonic Wars, while they were being fought, were a time of prosperity for England. Her position then was not unlike ours at the present time. As England was not invaded, English agriculture largely fed the European armies; Trafalgar gave her the mastery of the seas and established her as the great carrying nation. As industrial enterprise could not thrive on the devastated Continent,—any more than it can thrive in Poland today,—England secured her position as the world's greatest workshop.

This Napoleonic prosperity blinded the eyes of politicians and people. Every one thought that it was permanent; that the cessation of war, far from stemming it, would make the nation even more prosperous. In the last two or three years of the war "Peace and Plenty" became the great popular "slogan."

The period that followed Waterloo, however, gave Englishmen a rude reawakening. It ushered in one of the greatest industrial and social crises in English history. The Continent began cultivating its own acres and feeding itself. Thousands of agricultural laborers, who had been fighting in the war, returned to their peaceful employments. Shipping in the United States grew at such a rapid pace that the old-time colonies proved a close second as a carrying nation, and even threatened to displace the old country. Continental manufacturing plants began producing the things that, in wartime, they had been obliged to buy from England.

This great falling off in agriculture and industry, combined with the huge war debt, immediately plunged the United Kingdom into great industrial distress. There was a lessened demand for labor, and prices everywhere fell. The Irish

members could not come to Parliament in 1816 because their pecuniary embarrassments were so great. Farms all over England and Ireland suddenly fell out of cultivation; tenants would not till the soil rent-free. "The number of bankruptcies," said Lord Brougham in Parliament in 1816, "is daily increasing; the home trade is at a standstill; the landlord receives no rent; the tenant can sell no corn."

The rich gave up their luxuries, while the poor had difficulty in saving themselves from starvation. "The distress in Yorkshire," wrote one observer, "was unprecedented; there was total stagnation in what little trade they had." In Birmingham, whose population then was 80,000, more than 30,000 were receiving poor relief.

#### Distress of England's Poor After Napoleonic Wars

**I**N the next five years Coxe's armies paraded from one end of England to the other. Riots, on a large scale, terrorized the people nearly every day. Mobs gathered at the docks and forcibly prevented the exportation of potatoes; they broke into baker and butcher shops and appropriated the food; they burned down the houses of the gentry and stoned the Prince Regent in the streets of London. Hayricks, farm-houses, barns, and business premises were burning all over England.

There were even organized attempts made at rebellion. In many places troops were called out to quell the rioters. "Death now would be a relief to millions," was the general cry. Starvation actually prevailed in certain districts, and peasants considered themselves fortunate who could get cabbage stalks as food. English statesmen feared a general insurrection and a wholesale plundering of property. English mines closed down, blast furnaces were cold, factories were going to ruin, while workmen were parading the streets wrapped in blankets, demanding free distribution of food, and vowing vengeance upon the upper classes and Parliament. In 1817 the habeas corpus act was suspended.

For twenty-five years succeeding the war, England now and then had a spurt of prosperity; in the main, however, these disturbed conditions prevailed until the repeal of the corn laws and the rise of modern English industrialism. Students of American immigration always note one fact. Until the years 1816 and 1817, the figures show, almost no aliens arrived in this country. For the first thirty years

of our national life our population grew rapidly; but it was the high birth rate of the native born, not immigration, that increased it. Wars always stop the inflow, as the falling off in immigration this year shows, and the long period of the Napoleonic Wars checked any tendency Europeans might have felt to migrate.

Here, as in Europe, hard times followed that conflict, but they were not so distressing as in Europe, and were quickly forgotten in the great sweep of our population to the West, in the tremendous activity in canal and railroad building, and in the development of manufactures and the American mercantile marine. Almost immediately after Waterloo, therefore, the westward movement of population began.

"Two things, great things," wrote Carlyle, "dwell, for the last ten years, in all thinking heads in England, and are hovering, of late, even on the tongues of not a few. Universal education is the first great thing we mean; general immigration is the second."

"The distress which followed the pacification of Europe," says MacMaster, "the disbanding of the armies and the navies, the enormous war taxes, and the general depression of trade and agriculture, sent the middle classes of England, Ireland, and Germany to our shores by the thousands."

Meetings were held in British towns to facilitate the migration of the suffering masses to America. The press demanded parliamentary action to stop the "ruinous drain of the most useful part of the United Kingdom." All kinds of falsehoods were spread, in the hope of checking the movement.

The onslaughts of English writers on America, which filled the newspapers and the magazines, even those like the *Edinburgh Review*, and finally culminated in such works as those of Mrs. Trollope and Dickens, had their original inspiration in an attempt to keep Englishmen from emigrating. Parliament passed laws the purpose of which was to send English and Irish immigrants to Canada and the Cape of Good Hope and steer them away from the United States.

#### Useful Additions to the United States

**A**LL these efforts failed. Compared to the hordes which the trans-Atlantic lines have brought in recent years, the numbers were few. When one considers the small population of Great Britain a hundred years ago and the difficulties of transportation—a sailing-vessel that had one hundred emigrants created a greater stir than one that has a thousand now—the movement was a substantial one. In the ten years ending in 1829, 126,000 immigrants left England for Canada and 72,000 for the United States, the greater majority of the former crossing the border almost immediately to this country.

These English and Irish immigrants represented valuable additions to our country. Many joined the movement to the West and settled on government lands in Ohio and Indiana; others secured employment in building the canals and,