THIS PAPER IS
The Official Journal
—OF THE—
CITY OF BAY ST. LOUIS.

The Sea Coast Echo.

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Subscripton: $1.50 per Annum.

BAY SAINT LOUIS, MISSISSIPPI, SATURDAY, MAY 27, 1911.

TWENTIETH Year. No. 20

THE IMMIGRATION INTO THE SOUTH.

Class Paper by Miss Adele Hymel, Bay St. Louis High School, 1911.

This is a practical subject and must be treated from a practical standpoint. My subject covers a wide field, and I am unable to say whether the emigrant here referred to is intended to be a native of this, or of a foreign, country.

Authority cites the definition of emigrant as "One who goes a distance to settle as a permanent resident". As to the distance, suffice it to say, our emigrant is at liberty to come whence he may. But I take it for granted we are to discuss him here from all points of the compass; as to who he should be, who is desirable, and what precautions we should take.

It is a noted fact that this great country of ours was made up of foreigners from the start. They were men of brain and of letters, who never resolved upon a thing they did not successfully carry out and execute. They came to this country with the fibre and best blood of the Old World in their being, and "stood their ground" in the new upon their manhood for noble achievements, civilization, right, justice, civil and religious liberty.

It is not my intention to go into history any further than to show that since Columbus discovered America; since the landing of the Pilgrims; since the Revolution against the British; since the Declaration of Independence; since we are a free, united people; since the Constitution of the United States has been penned by that body of great and good and patriotic men whose lives will ever be immortal upon the pages of history: these and those periods will ever be a monument, teaching us that, so long as the emigrant is of the right calibre, it matters not what his nationality may be, or whence he hails; whether it be from the Atlantic Coast or the Pacific Slope; whether from the North, the East, the Middle, or the Western States; or whether he be from French, German, English, or Irish soil—it matters not, so long as he is a valuable accession or acquisition to the country in which he resides. He is welcome; therefore, it stands to reason that the entire matter of immigration—the benefit and non-benefit—resolves itself into a question of quality in the individual: his attributes of character; steady habits; good conduct; average intelligence—whether he be of this or of any other country.

Unfortunately, our subject is neither specific nor definite. The foreign emigrant who does not speak our language, except possibly a smattering, is retarded for a while, until he knows our customs, laws, language, etc., and, consequently, our material development would be equally retarded from an educational, agricultural and commercial view. Besides, the foreign emigrant of today, as a rule, only seeks our shores when driven by the furious gale of necessity, and then his motive becomes selfish, and all sense of what the citizen should be is quite submerged for some time.

For this reason, I rather think the committee who favored us with this interesting theme intended that we should discuss the ever ready native, or those residing within the United States long enough to be identified with all that is near and dear to us. Those who understand our institutions of government know what excessive taxation means; the value of schools and churches to their children; people who are with us and amongst us in the spirit of American citizenship; who, in the distant North, East, or West, are watching our success and happiness, in contrast to their blizzards and prairie fires, or who have soil too difficult to work, or too barren to grow their crops without much labor and expense.

The good emigrant is looking for good soil, where one crop after another may be planted. The good emigrant is on the lookout for reasonably cheap homes and farms, cheap transportation, water as clear as crystal, good neighbors, just laws, and decent citizenship.

The South welcomes such as these and feels our relationship reciprocal. And through the medium of the press, or whether it be on cliff or on the tall trees, along the great railroads of the country, or in valleys, or in tunnels underneath, or in the great hotels overhead, we are heralding the South as the emigrant's home, a haven of rest; in peace and plenty. Where great riches abound, and where good old mother earth is ready to open up her great department store of resources and wealth. She virtually obligates herself to "first come, first serve", and proclaims to the world that she is the elysian field in climate, health, general prosperity, and perennial happiness. We say to him: "We welcome you and yours. Our schools are modern and among the best; our churches are of your denomination. The live oak, the crepe myrtle and the magnolia bathe your mental vision in dreams alluring, while the mocking bird in the arbor vitae carols to his mate through the twilight, wafting to you visions from the fields of grain in your home, of your children and the fulfillment of your prayers.

The principal crops of the South are cotton, sugar and rice. The nation depends upon much of this for her revenue and tariff. These staples are known the world over, and no market reports are complete without them. They are the necessities of life and play an important part in the world's consumption. England's manufactories watch us from the planting of the cottonseed to every drop of rain that falls upon our fields. The wires are kept busy between Liverpool, Wall street and the New Orleans Cotton Exchange, and the quietude or feverish tone of the market is duly and daily recorded.

Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas grow the principal crops of the South's three greatest staples. Land will produce from one and a half to two bales per acre in cotton, averaging five hundred pounds per bale, at a basis of ten cents per pound, while sugar lands will yield from twenty to twenty-five tons per acre, which sells to the "central factory" at from two and a half to three and a half dollars per sack, producing from fifteen to twenty to the acre.

Corn grows abundantly at little cost and is of fine quality, a well-cultivated acre yielding forty bushels, while special experiments have resulted in as much as a hundred bushels.

No Southern writer who lifts his pen in advocacy of immigration into the South would hesitate to tell you that we have a capital in our soil that only awaits the heart and hand of the good, steady yeomanry of the country, of the good, rugged, honest type of citizen, to develop and spread our inexhaustible resources and prosperity throughout the land.

Before the Civil War our land was cultivated by numbers of negroes on a large scale, hundreds and thousands of acres to one plantation. Since the war this has been kept up to a limited extent. But those who engage in it have found out that it does not pay, except when a large capital is employed, and 9 times out of ten the end is disastrous, especially if the money be borrowed.

I consider we have a "New South". We have long since recognized that large plantations are of great risk to the owner or owners, and, therefore, of little benefit to the country at large, except for the mere employment of daily laborers and some tenants.

But the wise men of the South have found out that what is good for the country depends upon the facilities afforded the laboring man and those highest up, not only in intelligence, but in financial possessions and the knowledge of agricultural pursuits.

We have waste lands that are being reclaimed, year by year, and swamps, that after being drained are so rich that a spade in them is equal to the plow in ordinary soil.

The emigrant coming to the South can select his crops or lay out his work as he would sandwich his butter bread. Here in Mississippi the fig ripens in the sun, and there is hardly more than a few steps between the poultry farm, the dairy and the table. No good, enterprising man can starve,

Our soil and our climate call for successful experiments in a diversity of crops and there is no better example of what an emigrant could do in the South than referring to the good old German farmer, who, between his Holstein and Jersey cows, his husbandry and his poultry he never strives for riches, but he is independent, out of debt, with a surplus bank account, and on a rainy day is found at home enjoying the solid comforts of the workingman's life.

But the emigrant to the South is wanted in particular to draw the juices of the fruits, the products of our land and distribute the great wealth for the general welfare of the citizen and the State in which he resides.

In the New Orleans City Item, of March 16, 1911, among other things that journal truthfully stated: "Farm lands all over the South are rising in price steadily. This is natural and highly desirable. The productive acreage of the State is being increased every year through reclamation projects; and farmers from every part of the Union are taking up land here with the intention of settling and developing their holdings. One of the attractions of the land has been its riches as to fertility and its cheapness as to price."

On his arrival here the emigrant can take his choice between the product of the soil and her hidden treasures, whether it be of timber, of minerals, of oil and of salt, and of sulphur or the white fleecy staple will be too beautiful for him to look upon, or, he may choose vegetables, strawberries and cane, with hog and hominy pitted against adversity.

This reminds me to say that there is not a place in the South where the desirable emigrant wishes to live and where he cannot rotate his crops month after month and follow his taste, from pumpkins to the whippoorwill pea, and from the drumhead cabbage and the onion and the Irish potato down to the sweet potato vine.

At present, this beautiful South of ours is rapidly being developed and is looked upon from all parts of the United States as a source of encouraging livelihood. I take it for granted that immigration to the South means, particularly just now, that of our own people, and not from the Continent of Europe. But if the latter is true, spare us from the evil, treacherous, ignorant, and vicious emigrant; for no greater curse could be put upon our dear old Southland than an annual influx of undesirable immigrants; if permitted to come amongst our people, illiterate, steeped in vice and moral abandonment, degenerate and therefore devoid of all civic pride.

No greater curse could ever befall a community or a people than to be mixed in their social ties. It would be like drinking a glass of water with one-half from a clear spring and the other half polluted.

May God forgive the contempt and loathing that we have reserved for such emigrants, and may we be spared their coming. Therefore, I have not attempted to argue a matter that I contend is entirely irrelevant. The emigrant that is welcomed in the South is the man who labors by the sweat of his brow, not the schemer and promoter of watered stock, nor the strictly vicious and ignorant. But we want the bone and sinew of the country, to take out the wealth of the land and properly utilize it for the benefit of mankind; but not as a speculation by the idle rich at the expense of his poor brethren.

We have homes and alluring firesides that await the man with the axe in the oak; the ash; the hickory; the gum.

Rapid emigration into the South in considerable numbers is a certainty. The virgin land, the fertility of our soil, the great variety of crops that can be raised at a small expense in one season, and the railroad, steamboat, luggar and barge facilities for handling the same, make the influx of the emigrant inevitable.

Our meadows and our prairie lands are unequalled for the grazing of cattle and their breeding. Our woods abound in a variety of bird and game that made the poets sing of the wild Indian's happiness. Our bayous and streams abound in all kinds of fish. We have firewood in abundance, and by means of rivulets, creeks and bayous, coal, which is transported down the great Mississippi and through her territories, is placed at our very door. Our oil fields furnish the gas, and the light, and the drawing power. Our copper, iron and steel are shipped to all parts of the earth. The central factory, sugar system, enables the farmer to raise cane by the ton, and the emigrant of Welsch, Jennings and Crowley, La., can speak for the rice industry of those sections and favorably to all others interested. Sawmills dot the shores of our streams throughout the southern states, where, in close connection, timber is cut for daily consumption.

Emigration into the south? Why, I should say so! Where the break of day is a scene of loveliness and beauty, and the sun goes down in a sea of glory. Where and how do you make any comparison between the climate, health, educational and financial resources of Mississippi and her sister states, except to admit that for less money and more of it at your command you will soon share alike the common blessings of a united and contented people.

Wild ducks are seen migrating to the warm winters of the south in the early fall, and our lakes, lagoons and streams are full of them, inviting to the hunter and the sportsman. Persimmons, wild grapes, nuts and berries grow all over our woods, and the scent of the violet and the jasmine is common to the forest. Negro melodies and songs of "Dat Watermelon Patch" are still heard. The great states of the south may be likened to an immense department store where the cultivated taste of the applicant—emigrant—can find what he wants. It all resolves itself into a solid question of their benefit and our benefit and what constitutes a level-headed change for the emigrant from one section of the country to the other. It is, first, health, which comes from good sanitary laws, such as pure water, good drainage, schools, churches, and, from the economic side, fertile lands; raising consecutive crops, cheap for cash or on easy terms; taxation reasonable; shipping and receiving facilities at hand, and everthing that tends to the moral and educational welfare of our people can be found by the emigrant if he settles here in the "Sunny South".

The wild bee gathers your honey free of charge in our wild woods, while the humming bird supplies the fragrance to the honeysuckle that climbs upon your porch.

An immigration station is being erected at New Orleans, La., and an "Immigration League" is formed there. Of late, a branch, the primary object of which is to obtain desirable emigrants, particularly for the south and southwest; to have criminals, paupers and persons having contagious diseases excluded from this country; to provide for the proper and expeditious distribution of emigrants, and, in short, to induce and foster the coming of the desirable emigrants to this country and section, and to properly place and assist them after they come.

COAST NORMAL.

The Coast Normal, which has been so popular with the teachers of south-east Mississippi for the past two summers, will open at Wiggins July 24th and continue four weeks. The counties of Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, George and Perry have joined forces and expect to make this one of the best normals in the State. For information, address either your county superintendent, or W. F. Bond, Wiggins, Miss.

IMMIGRATION TO THE SOUTH.

Prize Essay by Edwin Shelby, Bay St. Louis High School, '11.

For the last ten years there has been much discussion in Louisiana and Mississippi as to whether immigration will prove beneficial or not. It has at last been decided in these two States that they need immigration.

The need of immigration in Mississippi was shown as early as 1907, when the Legislature appropriated $10,000 for the expenses of a commissioner to visit foreign ports and to try to get immigrants to settle in Mississippi. In Louisiana the Legislature has appropriated money for establishing an immigration office at New Orleans, the port of entry of Louisiana. As soon as the immigrants are set free by the immigration officials, this office secures work for them. The railroads, sawmills and planters keep this office posted as to the labor needed by them; the alien is informed of these and chooses the one he likes best. This office has literature printed, which is distributed in New Orleans and by all steamship lines carrying immigrants to the same city. This literature is printed in the following languages: German, French, Hollandish, Polish, Lithuanian, Croatian, Italian and Hungarian. This office not only wants to get immigrants here, but after it gets them, it wants to visit them and see that they are well treated and let them know that we want them to succeed.

Louisiana contains many colonies of foreign immigrants. The Secretary of this department makes a visit several times a year. First, I will tell about the German colonies. There are four in Louisiana. One is situated at St. Leo, near Rayne in Acadia parish. When this colony first was started it had only twenty-two families; now it has four hundred families. The second one is near Clinton, in East Feleciana parish. It began with ten families and now has forty. The third is near Ponchatoula, in Tangipohoa parish, and it now contains seventy-five families, having begun with only four. The fourth colony is in Covington, St. Tamany parish. It now has forty families, while it started with three.

The Germans are a thrifty and industrious race. They have succeeded in the South, and, if more should come over, it would be a benefit to the South. It would be a beautiful sight to look over Louisiana and Mississippi and to see all the land, that now contains nothing but pine stumps, cultivated in small truck farms. The South needs immigrations; it needs something to take the place of the blacks of the past, which are no good to the South.

The Belgians are another good class of people, who would benefit the South if they should immigrate here. Twenty-five years ago four Belgian families came to the South and settled near Alexandria. They succeeded and encouraged other families to come and settle in the South. And now there are eighty families in the colony. They are farmers by instinct. It can be traced as far back as the time of Caesar. The Belgians are healthy, happy and highly respected citizens of Alexandria.

The Hungarians did not come to the South until about thirteen years later; nevertheless they in turn will do good to the South. Two colonies landed at Hammond, on the I. C. R. R., and formed a thriving colony, now containing about sixty families. At Hammond the Hungarians are noted for strawberry raising and truck farms. They are showing the South that what land they thought to be useless is excellent for raising strawberries and cabbages.

There were Hollanders, Danes, Norwegians, Swedes and Scandinavians in Louisiana, but so far they have not settled in colonies. There is a movement now going on now to organize a Scandinavian colony near Homer. There are Servians, Croatins, Austrians and Dalmatians in Louisiana, but they are a roving class of people.

There are Italians all over the South who have truck farms. All along the Gulf Coast you will find an especially large number of Italians, who are gradually law-abiding citizens. Compare any of these races which I have mentioned with the blacks and you will see how willing we ought to have them come and settle in the South. The blacks will work for one week and then rest one week and spend all they made the week before. Such is the decided difference in the Italian and the black. The Italian will rent a small farm with a house containing just two rooms, a bedroom and a kitchen. Sometimes a whole family will live in even one room. Some time you will find a chicken coop under the bed and bananas hanging all around the room. They save very nearly all they make and send for their brothers or sisters. Then in the course of five years are respectable citizens, practically rich, but judging by their frugal manner of living outsiders would think they were paupers.

Mississippi needs immigrants, because she needs laborers to harvest her crops and work in her factories along the Coast and in the interior, too. The northern Europeans are preferred by Louisiana and Mississippi rather than the ones from the South. There is no telling what would be accomplished in Louisiana and Mississippi if they had the right kind of labor.

The reason that Mississippi and Louisiana have not realized their labor is because of their pride. They did not want foreigners to come into their State and mix with their blood, but I think at last they have overcome this foolish pride and have realized the necessity of immigration. Look at the railroad facilities and the waterways of both States and think of what could be done in the South if the South had sufficient labor. If you were to take the lands lying between Ansley and Michaud, on the L. & N. R. R., and place this in the north of Holland under the same conditions that exists here they would be reclaimed in a year and probably realize a value of $500 an acre. They are not so valuable here. Why? Because the population of the South is so small. The marshes of Louisiana contain as good cypress as any State in the Union and yet it is not all used Just look at the sulphur mines, the salt mines and the oil fields of Louisiana and think what could be done if she should have suitable labor. Daniel Boon is said to have paused when he reached the highest pinnacle of the Alleghanies on his Western journey and put his hand to his ear as if to listen, and some one near by asked: "Why do you listen?" He said: "When I look Southward at that vast valley that lies out before me, methinks I can hear the footfalls of millions of contented people passing to and fro in the beautiful Southland yonder, (under the fear of God) living peaceful and happy lives."

I for one think that immigration will work incalculable benefit to the South and I hope that within a few years we shall see the people of these Southern States of ours awakened to a full realization of its value as a means of developing the great natural resources we possess.

N. Y. LIBRARY OPENED.

The New York public library, the most costly, and one of the most beautiful buildings designed for its specific uses in the world, was dedicated to the instruction and convenience of the public on Wednesday of this week by President Taft, Governor Dix, Mayor Gaynor and a distinguished representation of the culture of the entire nation. It holds shelf room for 3,500,000 volumes; it has floor space of 375,000 feet, as against 326,000 feet in the congressional library at Washington, and it has cost for erection merely more than $10,000,000, a figure which, when all details have been attended to, may rise to $12,000,000. The land on which it stands—fronting two blocks on Fifth avenue, between Fortieth and Forty-second street, was last valued at $20,000,000.

Three foundations, originating in private beneficence, merge in the present public foundation — the Astor library, incorporated in 1849; the Lenox library, incorporated in 1870; and the Tilden trust, incorporated in 1887. The city, empowered by special act of the legislature, gave the land and defrayed the cost of erection. Carrere and Hastings were the architects. John Carrere, one of the moving spirits in the American renaissance of the present generation, was run down by a taxicab and died before he could see his greatest work established as a part of the life of the community.

At the time of consolidation, the Astor library owned its site and building and had an endowment of $941,000, with an annual income of $47,000 and 267,000 volumes; the Lenox library owned its site and buildings and had an endowment of $505,000, an income of $20,000 and 86,000 volumes, and the Tilden trust owned 20,000 volumes and had an endowment of $2,000,000. The New York public library, therefore, opens with a total endowment of $3,446,500 and 373,000 books on the shelves. Within the next twenty-five years ten times as many are expected—3,700,000. The catalogue room now has 3,00,000 cards and can rise to 10,000,000 without feeling cramped.

Nine years ago next November the cornerstone was laid by Mayor Seth Low. Since then criticism has been abundant, not always well informed and often conflicting. In great measure the public has been hampered in any true appreciation of the building as a whole by the fragmentary and ragged state of its approaches. Said John W. Alexander, the painter: "The public library reminds me of a beautiful woman who hasn't kept her fingernails clean." All that has now been done away with. The approaches have been cleared and the building stands free to the public gaze as the architects planned.