

PORTALS TO LAND OF LIBERTY ARE HARD TO PASS, ELLIS ISLAND DAILY SCENE OF JOY AND PATHOS

Sympathetic Hands Attempt to Ease Chafing of Red Tape as Uncle Sam Guards His Shores From Undesirables

STERN LETTER OF LAW MAY SEPARATE MOTHER AND SON, BUT PARTING IS SOFTENED

Shedding of Tears and Ecstatic Shrieks of Welcome Fall Upon Unheeding Ears and Eyes Long Accustomed to Tragedies

FIRST squeeze your camel through the eye of a needle! Then tackle Ellis Island with an undesirable alien! The old island is as far away from New York and the Cradle of Liberty and the Land of Promise as Europe herself is for the alien with questionable credentials. It is a little land of hope deferred; it is a halfway house of anxiety and grief; a port of disillusionment after a long voyage of promise and dreams. Just fifteen to twenty minutes over the water by ferry, struts, races, eats, thinks, plays, New York—a conglomerate roar of manifold industry, canyons of steel and stone lipping the very clouds, a colossal bonfire of electric lights—the most emphatic, the most awe-inspiring symbol of all freedom. Within the confines of Ellis Island, eats, sleeps, thinks, waits the alien—plastered, institutional-looking walls surround him, uniformed attendants inspect him, the odor of human bodies and disinfectant poisons the air he breathes—the most abject, the most pathetic symbol of the very antithesis of freedom. Such is the impression and the contrast Ellis Island leave for the casual investigator. One thinks of jails full of victims who have committed no crime, where the cruelest walls are the insurmountable barriers of strange tongues, where keepers must seem inhuman largely because they are efficient, and despite the fact that they themselves are even as anxious to free the victims as the victims are to be freed. Gateway of Freedom

Is Home of Paradoxes

Ellis Island bristles with paradox, wretchedness, misunderstanding, aimlessness. And yet Ellis Island is one of the most humanely conducted of institutions. And that is the supreme paradox—the ultimate paradox of the place. The most poignant way to understand Ellis Island is to enter it as an alien, and of course, that is the best way to misunderstand it, too. Another good way to misunderstand it is to wander through as a casual observer. When Hulda Tulp, of Holland, who comes over to meet and marry Hans, her sweetheart, steams up the harbor and passes the Statue of Liberty, her heart begins to palpitate. "Land again!" says her head. "Hans!" cries her heart. She has fleeting pictures of herself moving down the gang-plank, and hurling herself into her sweetheart's open arms. She sees herself pushing by these slower, older folk who have crowded her so in the crush of the steerage, and out upon the streets of freedom. How she has waited for this moment through the long, anxious uncomfortable days of her voyage! How impossible it seems for her to wait a moment longer for Hans and America! But when the liner has docked, uniformed officers push her back as she jostles with the others toward the gang-plank. And Hulda must wait. Hulda doesn't know why she must wait. So she sits on her great bundle of clothes, and the tears come to her eyes. About her are the other steerage passengers, waiting too. An old woman out of Middle Europe somewhere, who made her 600-mile trip in an apron for her outermost garment, cuts a slice of cheese from a tremendous slab of it under the clothes in her wicker trunk, and slowly munches it. A young mother, from Italy, nurses a whimpering child. A patriarch, with sad eyes, and a crinkled brown face, lights his curved and elaborately ornamented pipe. And while Hulda and the other aliens in the steerage are waiting and wondering why they are waiting, the first-class passengers leave the ship, and the second class, and the United States citizens in the third class, which is steerage. They have all been examined on the boat by immigration officials, and on the pier their baggage is inspected by customs officers. Hulda waits maybe one day, maybe another. But at last, early one morning, she is allowed to leave the ship, with the swarm of alien men and women and children who glow with the expectation of seeing America.

Immigrants. And then Hulda has to wait again. At the other end of the long hall and corresponding with each row of benches there are desks. At each desk are an inspector and an interpreter. The immigrants are called to these desks singly or by families, and they are checked up according to the lists. They are asked their age, their trade and how much money they have in their possession. Hulda has heard some of the immigrants talking about how much money it is necessary to possess to get into the United States. She has an amount equal to \$100 herself. Some of the immigrants have much less. The more cunning "swap" money with each other

ing—doing on the benches, gambling, eating lunch and throwing the scraps under their feet. Few of them, though the opportunity is given, go out to the open-air porch, where the cool breeze blows from over the harbor. Most of them stay in the stuffy rooms, breathing in the bad air, apparently unconscious of the disagreeable pungent odor of disinfectants. Uncle Sam Now Guards Portals From Unworthy

It must be remembered that Ellis Island was built to be a clearing house for unrestricted immigration. In the old days it was not uncommon for 5000 immigrants to pass through in a day,

that can be expected under the circumstances. "Immigrants are men and women," said Commissioner Robert E. Tod, a great jovial-looking, white-haired man, and the obviousness of it only gives his statement the more emphasis. "They are being detained because of the necessary laws of this country, and their detention must be made as comfortable as possible. And their freedom to go into the country must be given them as efficiently and with as much dispatch as is possible. They come here, under the great handicap of language which isn't understood. They are excited. They are fearful as you or I would be under the same conditions. Many of them



Safe past the "quota deadline"



From Sunny Italy



Five little strangers from afar

to exhibit to the inspectors as their own. But the experienced inspectors spot "show money" invariably. It Is Real Mystic Maze to Enter Land of Liberty

Leading from the inspectors at the tall desks are passageways running in four different directions. One leads to a room where immigrants are kept over when there has arisen some question as to the advisability of admitting them to the United States; one leads to the ferry for those who have passed all the inspectors and plan to live in New York; one leads to a detention room, where the immigrants wait for relatives or friends who must arrive before the immigrants may leave the island; the last one leads to the trains, by way of the ferry, for those who mean to settle in the West. Hulda tells the inspectors that she is to meet Hans, who is going to marry her. She is sent to the temporary detention room. She finds herself in a screened enclosure, but Hans is nowhere in sight. Others are more fortunate. An Italian woman sitting beside her jumps up breathlessly when she hears her name called out. An attendant opens the door. An Italian, feverishly and with a flushed forehead, rushes towards her. She is embraced and kissed. "La mia moglie!" (my wife). He grasps the first woman he sees. It happens to be the matron. He kisses her again and again and she is exhausted. Then he holds her off at arm's length to feast his eyes on the welcome sight. An expression of consternation comes over his face. "Dio mio!" he shrieks. "Non e' la moglie!" It is not his wife. Without so much as a "cousin" to the poor woman whom he has been kissing so ardently, he pushes her aside, and spies the only object of his affection, who blinks and stares, dumfounded. Hulda looks pensively at the "kissing post" and the "kissing gate." She doesn't know that those are the names given by the inspectors to the almost hourly scenes of intense joy. She wonders if she will be called soon. And she is, strangely enough. She hears her name and in an instant she is in Hans' arms, the officials nearby, smiling, disinterested—not because they are inhuman, but because they see so many Huldas and Hanses. It is all part of their day's work, and they become callous, only because it would break their hearts if they didn't. Hulda, as was indicated, is fortunate. Many of the thousands of immigrants who come into the United States have more difficulty. Some are diseased, some for other reasons are likely to become a charge to the Nation, some are "ex quota." And these are sent to the detention wards upstairs. The third class passengers detained are separated according to sex, the second class are not. But they are all quartered in bare, lifeless rooms. You find them there—wait-

ing on the benches, gambling, eating lunch and throwing the scraps under their feet. Few of them, though the opportunity is given, go out to the open-air porch, where the cool breeze blows from over the harbor. Most of them stay in the stuffy rooms, breathing in the bad air, apparently unconscious of the disagreeable pungent odor of disinfectants.



From Poland



"Welcome, brother"

are poor, many ignorant. There has been some complaint over our treatment of them, especially over those who are "ex quota" and, consequently, detained."

It is to be remembered that an amendment to the Immigration Law restricted the number of aliens who may be admitted to the United States in any one year to 3 per cent of any nationality resident therein as determined by the census of 1910. That is to say, if there were 2000 South Africans in the United States when the 1910 census was taken, 150 will be permitted to enter the United States each year. The fiscal year begins July 1. It is also provided that a maximum of 20 per cent of that quota may be admitted each month. This makes it possible for a quota to be exhausted within five

months. If it is, no immigrants from that particular country are permitted to pass Ellis Island until the next July 1, when the quotas begin again.

Stern Quota Law Keeps Many Out of Country

Because many of the aliens do not understand these quota regulations, which have been deemed necessary by the government, they are doomed to great griefs. A little girl who has been in the detention quarter a fortnight was born in South Africa. Her parents are both English. And the English are both English. And the English are practically inexhaustible. But the South African quota is exhausted. And a law gives the child of an alien the nation-

ality of the country in which the child is born. The parents and their child reached America a day after the South African quota was exhausted, and the child is detained. It is possible to appeal cases to a Board of Inquiry, which sits daily. The findings of this board are sent to Washington, and the Department of Labor decides. In all likelihood, the little South African, who is English to the core, will be deported, though her case has been appealed. But she may return to this country immediately the new quota begins. There are many cases of this sort on the island. A French girl born in Algeria was excluded because she arrived on the last day of the month, during which the 20 per cent maximum Algerian quota had already been exhausted. If the ship had landed on the first day of the next month, when the new monthly quota of 20 per cent began, she would have been admitted. As it happened, she is "ex quota" and unless she is able to convince the Board of Inquiry to the contrary, she will have to return to make the trip over again. Perhaps it's a stupid arrangement," said Commissioner Tod. "But what can we do? We are bound by the laws which Congress gives us. We have no authority beyond what the law allows. And the law does not allow us to admit 'ex quota' aliens. I have recommended that a change be made in the matter of nationality being determined by that of the nation in which the child is born, even when the parents are alien to that country. But nothing seems to be done about it."

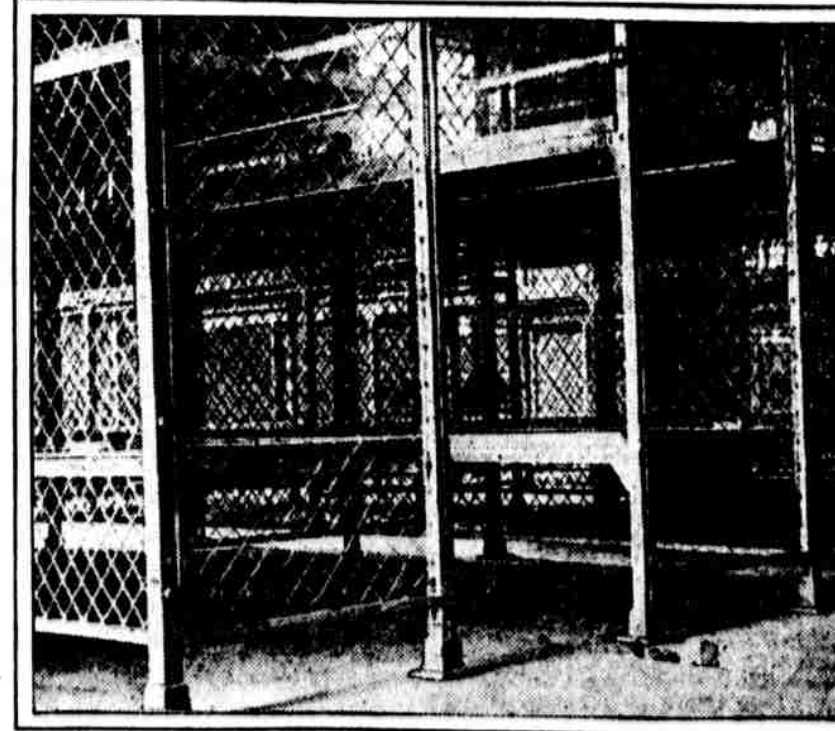
The aliens who are detained, are bonded and lodged at the expense of the steamship company which brings them over. There is a great dining hall, and on the other side of the island a hospital, which treats from 8000 to 10,000 cases a year. Eighteen welfare organizations work among the immigrants. They conduct religious services, and maintain a kindergarten and nursery for detained children. They furnish clothes to needy. They guide immigrants to their destinations in New York City in order that they may not be subjected to unscrupulous porters and taxicab drivers; they protect relatives already in this country from shyster lawyers who try to reap a harvest at the expense of their unfortunates with the regulations regarding entrance into the United States.

Newcomers Are Accorded Sympathetic Treatment

During the period of inquiry into the cases of immigrants detained for one reason or another, they are not per-

mitted to see relatives or friends living this side of the ocean. This is done in order to permit the Board of Inquiry to work smoothly. Those who are deported are allowed to see friends and relatives at certain specified hours. Each immigrant is regarded as an individual who, by virtue of his situation, is in need of help and protection," said Thomas F. Mulvihill, representative of a welfare council, one of the eighteen organizations who co-operate with the Government on the island. "The saddest cases that come to our attention," said Miss Sarah I. Wendick, one of the workers, "are where one member of a family dies just as the new world is reached. This happens all too frequently. Some time ago a little Polish woman arrived with her two children, a boy and a girl. The boy was taken ill with scarlet fever on the boat, and put in the hospital at Ellis Island, where he died a few days later. "The mother was a deeply little soul, and beyond words, with a voiceless grief which made it all the more pathetic. As the ferry pulled out to New York, she looked back at the hospital windows where lay all that remained of her little other child, who had died so suddenly, and gazed up at the tall buildings of New York," she sighed. And New York meant little to her at that moment." No wonder the attendants become more or less callous. They would die of emotion felt too violently, and they would cease to be human. The atmosphere of the great Administration Building is one of tension. The moments are full with life. The scrambling to collect bundles and boxes, when word comes that they are free; the violent embraces and kissing between son and father, mother and son, husband and wife, when they first see each other; the wailing eyes of long waiting, and of dejection—all these, joys and griefs, would eat the heart out of anything but a callous man. In the detention halls are little children, quaint little bodies in alien clothes. They sit at about and stare, they roll on the floor, they suckle at the breast of a detained mother—somehow, they are the most pathetic because they are so small. The older men gaming at the long tables in the men's detention quarters for third class, their hands writing letters—women with white socks tightly bound over their heads—some must wait, aren't half so pathetic. They must wait, certainly, and they may have to go back over the sea in the end—but they are all rather brave. Stolid Courage Shown by Detained Immigrants

It is this courage, this stolid acceptance of what must seem to them only a hopeless fate, that gives relief to the entire picture. Ellis Island isn't at bottom a gay place—the tears of the men and the women who are detained are not there because they want to be. And, under these circumstances it couldn't possibly be gay place. There is always the undercurrent of sorrow. There is, however, the comfort of hope. The aliens learn that Ellis Island officials are not trying to keep them there; they are not by any means giving prison fare; they know that if it is possible, under the law which they don't understand, they will soon be free. And this hope, which is the fire of courage, makes Ellis Island as attractive as any such place ever could be. In the ferry down below on the water a hundred ragged immigrants are being taken to their trains. The tags are yellow in most cases and have hand-printed numbers on them. These numbers refer to the railroad companies, whose trains are waiting to take the immigrants to all parts of the Union. When the ferry reaches the various company docks a great number is raised from the shore. The immigrants compare their numbers and get off the ferry or stay on, as the case may be. These are the really happy ones—America welcomes them. Ellis Island for them is not doing its worst. New York; it is the miles away from which they had already passed, and opportunity and happiness without end. And therein again they may be disillusioned—but that's another story.



At the left are the sleeping quarters for detained "guests" at the Island; at the right is a section of the kitchen