

RESULTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GALVESTON MOVEMENT

In a recent article Mr. David M. Bressler, general manager of the Industrial Removal Office, explains in detail the work of the "Galveston Movement," its direct achievements and the influence it will likely exert on future immigration.

After tracing the origin of the Bureau, which was a logical development of removal work, for distribution before the immigrant has attempted to adjust himself in a definite locality, seems so much more reasonable than readjusting him after he has located himself, Mr Bressler describes the operation of the Bureau and its connection with the Jewish Territorial Organization. The latter, through its agents in Russia, carefully sifted the immigrants who wished to go to America, dissuading the weak and the unfit, and directing with information and advice those fit to go, but in no case stimulating or inducing anyone to leave Russia for America. This is an important point and one that the Bureau strictly insisted upon and conscientiously carried out, as it did not wish in the remotest way to appear as an encourager of immigration to this country.

The Bureau took charge of the immigrant as soon as he was admitted to America, and placed him in a position that was obtained for him through the instrumentality of co-operating agencies which the Bureau had previously established.

"The manager and traveling organizers of the Bureau blazed the trail. Into every city and town of consequence they went forth spreading the idea and principles of the movement and arousing American Jewry to its task and its opportunity. The response was ready and, with singular rapidity, the network of committees grew larger. These committees kept in constant touch with the Bureau at Galveston, filing industrial reports and requisitions, and keeping it informed of all the fluctuations in the labor market. All this information was carefully collated and utilized in selecting the locality to which the immigrants were sent. Naturally, regard was paid to the industrial status of each immigrant, to his efficiency and experience, and special effort was made to dovetail these factors

with the needs and requirements of the receiving communities. Mechanics were placed with little difficulty; greater energy had to be expended in placing the merchant-peddler type, who, unable to speak English and without a practical trade, was yet as a rule a man of splendid caliber willing and ready to wrestle with his new environment.

"How they struggled and succeeded, how they acquired civic conscience and economic security—these belong to the spiritual history of the movement and constitute a contribution to the upbuilding of human life and character.

The work of the Bureau by years may be summarized as follows:

Year	No. Distributed
1907.....	866
1908.....	135
1909.....	418
1910.....	1193
1911.....	1355
1912.....	1522
1913.....	2918
1914 (to July 1st).....	925
Total.....	9332

"With the anticipated arrivals up to October 1, 1914, it may conservatively be stated that fully 10,000 people will have arrived at Galveston by the closing date.]

"It would be interesting to study in detail the distribution of the immigrants arriving at Galveston from 1907 to 1913, inclusive, by States, and the following table is for the first time presented to the public as an accurate statistical summary:

Arkansas.....	155
Colorado.....	284
Illinois.....	283
Iowa.....	1225
Kansas.....	208
Louisiana.....	296
Minnesota.....	997
Missouri.....	1099
Mississippi.....	35
Nebraska.....	641
North Dakota.....	35
Oklahoma.....	245
Tennessee.....	191
Texas.....	2134
Wisconsin.....	48

"Following is a table of the more important industrial pursuits engaged in by the immigrants distributed by the Bureau:

Bakers.....	143
Blacksmiths.....	120
Butchers.....	202
Carpenters.....	418
Clerks.....	537
Dressmakers.....	343
Laborers.....	332
Locksmiths.....	183
Merchants.....	422
Painters.....	146
Shoemakers.....	463
Shoe Upperers.....	166
Tailors.....	600
Tanners.....	132
Tinners.....	114
Unskilled.....	765

"If we scan the wage lists of the Bureau immigrants for the last two years (to bring the figures up to date), we find that notwithstanding the fact that the men placed by the Bureau could not speak English, they commanded reasonably satisfactory wages in the communities where they located. For blacksmiths we find an average wage of \$15 per week; for carpenters, \$12 to \$15; for laborers, \$9; for locksmiths, \$12; for painters, \$15; for shoemakers, \$10, and for shoe upperers, \$12.

"Considered in the light of the legitimate possibilities of the movement, the foregoing figures of the total distribution effected by the Bureau may prove somewhat disappointing. For the work of the Galveston Bureau, had it been unimpeded, could have substantially altered the ratio of immigration between the several ports of entry of the United States."

The difficulties that have retarded the work are, as explained by Mr. Bressler, mainly two: lack of encouragement on the part of the immigration authorities of this country, and the failure of the steamship line to improve the service so as to make the long voyage more bearable. As to the first reason, its influence can be shown mathematically in the rejection at Galveston of proportionately four times as many selected immigrants as are rejected by other ports handling the ordinary run. This is

one of the cases in which figures do not lie. As to the steamship service, some slight concessions were obtained for immigrants, but the voyage remained very long and very uncomfortable.

Mr. Bressler thinks the authorities were particularly lacking in vision in not apprehending the significance and the potential value of an agency that distributes at the source, and those who have experience with immigrants will share his view. However, it is the function of the private organization to show the way, and perhaps the Government will wake up some day and realize how signally it failed to grasp a real opportunity.]

Besides the 10,000 individuals that the Bureau will have diverted from the congested ports by the time it concludes its labors on September 30th, Mr. Bressler points out that the children of the immigrants will grow up in the great American spaces and not in the crowded quarters of great cities, and that this gives a qualitative result to the work that should not be overlooked.]

"In concluding, the writer feels it incumbent to say that the obstacles which the Galveston movement encountered should not render us discouraged or indifferent. Every movement has experienced and is still experiencing the obstacles created by lack of social vision or indifference. We cannot hope as yet for that far-sightedness which will enable everyone to perceive the social significance of a movement. But the tendency is in that direction. One need not be a Utopian to indulge the hope that the work of the Galveston Bureau and of similar institutions will have profound influence in shaping Government policies regarding immigration. It may be that not in the distant future our Government will realize its responsibility toward the immigrant and instead of throwing barriers in the way of his admission, will embark on more constructive principles, bending its energies to a proper absorption and distribution of the immigrant rather than to his exclusion. What a private agency has accomplished in the face of all discouragement and difficulty should be an experience by which our National Government might well be guided."]