

CHAPTER XI

PRESENT-DAY IMMIGRATION

IF present-day immigration were the result of personal initiative and voluntary action on the part of the immigrant, the United States would not now be receiving so large a volume. Upon this there is virtually a unanimity of agreement among the authorities on the subject.

It is believed by Professor Commons, for instance, that if it had been left to the initiative of the immigrants themselves "the flow of immigration to America could scarcely ever have reached one-half its actual dimensions." He is of the opinion that the desire to make a profit upon the immigrants, to get cheap labour, and to sell land have probably brought more to the United States than the hard conditions of Europe, Asia, and Africa have sent. He says that the induced immigration has been as potent as voluntary immigration and that it is to this "mercenary motive that we owe our manifold variety of races, and especially our influx of backward races."* The efforts of large employers of labour and shipowners to attract and bring them have been a most potent factor in flooding the domestic labour market with an over-supply of low-wage workers.

* Commons: "Races and Immigrants in America."