

Immigration and Labor

PART I

SUMMARY REVIEW

IT is the purpose of this review to state briefly for the benefit of the busy reader the results of our inquiry into the various phases of the immigration question. Such a summary must necessarily be dogmatic in form. Every proposition is advanced here, however, merely as a theorem, whose demonstration is presented in its proper place, in another part of the book.

It is recognized on all sides that the present movement for restriction of immigration has a purely economic object: the restriction of competition in the labor market. Organized labor demands the extension of the protectionist policy to the home market in which "hands"—the laborer's only commodity—are offered for sale. The advocates of restriction believe that every immigrant admitted to this country takes the place of some American workingman. At the inception of the restrictionist movement, in the 80's and the early 90's, they were avowedly opposed to immigration in general. The subsequent decline of immigration from the British Isles, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries and the increase of immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe have diverted the attack from immigration in general to "the new immigration" from Southern and Eastern