

## VIII

### LIVING CONDITIONS AND CONGESTION

#### *In Large Cities*

##### CONGESTION OF POPULATION A SERIOUS EVIL

For a number of years it has been the opinion of many of the workers for social betterment in our large cities, that the congestion of the population in the poorer quarters, is among the greatest of evils, and that this overcrowding is to a great extent brought about by the incoming of new immigrants in large numbers. The facts, however, regarding general conditions have not heretofore been well known. Previous investigations have been mostly the work of individuals sent out by the "social settlements" or by charitable societies with the purpose of making local studies. Inquiries have not been made on a scale sufficiently large to enable one to judge of average conditions. It has been natural that investigators should see primarily the worst cases, and that they should note especially the great number of people living in a block, and should judge of the conditions very largely from the number of people, rather than from the circumstances under which they live. Furthermore, no accurate comparison between the different cities was possible.

##### METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

Recognizing these facts, and also the importance of the question, the Immigration Commission decided to