

touch, every one is made vivid. During the exposition year the President and Mme. MacMahon gave a state dinner to Ex-President and Mrs. Grant. Mme. Waddington's account of Mrs. Grant's natural dismay on discovering that her host on whose right she was placed neither spoke nor understood a word of English and her own difficulties with the Chinese ambassador who sat next her is most amusing. The ambassador was credited with a fluent knowledge of English. Apparently he had learned a few phrases which he used in rotation with all the spontaneity of a phonograph. Among them, "Yes, yes, very hot, very cold, very hot, very cold," seemed to be the one in which he had most confidence. One gathers that, conversationally, at least at the end of the table at which Mrs. Grant and Mme. Waddington found themselves, the dinner was hardly a success.

One has little glimpses of life away from Paris during occasional holidays when this very cosmopolitan family were united. M. Waddington's mother was Scottish by birth, his sister-in-law an English woman, while his sister had married the German diplomatist, de Bunsen, and his wife was an American. French, English, Italian and German were used with equal ease and facility. The elder Mme. Waddington did not at all approve of the careless habit of mixing their languages. She made it a rule that they should keep to one language at least at meals. She did not care which one they chose, as she spoke all four fluently herself. But whichever one the repast began with, had to be held to throughout.

In the author's opinion, none of the celebrities she met ever surpassed the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, for kindly tact and charm of manner. As a sort of footnote to history, the reviewer recalls reading in the *Figaro* a few weeks before the late king's death, that on his return to Paris from what was to be his last journey to the south of France, the only engagement he made was to attend a breakfast at the house of Mme. Waddington. The author devotes a para-

graph to recording a protest against the modern craze of Bridge which she complains has destroyed all real conversation and has opened the doors to many people who formerly knocked vainly at the portals of good society. It would be interesting to hear her opinion of the more recent craze for dancing and of the people who have tangoed their way into that once exclusive region!

Edmond L. Coubert.

## VII

### MARY ANTIN'S "THEY WHO KNOCK AT OUR GATES"\*

The one fundamental criticism which could be made against *The Promised Land* rested in that it may have led readers to feel it was America and not Mary Antin who made Mary Antin. Indeed that remarkable human document, written with so much eloquence, was primarily the story of a very exceptional woman who had the power to make America give her the things which lay waiting but are undiscoverable to many other immigrants. Seldom has there been written a more moving story of personal experience and, as such, it has already taken its very definite place in the literature of the decade. But one could not help feeling that the flush of gratitude with which the author faced the country where she was able to achieve so much, had blinded her vision somewhat as to actual conditions here. In her latest little volume there is the same lyrical note, touched at times with rhapsodical rhetoric; but one gains a sense of deeper study of the problem as it faces the sordid facts confronting the immigrant. This is not said in deprecation of the earlier volume: merely to point out that as a discussion of the general problem this later book has a distinct and somewhat different contribution.

In the three sections into which she divides the problem the first seems the less convincing. For in it she endeavours to discuss the large problem as to whether

\**They Who Knock at Our Gates*. By Mary Antin. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

we have the right to restrict immigration at all. Most of her arguments are based upon abstract principles of brotherhood and liberty as voiced in our Declaration. Here we have the familiar analogies drawn between pioneer immigration and present day immigration. Mary Antin feels very strongly, indeed, that the inalienable rights of a common humanity should bid us pause if we are to restrict what was formerly unrestricted.

A little attention to the principles involved would have convinced us long ago that an American citizen who preaches wholesale restriction of immigration is guilty of political heresy. The Declaration of Independence accords to *all* men an equal share in the inherent rights of humanity. When we go contrary to that principle, we are not acting as Americans; for, by definition, an American is one who lives by the principles of the Declaration. . . . We shall have to recall officially the Declaration before we can lawfully limit the application of its principles to this or that group of men. . . . If under that authority the immigrant appears to have rights in our land parallel to our own rights, we shall not lightly deny his claims, lest we forfeit our only title to national glory.

When it comes to a closer analysis of the restrictionist theory the authoress takes up with much vigour and emotion the various arguments with which this question is usually faced and gives the answers out of her own rich experience. It is here we detect the new note which did not appear in the earlier volume: a note of just criticism of social abuses which are not caused by the immigrant, but of which he is the victim. With a sustained utterance, she cumulatively shows the exploitation to which the immigrant is submitted and over which he has no control; yet because of which he is so unjustly blamed. Mary Antin urges that we look to our own civic housekeeping and see whether many of the exploitations are not our own social sins. Her argument is that we should scrape off the parasites that feed on immigration and unjustly exploit it, rather

than put the bars up upon those to whom America is an ideal and a "promised land."

Mount guard in the name of the Republic, if the health of the Republic requires it, but let no such order be issued until her statesmen and philosophers and patriots have consulted together. Above all, let the voice of prejudice be stilled, let not self-interest chew the cud of envy in full sight of the nation, and let no syllable of wilful defamation mar the oracles of state. For those who are excluded when our bars are down are exiles from Egypt, whose feet stumble in the deserts of political and social slavery, whose hearts hunger for the bread of freedom. The ghost of the *Mayflower* pilots every immigrant ship, and Ellis Island is another name for Plymouth Rock.

This book is highly compressed with fact and feeling: it is moving to a degree because of the author's eloquent sincerity. It is essentially a plea for the immigrant, an exposition of what this country means to him and what he means to it. Colouring all the pages is a belief in an idealistic conception of our destiny which bids the cynic shame. Some may feel that much of it is sentimental—the resort of the cynic; but no student of the problem can ignore the passion of its utterance. In fact, this book does for the immigrant what Olive Schreiner has done for woman in *Woman and Labour*; both have expressed with a broad epic touch the inner cry of a group. If all the immigrants were endowed as Mary Antin how simple the problem would be. One leaves the book with a sense of wonder, for she has humanised the problem better than any other writer who has tried to express it.

Geoffry Monmouth.

## VIII

GEORGE LINCOLN BURR'S "NARRATIVES OF THE WITCHCRAFT CASES"\*

This is one of the series of Original Narratives of Early American History. It includes all contemporary American

\*Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases. Edited by George Lincoln Burr. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.