

on the bench. "Well," I answered, "no, I don't think he looks much like you." "No," said the Philadelphian, "he looks like a monkey." I saw in that sober countenance and squalid apparel, centuries of Russian oppression — the knout, imprisonment, persecution, and murder. Would America straighten that form, lift up that head, and put a smile on that face, as better clothes were put upon the body? Yes, that is what this land of opportunity does to the millions of Europe. It is culture for them to breathe the air of this "home of the free"; it is an education to be able to travel where they will; coming to America is the resurrection of many a soul to newness of life, and that accounts for the fervent patriotism of millions of foreign-born men to-day in America, who would gladly lay down their lives for the land of their adoption.

**Libraries do Good Work.** — In this process of educating the foreigner, the libraries of the land are interested. In Detroit, in the public library, there is a bright Polish young lady in charge of the department of foreign literature. She told me that they had twenty thousand volumes in Polish, Italian, Yiddish, French, and German. These foreign books were distributed in various factories where foreigners worked, in order to cultivate their taste for reading. The books were chosen with great care and had a special relation to United States history, biography, and government. That is excellent. In Buffalo, a branch of the public library is found in "Dom Polski," a building put up and maintained by the Poles of the city. A Polish lady is in charge, and her countrymen come there to read, take out books, and spend an hour with their friends. The same desire and anxiety to help foreigners is found in other cities in the immigration zone. In annual sessions of library associations in the states of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, the librarians express an earnest desire to give a helping hand to the foreigners by bringing within their reach books which will help them to understand America. Some librarians have gone farther than that; they have opened the spare room to the foreigners who meet there regularly to study the English language. One of these sympathetic librarians, in a branch library in Brooklyn,

made it a practice to be present at each session when the foreigners came together ; she brought all the books the library had in their language to that room ; she soon was able to call each man by name, and her estimate of them was, " fine fellows."

**Foreigners should choose the Books.** — Of course, the taste of the foreigner in literature is not our taste ; the standards by which he judges a book are not our standards. Anglo-Saxon ideas and ethical concepts are not always the best guide in the selection of books for foreigners. The best results in the choice of books are secured by asking for the coöperation of a committee from among the foreigners themselves to make the selection. In every foreign community there are men who can do this. The foreigner knows how to behave when he comes to the reading room of the library. Miss Wells, of Pittsburgh, once contrasted the foreign and the American attitude by saying, " The foreigners come in quietly and with genial spirit, they will pass on the papers to their friends and not do as Americans, sit on one while they read the other." Some foreigners interpret the words " Free Library " too literally — they take the books and never return them, on the supposition that they are free to keep them. A group of five Poles, in one of the cities of Pennsylvania, gave considerable trouble to the librarian because they forgot to bring back the books. Immigrants need training to use libraries properly.

**Foreigners have Self-culture.** — Among all the peoples of the new immigration may be found small libraries, educational societies, and clubs for self-culture. When in Ashokam Dam, visiting the bunks where the foreigners slept, I saw two young men studying English ; the one had a Russian-English book and the other a Bulgarian-English reader. In hotels and shoe shining parlors, Greek boys may be seen studying our language and wrestling with the difficulties of our grammar. The desire to learn, the ambition for culture, is found among all peoples, but we have to look for it sometimes behind the screen, for the men are shy and sensitive. To meet this desire for education, to guide these men, to lead them into sympathetic relation with the education and culture of America, is our privilege and duty.