

A
-2nd
misc pamphlets
Ass - Comm Study Recent
Immig

PILGRIMS IN OUR TIME

These three articles reprinted from *Survey Graphic* for April 1946, are based on information compiled in a comprehensive, nationwide survey conducted by the Committee for the Study of Recent Immigration From Europe. The Study was organized by five leading national agencies assisting refugees in the United States: the American Christian Committee for Refugees, the American Friends Service Committee, the Catholic Committee for Refugees, the National Refugee Service and the United States Committee for the Care of European Children. Dr. Alvin Johnson is Chairman of the Study Committee, and Miss Dorothy Canfield Fisher is a member. Professor Maurice R. Davie is Director of the Study.

Compliments of

THE NATIONAL REFUGEE SERVICE

105 Nassau Street

New York 7, N. Y.



PILGRIMS IN OUR TIME

A quarter million refugees—men, women and children—have come to our shores since Hitler rose to power. Here three articles illuminate the findings of the Committee for the Study of Recent Immigration from Europe which undertook nothing less than to appraise objectively the impact of these newcomers in our historic stream of settlement—and, in turn, their adjustments to American ways of life.

Meet Two Families

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

MY SHARE IN THIS ADVENTURE IN interpretation is to give some idea of the concrete, personal, human aspects of what in these years of persecution and war has come to be called the "refugee problem" in the USA.

When I first began to think about it, my simple idea was to select the experiences of one man or woman as characteristic of the group. My dismay at such an impossible self-assignment was not for lack of information about the subject. I know plenty of refugees, and have followed with almost anguished hope and fear their encounters since coming to this country. But to pick out any one of them as typical . . . ! What would you feel if you sat down to tell the life story of one of the men or women you know, selected to illustrate what human beings are like?

In a confusion like what yours would be in such a case, I pass on to review some of the refugees I have known. Shall I tell of the composer of music and director of choirs who arrived in New York with his wife and children just one jump ahead of the police and Dachau? Would his story be "characteristic of the group"? Let's see.

A suitcase apiece of European-looking clothes was their sole wealth, except the sound knowledge of mu-

sic inside the man's graying head. The possessions accumulated during a successful lifetime had been left behind in their hurried flight.

I know in every detail what happened to them here—The first desperate months in New York, housework for the wife the only paid occupation available—Their encounters with the hastily organized offices for

—By a Kansas-born Vermonter. There she has been a member of the State Board of Education, and her hillside looks out on all mankind.

An ace interpreter of the human drama of World War I (she spent three years in France doing war work), Mrs. Fisher has been a rare portrayer of American life in such novels as "The Bent Twig" (1915), "The Brimming Cup" (1921), "The Deepening Stream" (1930). Her own books have been translated into French, German, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish. She is a force in America's reading as member of the editorial board of the *Book-of-the-Month-Club*.

Mrs. Fisher's part in the American Youth Commission has been matched by that in harboring refugee children in New England countrysides. She is an active member of the Committee for the Study of Recent Immigration from Europe.

refugee committees. Oh, those first "offices"! Four bare walls, six straight chairs, a kitchen table; back of this table an inhumanly overworked American, half-blind with too little sleep, too many papers to handle, too many "cases" to be responsible for; in front of it a group of European men, women, and children half-blind with tears, shed and unshed, with horror at what was behind them, with blank all-pervasive alarm at what might be before them, people who had been civilized, privileged-by-society, secure people now moving in a waking nightmare.

My musician's name was soon inscribed on one of the folders heaped on the improvised desk. In it was the record of his life achievements, which we all soon learned to call by the European Latinized name *curriculum vitae*. Day by day, in the hours when his wife was working, he came to sit on one of the straight chairs, to wait for something to emerge from the folder. His morale was not helped by becoming an uninvited, unwilling witness to fresh horror at the past and alarm at the future brought in by each new arrival.

Finally something did come out of his folder—an opportunity to teach music at a tiny salary in a poorly endowed, small "college" far inland.

A job. The job which meant one step inside the country outside of New York City.

Of Pride and Prejudice

In the struggling, poor old institution and in the small provincial old-fashioned town where they went, they found some joys—the freshness, vitality, good will of young Americans, their adolescent students. They found many difficulties—such as the perfectly understandable jealousy of the old-American “professor of music” who had never dreamed of so high a standard of professional accomplishment as that of the newcomer. They found friendliness, neighbors who were good to them in sickness. They aroused prejudices; some of their ways seemed unutterably queer to local folk. The older, more “sot” people of the town felt a growing alarm at the fascination these foreigners had for “our good church-going American young folk.” Rigid church-goers disapproved of social gaiety at their Sunday afternoon teas. Plain rural people had an accurate, instinctive perception they were looked down on by these urban, cosmopolitan artists.

And indeed how could the newcomers feel, at first, the human worth of their new neighbors? Their tradition was the often-found European one that plain rural and small town people who have no aesthetic culture worth mentioning have *no* culture at all, or human dignity either—are, by definition, “peasants” or “petit bourgeois.”

This growing tension ended in an explosion, a big row, one of those rancorous, tight, small community rows, in which there is no discernible right side or wrong side, because everybody has become so emotionally involved that everybody is to blame—and nobody is to blame.

So our musician was out of a job.

They had no money; they must sell what few possessions they had; they had no future.

But his wife said gallantly, holding her head high, “We must not forget that this is better than Dachau.” They rallied themselves to make a new start. And, really, their situation was quite changed from what it had been. The musician and his family were no longer total strangers to our country as though they had been rocket-shot to the moon. There were five of them, man, wife, growing-up chil-

dren. They had all made human contacts; contacts which meant friends.

The children (they were bright) secured scholarships of one kind or another. One of the girls had always wanted to be a nurse and was safely in a hospital nursing-school, in training, her expenses paid. The genial, warm-hearted musician himself, rather obviously impractical, had appealed to the friendliness of several people in the community, who, perhaps to begin with, got into the row only because they always did detest the people who were opposing the newcomers.

The committee in New York once more took a hand. It was now established in a sure-enough office with real desks with drawers and blotters on top, and rank upon rank of steel files, crammed with what were no longer called *curricula vitae* but “records.” There were even stenographer-secretaries (a few) taking notes, typing, filing, dashing to and fro. In addition to the committee, those Americans who were interested in the case—perhaps because of letters of introduction from European friends—put their heads together, planned, wrote letters, and used their influence (ruefully surprised to see how little their names counted in far-away small communities).

The committee now had, in one of its steel files, copious lists of institutions of learning of which many of us had never heard before. Everybody set his hand to the rope and pulled, a long pull, a pull all together. But after all, it was no “influential” person in the big city but the group of new friends in the small community, the ones who had been on the composer’s side in the local row, who secured another job, in another small college.

Old Wine in New Bottles

Long breaths of relief. The new work started. With a better chance of success from the first. The once-European thought he acted just as he had before, because (his heart is absolutely clear on this point) he did the very best he could in the first place. Yes, but those several years spent in America had imperceptibly molded him in many ways. He and his wife no longer unconsciously rubbed the old women (male and female) of the small community so often the wrong way. Perhaps on the other side, those years of talk about

European refugees and what they can do for America had imperceptibly molded the old women—and the rest of us—too. In the second town, there was no anxious, aging, jealous, poorly trained American professor of music. The young people, in from the farms and villages, getting for the first time in their lives some sound musical training, burst into communal skill they never dreamed was theirs. They learned to *sing in parts*, at first two parts (great adventure), and then in four parts. They sang as a choir in the local churches. They were sent to take part in the state musical festival.

That was the first time, for many of them, ever to visit the capital of the state. It was an ordeal for them, shy of all those strange faces, to sing in public. They were tremendously impressed by the masterful calm of their leader. He, for whom the audience of small-town folk in the assembly hall of the State University seemed very small potatoes in comparison with those for whom he used to make music in the Old World, smiled at his young singers reassuringly. They clung to his rock-like composure. They fixed their eyes prayerfully on his familiar face. Emotionally stirred, they sang as never they sang before.

From the friendly audience came a great burst of applause—oh, life-giving sweet sound to rural self-distrust. Keeping their poker-faced dignity, they filed off the platform. But back of the scene what childlike relief, what pride, and enthusiasm! They hugged each other, they slapped each other (and “the professor”) on the back. They were moved to a hearty joyful intimacy of triumphant group life they had never before achieved.

Of this our refugee musician was an integral part, in fact the central part. He was no longer a refugee. He was a part of American life.

We might as well leave him there, the doors to the future open before him. He will have ups and downs, of course. Was there ever a musician who didn’t have? Other rows will start, but now because, although he and his wife don’t realize it, they have learned more about the tempo and rhythm of American life, somehow those rows end like ordinary rows, in some sort of compromise. They are soon forgotten by people carried along by the current of active creative life. All we need to know about his later life is that somehow

the chorus of that small institution became and has remained one of the best in that state.

An Expert and His Ordeal

But no, it really is too absurd to tell you only about this one refugee's story, different from anyone's else because he is a human being, and each human story is unique. Let me tell you about a doctor and his wife I know. And when a Vermonter says that she "knows people" she means she knows their family circle in the parents' generation, and something about the grandparents, too.

I won't tell you at first about the grandparents—I'm not sure I can bring myself ever to. Let us start with the parents. The father held a responsible official position under the short-lived Weimar Republic, his specialty being the administration of savings banks. You might think that even the Nazis would feel that the management of savings banks had nothing to do with politics and that an experienced, honest, faithful, skilled administrator in that field might well be left, in the general interests of any kind of society, to go on keeping savings banks on an even keel.

If that is what you think, you are very naive. Our middle-aged financial expert barely escaped with his life. He and his wife and their children, a married daughter (and her doctor husband), a son in his late teens, left their comfortable, pleasant, civilized home in Germany, made their way to the USA slowly, from one country which promised a safe domicile and then became dangerous, to another, by stages too long and too complicated to set down in a statement as brief as this. They were very tired when, after all their wandering, they finally arrived. They had few possessions and very little money.

As usual with these involuntary exiles, the two women found paying occupation more easily than the men, terribly, passionately eager though the men were to go on providing for the family. The married daughter secured a pleasant, rather interesting position, which was not out of keeping with their cultivated background. But oh, the pay! Those miserably meager weekly salaries paid by New York employers who count on the steady influx of fresh young moths fluttering into the bright lights from the hinterland. The young wife was no moth, but her job was one which

could be held by one. So that was what she was paid. She must live on that small, inelastic weekly pay, and help her parents live, and help her husband, too, working as an interne in a hospital for a dime a month, or something of that kind, as internes do.

At first, her mother, the wife of the financial expert, worked too, at anything an untrained, middle-aged woman not in very robust health could do. She took care of old people while their younger-generation went out to work. She did mending. She took children out for walks; she was a "sitter" who stayed with children in the evening. She read aloud to blind people. She climbed long flights of stairs, she went out in all weathers, no matter what her health was. She never complained. She grew very thin, very white. She always smiled. Her husband—tenderly loving, unable to find any paying occupation at all—ate his heart out in bitterness.

He could not believe that there was nothing he could do for pay. He followed every clue, used to the uttermost every letter of introduction the committee or any of his American friends could get, went up and down the city, knocking at every door. But no, there seemed nothing for a dignified, statesmanlike looking man with iron gray hair and a special knowledge of finance—German finance.

Sometimes during this heart-sickening ordeal he said: "But you are all looking for *good* jobs for me. I would take anything. I would be overjoyed to get an office-boy's job and do an office-boy's work."

Silently we Americans thought: "What employer would feel comfortable in giving orders to a middle-aged office-boy who looks like a combination of Paul McNutt and a college president?"

And then, by and by—it now occurs to us sometimes that perhaps this purgatory of waiting lasted just long enough to finish his acquisition of English and his wontedness to American ways—the door which had been shut opened a crack. A small, temporary piece of technical work along his line was secured—paid, PAID! Not well paid, you must understand, but something. This first job the able, experienced expert fairly ate up, starved as he was for the exercise of his skilled powers.

The work was so well done that the

bank officers offered him another job. Again poorly paid. But a second actual piece of work. And later, a part time job doing economic research was put in his way. Small pay also, but more than his frail wife had earned. With a poignant relief which all who knew them shared, he began once more to be the provider of funds, while his wife went back to home-making.

Now he has three part time jobs—which all together just about amount to one. They entail much waste of time getting from one to the other; they are not well paid—none of them are what he would have chosen—but they mean rent for the little flat, food, clothes, carfare—a living, an independent living.

The son in his late teens, a skilled musician, had a "hearing" with an organization which places musicians, and secured a position in a small municipal orchestra in a distant western city. The war came, he was drafted into service. Throughout the war he was one of the stout-hearted young men who poured into a private soldier's life the vitality of their early twenties. He came through the ordeal alive, unhurt. He is a new, valuable American citizen.

Enter a Doctor

During this time the daughter's doctor husband, working in a hospital for nothing or near it, ground his teeth and set himself not only to work hard but to endure anxious, foreboding uncertainty as to his future. For the air was full of rumors (you certainly heard echoes of them, no matter where you live) that the American medical profession would never allow these foreign doctors to practice in the USA.

We heard—everybody passed these gloomy items on to everybody else—that doctors not born in the USA would never be allowed to pass their state examinations, no matter how completely they fulfilled every requirement. There would be ways, unavowed ways, to bar these outlanders from taking away the work of American doctors. Even if they did somehow, with the ingenuity of desperation and their disagreeably brilliant professional training, succeed in passing the examinations, they would never be let into any American community. They would be boycotted. The fiery cross—well, no need to go into details. You know as well

as I do what was said in those days.

The Americans, on the committee and off it, who were interested in this family, heard with sinking hearts this ghastly talk of shutting away from American sick people the medical care they so much needed. Because we were all emotionally taut and excited (have any of us been anything else in the last decade?) we did not think of questioning the truth of these rumors. So much that was the worst possible kept happening in the world, we jumped to the conclusion that the worst would happen here, too.

I don't pretend to be specially informed on all this; I can't tell you in general terms how much of those horrible rumors was true and how much no more than excited anxious gossip. I can only tell you what happened to this young doctor whom I happen to know.

These are the facts: he finished his interminable service as interne; he took his state examinations; he passed. A committee of the medical association of his state asked him if he would be willing—was he willing? Are they not all willing—to leave the city and go into a small, poor, rural region which had never had a doctor available. He was assigned to a town none of us had ever heard of, in a farming district.

We transferred our forebodings to

the reception these "foreigners" would get in a remote provincial corner of our country where there never had been any "foreigners." No house would prove available to them. There would be, we feared, a silent boycott.

News came that they had at once secured a house to rent, a largish, rambling, clap-boarded house, not very convenient, but as good as most houses in the town, with extra rooms enough for the doctor's office and waiting room.

He Hung Up His Shingle

We crape-hangers anxiously foresaw a period of heartbreaking waiting for recognition. We saw in our mind's eye the penniless doctor sitting at his desk, watching people go by in cars, on the sidewalks, never even turning their heads towards the house into which the new doctor with the foreign name had moved.

The date passed on which the M.D. shingle was to be hung up. We waited anxiously for news. The news was that on the first morning when, after his breakfast, the young doctor opened the door to his waiting room, every chair had somebody sitting on it. The sofa, too. Not bigoted, provincial Ku Klux haters of foreign names. Just sick people, very thankful indeed that a doctor, a real M.D., had come to their town.

I am not making any of this up. I don't claim that it is a typical experience, or not a typical experience. What is? It happened that way.

And it goes on happening. That first morning when the doctor who had come such a long weary way to use his special skill for human welfare, opened his door and saw those sick people who had been waiting so long for someone to take care of them—that was several years ago. There are two children in the doctor's family now, one of them still a small baby. They are great favorites with the doctor's patients, who often bring in presents for them and their mother—eggs, a pat of butter, a piece of salt pork, a chicken from the farm. No, this is not in lieu of paying their doctor-bills. They pay their bills all right. The doctor has an automobile, of course, to get around in a farming district of scattered homes. And he has acquired that special skill of the American doctor, ability to drive a sick patient to the hospital over roads covered with glare ice. Like most established doctors, his only trouble is that he has more work to do than time to do it in. He is an American country doctor.

Not long ago, out of a letter which I opened in my mail there dropped a little snapshot photograph. At first glance it did not look especially interesting—it might have been taken on the Fourth of July, or on Flag Day, in almost any American small town, in front of almost any American wooden house with rather old-fashioned jigsaw trimmings on the porch. A gray-haired, sweet-faced woman held with grandmotherly pride a plump pretty baby, bonnet-strings tied in a bow under the fat baby chin. A bright-eyed little girl leaned against the grandmother, who held the baby high. She and the little child beside her smiled straight into the camera. Over their heads hung a large American flag.

* * *

—About the grandparents left, perforce, at home in Germany? No, no. I find I cannot bring myself to tell you what happened to the old grandparents. We must not think of them, or we should lose our minds. We must fix our eyes on the sweet-faced American grandmother, standing with her two American grandchildren under the American flag. Beyond them lies the future. We must avert our eyes from the past.



A former European doctor serves a poor rural county as its sole practitioner

From "New Americans"



Wide World
With the help of the U. S. Committee for the Care of European Children, unaccompanied young refugees find foster homes here

Our Newest Americans

How many recent immigrants have been refugees? Where did the refugees come from; to what religious groups do they belong? Where have they settled? How have they adjusted themselves? Are they an asset? Here are the facts.

MAURICE R. DAVIE

SOME 250,000 REFUGEES HAVE BEEN ADMITTED to the United States as immigrants since 1933, when Hitler rose to power and started Germany on a career of tyranny and aggression. In the light of the history of American immigration this was a small movement, yet it has attracted as much attention as if it had been several times its actual size.

In part this unusual interest in the refugees arose from the dramatic character of the movement and the type of people it involved. The average American is familiar with the Ellis Island immigrant, but not the immigrant with an international reputation as scholar, scientist, writer, or artist; or the immigrant experienced in business and industry; or the immigrant arriving penniless and in a

—By the director of the Study of Recent Immigration from Europe. Mr. Davie, who was on leave of absence from Yale University to conduct this work, returned in March to his post as professor of sociology and chairman of Yale's department of sociology.

The findings of Mr. Davie and his research staff will be brought out later in the year by Harper. He is co-author with Samuel Koenig of a pamphlet on the study, "The Refugees Are Now Americans," recently published by the Public Affairs Committee.

Active in national movements, as well as those of Connecticut, Mr. Davie also has written a number of books. Among them are: "The Evolution of War"; "Problems of City Life"; "World Immigration."

state of high nervous tension, bearing the scars of persecution and of concentration camp brutality. These and other types of individuals, belonging to a great variety of nationalities, made up the refugee group. They had one thing in common: their whole-hearted condemnation of fascism and Nazism, of which they were the marked victims.

In part, also, the widespread interest in refugees was roused by rumors and allegations, often deliberately spread in an attempt to foster enmity and incite dissension. Whether propagated by Nazi agents or American 100-percenters, the rumors aimed at stirring up group hatred and at poisoning public opinion against the refugees, especially the Jews who constituted the majority. The effect

of this propaganda persists even though the Axis has been defeated.

Rumors and charges became current and magnified as they spread. It was alleged, for instance, that the country was being flooded with refugees, that they were practically all German Jews, that the immigration laws were being set aside for their benefit, that they were taking jobs away from Americans, that many of them were amassing great wealth here with the intention of taking it back to Europe after the war, that most of them settled in New York City, that they were arrogant, ungrateful, and ill-mannered, and that they were not contributing to the war effort.

What are the facts?

In an attempt to arrive at the facts in an objective and impartial way, a study was undertaken by the Committee for the Study of Recent Immigration from Europe—a special committee set up for that purpose in the fall of 1944. Headed by Alvin Johnson, it comprises twenty well-known citizens, men and women, selected by five national refugee service agencies (the American Christian Committee for Refugees, the American Friends Service Committee, the Catholic Com-

mittee for Refugees, the National Refugee Service, and the United States Committee for the Care of European Children) which sponsored the work and provided the necessary funds.

There is also a sponsors committee, of which Clarence A. Dykstra is chairman, consisting of some 160 persons of standing throughout the nation and representing a great variety of activities and interests. The investigation, which was nationwide in scope, was made possible by the cooperation of over 200 agencies and committees throughout the country.

A great mass of firsthand information was collected and analyzed. This included nearly 14,000 questionnaire returns from refugees residing in 872 communities in 44 states and the District of Columbia, over 200 life stories, over 50 reports on community backgrounds and attitudes, several hundred questionnaire returns on business enterprises established by refugees, and data obtained from interviews with representative refugees and Americans in various walks of life.

In addition to consulting the available literature on the subject, immigration statistics and government documents, the Study Committee analyzed thousands of

individual case records of agencies and committees serving refugees in general or specific groups such as children, scholars, lawyers, physicians, musicians, and writers.

Refugees and Other Immigrants

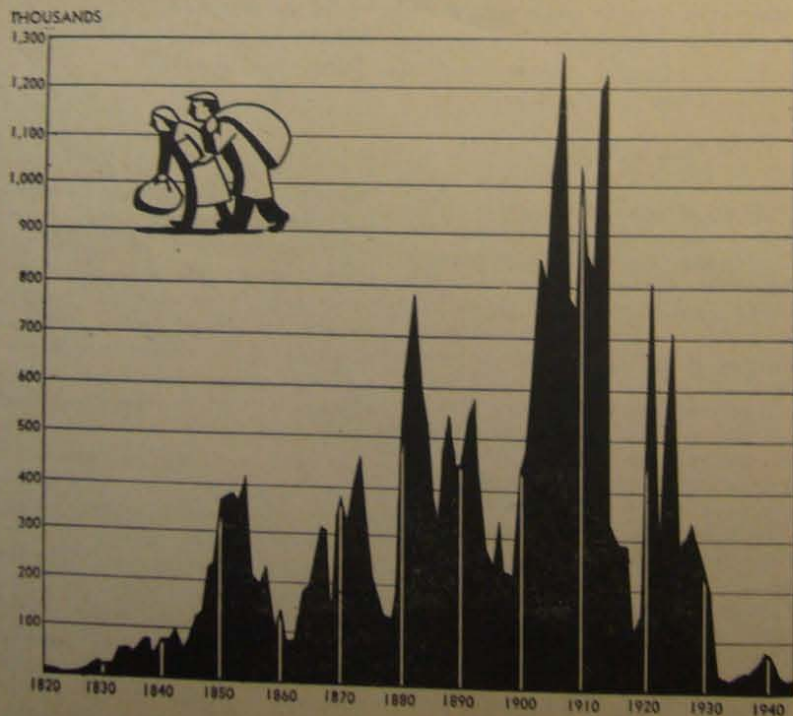
As we have noted, approximately 250,000 *refugee immigrants* were admitted to the United States from 1933 through 1944. The *total immigration* from Europe during this period was 365,955, and that from all countries was 528,549. Thus the refugees constituted about two thirds of the immigrants from Europe or one half of the total number of immigrants.

The whole period, because of the depression and the war, was one of very limited immigration, the smallest in any comparable period in the last hundred years. Few Americans seem to realize how sharply immigration fell off after 1930. Even otherwise well-informed citizens are amazed when told that only 16.8 percent of the allotted quota was used during the whole period of refugee immigration. Many are under the impression that the quotas from Germany and other countries of refugee emigration were exceeded. The fact is, however, that only 42.1 percent of them were filled.

Another common misconception is that additional huge numbers of refugees came in on temporary visas as visitors. As a matter of fact, the net entries of non-immigrant aliens during the entire period 1933-1944 were only 34,037. Official reports indicate that only about 15,000 aliens admitted on temporary visas were still here in 1944 on extended permits because of their inability to return to their homelands. Owing to the unusual length of stay—ranging up to five years—of most of them, we may safely assume that the great majority are refugees. These individuals are due to leave as soon as conditions permit. Once having left the country, they may apply for permanent admission under the quota if they so desire.

The immigration laws were not changed or set aside in favor of the refugees. Only one group was admitted outside of the regular immigration procedure—the 982 refugees brought in by the War Refugee Board and placed in a temporary shelter at Fort Ontario, near Oswego, N. Y. [See *Survey Graphic* for September 1944 and June 1945.] Since the end of the war, some of these refugees have

TRENDS OF IMMIGRATION



GRAPHIC ASSOCIATES FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, INC.

returned to their homelands, while the majority were allowed to go to Canada and apply for admission under our quota laws. During the entire period the entry of refugees, as of other immigrants, was limited by the strict enforcement of the likely-to-become-a-public-charge clause and by wartime regulations. On the other hand, their entry was somewhat facilitated by certain administrative measures, all operating within the quota requirements.

The admission of refugee children unaccompanied by their parents was facilitated by the use of a corporate affidavit in lieu of the usual personal affidavit. This guarantee of support was furnished by the United States Committee for the Care of European Children and the European-Jewish Children's Aid, Inc., and the children were placed in foster homes under the supervision of approved child-caring agencies. About 1,000 children were admitted within the quota under this special arrangement during 1934-1944. In addition, several thousand British children, seeking to escape the dangers of war, were admitted on visitors' visas. The great majority of these have already returned home.

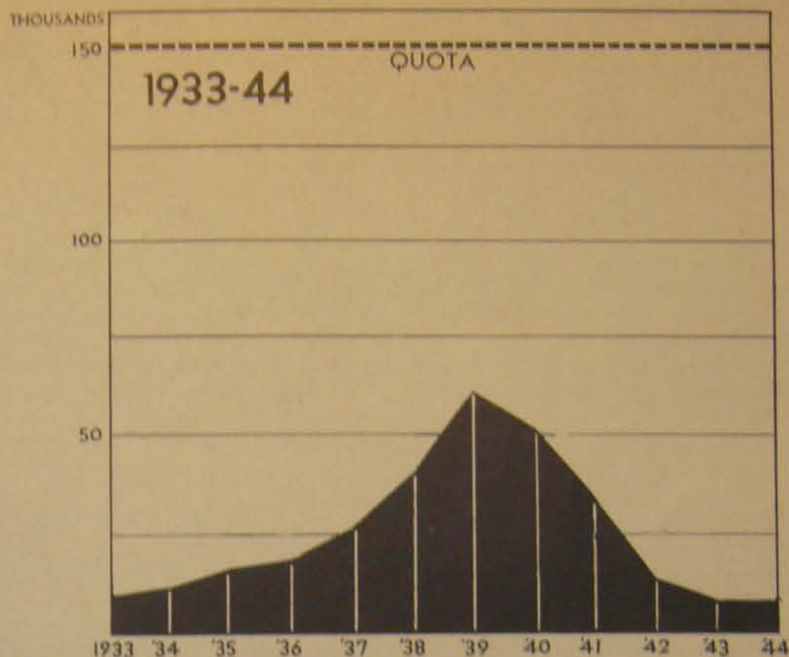
Another administrative measure was the procedure known as "unblocking the quotas"; that is, granting visas to give preference to those able to escape so as to make full use of the places available under the quota. It was adopted late in 1940 to meet the emergency created by the collapse of France and to rescue the political refugees who had fled there from Germany and other countries. About 2,000 were brought in under this plan.

Characteristics of the Refugees

Over twenty nationalities were represented among the refugees. Half of them were Germans and Austrians. The other half included Poles, Czechs, Russians, Italians, Frenchmen, Hungarians, Hollanders, Yugoslavs, and others.

About two thirds of the total were Jews. Among the non-Jewish refugees, there were more Protestants than Catholics, the ratio being approximately three to two. In a number of instances, the Christian refugees were married to Jews or were "non-Aryans" with one or more Jewish grandparents. It is noteworthy, in view of the alleged "flood" of Jewish immigrants, that the total number of Jews admitted from all countries dur-

EUROPEAN IMMIGRATION QUOTA WAS NEVER FILLED



GRAPHIC ASSOCIATES FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, INC.

ing the entire span from 1933 through 1943 was equal to only about one half the number of Jews admitted during the 1920's and about one eighth the number admitted in the heyday of mass immigration from 1904 to 1914.

The refugees contrast sharply with other and earlier immigrants. They are essentially a group of people who normally would not have emigrated but who left their homelands because of actual or anticipated persecution. In the days of mass immigration the unattached young male of the laborer, artisan, or servant class was typical. Recent immigrants, especially refugees, show a more even distribution of the sexes. There is a larger proportion of persons over forty-five years of age; a larger proportion of married persons and hence of family groups; and a larger proportion of professional and business people, white collar and skilled workers, and of persons with no occupation. This group with no occupation comprises housewives, children, and old people who have retired.

Most of the adult refugees had gone beyond the elementary school level in Europe and nearly half of them had attended college or professional school. They were primarily a city group with a cosmopolitan outlook. A con-

siderable number of them had traveled widely and knew languages other than their own.

Their Distribution

The refugees present no over-all problem on account of numbers, since they constitute only a minute proportion of the nation. Their distribution by state and community parallels that of the total foreign-born white population. They have settled mostly in the larger cities, although a good many live in small towns and rural areas. In no place do they constitute as much as one percent of the population. The largest center is New York City, where they number well under 100,000.

The distribution of refugees throughout the country has been largely determined by the location of their friends and relatives, job opportunities, and the resettlement program of the various service agencies. The resettlement of refugees was mainly a matter of moving them from New York City where nine tenths of them landed. Nothing comparable to this program had been done during earlier immigration movement with the exception of the efforts of certain Jewish organizations a generation ago. Its benefits

have been clearly demonstrated.

Following is a typical comment by a resettled refugee:

"There is too great a tendency [in New York] to live with other foreigners and I think it is a great mistake. When people ask me how long I am living in this country I say one year—five years in New York and one year in this country."

Occupational Adjustment

The refugees have tended to follow the same type of occupation here they had engaged in abroad. They are to be found mainly in business and clerical work, in skilled labor, and the professions. Although many at first were forced to accept menial jobs, the great majority are now engaged in their former occupational field, but generally on a lower economic level. The transferability of skill has been most marked in the case of skilled workers and of some of the professionals.

At the time of the study practically all were gainfully employed, although often not in the specific field for which they had been trained abroad. Practically all were self-supporting and the great majority were dependent on their earnings, only a small minority having additional income from savings or investments. The typical weekly wage was \$20-\$40 for women and \$50-\$75 for men. Only a tiny percentage had failed to make an economic adjustment and were dependent. These were chiefly cases of old people, the sick, and broken families.

Some of those who arrived before the Nazis imposed financial restrictions (or confiscated their property), brought capital with them and have established themselves in business. While they give employment to other refugees, they employ a much greater number of native Americans. In numerous instances, they have brought with them or developed new processes and started the manufacture of products hitherto unknown here or imported, such as scientific instruments, precision tools, and synthetic products. Many refugee manufacturers produced articles essential to the war effort. Some are carrying on here an export-import business which they had previously developed abroad.

Social and Cultural Adjustment

The refugees have become adjusted to a much greater extent and within

a shorter period of time than immigrants of earlier decades. This has been facilitated by their relatively small numbers, their wide distribution, their superior educational and cultural background, their desire to become Americanized, and by the assistance given by relatives and friends.

Throughout the country they tend to live in American neighborhoods rather than in immigrant colonies, to associate more with native Americans than with their own group or other recent immigrants, and to belong primarily to organizations with a predominantly American membership. They have intermarried with native Americans to a greater extent than is usually the case with foreign-born groups who have been here a short time.

It is safe to say that no other non-English-speaking immigrant group has learned English so rapidly and so well in a comparable period of time. They read mainly English language newspapers and English is the language commonly spoken in their homes.

Refugee Children

Refugee children have adjusted themselves to life in this country with relative ease and speed as compared to the older generation. Whereas the adults had been subjected to the strain of disruption of well-established careers and lifelong associations and of starting anew, the young people have been able to plan their life and work in terms of the adopted country. Moreover, their assimilation and social integration have been greatly facilitated by attendance at American schools.

The generally excellent adjustment of the unaccompanied children has been promoted by the skilled work of child-caring agencies. For a time some of the children were nervous, restless, anxious about the fate of their parents, fearful, and undernourished, but they overcame these problems without much difficulty; especially was this the case with the very young children. All the evidence indicates that, after a first period of insecurity due to their uprooting, the children have taken their place readily among American youth, that they have learned English and become Americanized rapidly, that they have generally mixed easily with American children and been accepted by them

Many schools report that the work of the refugee children has been above average, and that there is an unusually large number of outstanding pupils among them. Numerous are the accounts of children who made distinguished academic records (like the boy who attained the highest marks of any student attending a large high school in the last twenty-five years), who were accorded positions of prominence in school life, won contests, were awarded prizes and scholarships (one won the Hearst National American History Prize of \$1,000), and who distinguished themselves along musical, literary, or artistic lines.

A large number of these young people served in the armed forces. Some gave their lives. Remarkable but by no means unique is the case of the Polish lad who arrived in 1941, and completed with honors the four-year course at the University of California in two years and three months. As a student he did research on war chemistry problems and was elected to Sigma Xi. He declined an offer as research chemist, which would have meant military deferment, to enlist as a paratrooper. In 1944 he was killed in action in Germany.

Assisting the Refugee

Friends and relatives already living in the United States did much to aid the adjustment of the refugees. The newcomers often settled in the communities where their relatives lived, were sheltered by them for a time, and were assisted in finding a job and establishing a home.

Their integration into the community has also been greatly facilitated by the help extended by private social work agencies, both those already established and the new ones created to meet the special problems of the refugee. The refugee service program has depended heavily upon family service agencies and the use of case-work techniques. Other important elements have been the development of special measures to aid economic adjustment, such as loans to help refugees establish themselves in business and professional practice, the programs of retraining and resettlement, and the work of special agencies aiding particular professional groups. Distinctive, likewise, has been the integrated nationwide organization of services for this new group of immigrants. Also noteworthy is the mutual

(Continued on page 13)

Full Circle

1848-1946

How history is repeating itself a hundred years after Carl Schurz. Differences and portents today.

ALVIN JOHNSON

—By the chairman of the Committee for the Study of Recent Immigration from Europe.

Nebraska-born, of Scandinavian parentage, the author fairly boxed the compass of American institutions of learning as student and faculty member — Nebraska, Columbia, Bryn Mawr, Texas, Leland Stanford, Cornell, Yale. His editorial forays have ranged from *The New Republic* to the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*.

His outstanding achievement has been as director of the New School and founder of its University in Exile. He is now engaged in what Prof. Adolf Meyer once called "constructive composure"—an indefatigable round of activities as director *emeritus*.

IN MY EARLY YOUTH I BECAME acquainted with a German philosopher who had been a refugee of the German liberal revolutionary movement of 1848. Dr. Winkhaus had early attained to the position of private docent. He could expect in due time the professorship extraordinary, and ultimately the ordinary professorship. I was assured by a learned and intelligent friend that Winkhaus had exhibited promise of becoming a great figure among the series of great figures of German philosophy.

But like so many German philosophers he became involved in politics on the losing side.

When he landed as a fugitive in New York in 1849, he had not the least doubt that he would promptly find a place in an American university.

America was still very new, and philosophy was little cultivated in our institutions of learning. Winkhaus dreamed of immense bodies of students ardent to hear his exposition of the unity of time, space, matter, and the causal nexus—the latter being in his view metonymy for energy. But in the Fifties of the last century there was not one living American who



Alfred Einstein, citizen of the world of science—and citizen of the USA

could follow his mathematical demonstrations of this inherent unity.

Of course there was no possibility whatever that any university would take him on. Neither was there any possibility that a publisher would even look at his huge manuscripts, painfully written in crabbed German script. Finally he abandoned hope, and came west with his worried wife and skinny daughters, to take a homestead — a hundred and sixty acres of treeless, waterless rolling Nebraska prairie. In the 1880's, I once spent an unhappy hour with him while he stormed around in a petrified forest of equations. My conviction was that he was mad, or "brain-broke," as our local dialect put it.

He had proved a very poor farmer. It was alleged that in cultivating corn, while reflecting on the errors of Hegel and the shortcomings of Kant, the pernicious sophistries of Schopenhauer, and the crooked logic of Feuerbach and Marx, he would sometimes plow up alternate rows of corn, thus inadvertently anticipating Henry Wallace. And if a neighbor drove by on his way to town, Winkhaus, starved for human society, would

drive to the roadside, turn his horses loose to find their own way to the barn, and climb to the spring seat, happy to regale the cornfed and humorous neighbor with his latest conclusions on time, space, matter, and the causal nexus—which figured in the neighbors' anecdotes as the "cow-sal nexous."

The whole community set Winkhaus down as "brain-broke"—a judgment accepted by his wife and daughters. When he died his wife burned his voluminous manuscripts, "because nobody could make head or tail of them." She burned his volumes of Kant, Hegel and the other German philosophers, because he had spoiled them by writing in the margins.

"Poor Pa," she sighed. "He was such a nice man. Pity he went brain-broke."

We Are Coming Up

Like the recent refugee immigration, the immigration from Germany at the end of the Forties and the early Fifties contained an unusual proportion of intellectuals. There were philosophers, scientists, musicians, artists, writers, journalists, doctors, lawyers.

Some of them managed to pry their way into their proper vocations, and the place of this element in our history is an honorable one.

But there is no record of any effort on the part of established Americans to ease the way of these refugees. The one instance I've ever been able to discover of transnational consideration of the plight of the German refugees of 1848 was British. My father came over in a British ship with a group of them. Of course the English officers could not distinguish between a Dane and a German, and took him on board without inquiring whether he had passage money. In mid-ocean he inquired of the purser what his passage would cost. "That depends," said the purser. "If you have only a little money, you'd better keep it. Or those greedy Americans will let you starve."

In contrast, consider the record of America in the matter of the recent immigration of intellectuals. Immediately upon the announcement of the expulsion of liberals and Jews from the German universities, Dr. Stephen A. Duggan, whose motto is, "Nothing is impossible," set up an emergency committee, well financed by the Foundations, to make a place in American universities and colleges for men of mark cashiered by Hitler. The New School for Social Research launched a University in Exile, and promptly found the finances for a whole faculty of the social sciences. A host of individual academic institutions joined in the work of placing refugee scholars. A physicians' committee was formed, to do valiant work in assisting refugee physicians and surgeons. Henry Seidel Canby, of Yale and the *Saturday Review of Literature*, and his talented wife have long devoted their priceless energies to the assistance of bewildered refugee writers, seeking desperately to reestablish themselves in an alien environment.

It is not possible to enumerate here all the efforts of groups of Americans, and individual Americans, to help the refugee intellectual to find himself. I have seen so many of them that I feel impelled to bow my head and recite, "God bless my America"—and the American spirit of today. There was no similar spirit a hundred years ago. By the grace of God, we are coming up!

How can we account for so complete a change in point of view and

behavior? There is a good practical maxim: Business makes business. If you want to set up a brokerage business you do not go to Sedro Woolley, Washington, where it is easier to encounter a dinosaur than a broker. You go to Wall Street, where the brokers, to use an obsolete language, just *wimmeln*, like the gnats in the love dance of early May. If you want to set up a hardware store, you negotiate for space on a hardware street.

Our Street for Intellectuals

There was no street for intellectuals in 1850. However much your humanity might be touched, you could not think of any place where you could advise an intellectual to head in. All you could do was to advise him gently that this country needed, not erudite philosophy, but skillful hands for setting cabbages, now that the Irish had come in phalanxes. My father could have lived by cabbages, and the ground on which he would have grown them, in the heart of present-day Brooklyn, could have made of his son and heir a man of substance. My father came to America for freedom—the estate he passed on to his son and heir.

In the America of today the street of intellectuals is long and ambitious, with much old-time property to be improved. In 1850 we lived by our virgin soil. Today we live by the virgin unknown of intellectual and cultural prowess. Old-fashioned, smallish bourgeois still talk about the importance of capital, tradition. The live Americans talk about "know-how" in business, about expansion in culture. The live Americans recognized, well before Hitler, that America could use every sort of ability, from the whole wide world, and that American productivity could maintain it. Well before Hitler, foreign intellectuals, philosophers, writers, artists, musicians were orienting themselves toward the fabulous land of America. Hitler gave them a new compulsion to follow their heart's desire.

In 1850, when the vast prairies still lay in grass, forage for the disappearing buffalo, and when even the older states, like Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota were settled only by sample—samples too small to build highways or maintain the new railways—there were Americans who were profoundly alarmed by what was really only a

trickle of European immigration. Soon all the land, it was argued, would be taken up by aliens and no space would be left for the coming generations of native Americans. The noble stock of the Puritans would be compelled to cease doubling every twenty-five years, as it had managed to do for more than two hundred years. Instead of a pure strain, Americans would become a mixed multitude. Even so good an economist as Francis A. Walker, though confronted by the drift of Americans even from sparsely settled areas toward the towns and cities where the birthrate languished, was ridden by the delusion that this trend could have been checked by a drastic exclusion of aliens.

The Proof of the Pudding

This particular worry has receded into the limbo of history. More recently we worried ourselves sick and stupid about the immigration from Russia, which threatened to glut the labor market and to reduce wages—which continued blithely to rise. We had fought to abate the evils of the sweatshop, but after the pogrom of Kishinev a flood of starving refugees came in to swamp our hopes. Among them, however, was Sidney Hillman, carrying under his hat the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the transformation of the miserable sweated worker into a rising aristocracy of labor.

American history proves one thing: Exclusionists have always been wrong, economically. But our country is exuberant enough to maintain successive generations of the wrong-headed. No land is good unless it produces weeds.

Everybody has encountered Americans who have viewed with alarm the recent influx of foreign intellectuals. They feel that an immigrant Einstein takes the wind out of the sails of an unknown native American Einstein. They feel that immigrant professors, artists, physicians stand in the way of American talent.

Permit me another anecdote. When I was projecting on a short shoestring the present New School building, an agent of Jose Clemente Orozco, greatest mural painter of Mexico, proposed to contribute to the institution an ambitious fresco. Of course as an educational administrator, always eager to get something fine for nothing, I

(Continued on page 13)

FULL CIRCLE

(Continued from page 12)

accepted the proposal. Immediately I was assailed by native artists for discriminating in favor of a foreigner. Did I not know that we had in New York a talented painter, Tom Benton, who had never been able to get a wall? Being a man of peace I said I had just as good a wall Benton could have on the same terms—for nothing. Which he accepted.

In the sequel, Benton was invited to do an ambitious historical mural for the state of Indiana, to be exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair; a mural in the new postoffice in Washington; a mural in the capitol of his native state Missouri. And obscure Bentons cropped up all over the United States. The WPA gave them a shove — and they have decorated with their dreams railway stations, postoffices, reform schools, and even our immigrant detention plant at Ellis Island. My estimate is that ten square miles of murals have grown out of Orozco's initiative in donating a mural to the New School. Of course there is no ten square miles in the United States that is all good plow land. There are some murals that are just sand and bracken. But there are a lot of good ones, with real survival capacity.

Business Makes Business

There are thin blooded scholars and artists who still view askance the intrusion of foreign scholars and artists into American life. Their inhospitable attitude is bolstered by the century old tradition of exclusionism. But the dominant sanguine body of scholars and artists realize that in their field, too, business makes business.

The influx of foreign intellectuals into America has only begun. America alone has come out of the war with all its resources unimpaired. The United States is the only great country in the world where men feel secure; and security is essential to the development of artistic and scholarly careers. In spite of immigration restrictions, the great magnet of American security, American economic power, is drawing foreign abilities toward us, irresistibly. Will these alien abilities suppress the rising abilities of our native born, or will the chal-

lenge of the foreign scholar and artist bring them out?

American history offers a conclusive answer. Business makes business, in the things of the spirit as in the things of the purse.

NEWEST AMERICANS

(Continued from page 10)

assistance rendered by organizations created and maintained by the refugees themselves.

The refugees, for the most part, had never before had to appeal to a social agency. Moreover, they were not familiar with the American type of social work. The position of a refugee who came to a social agency for help after a lifetime of independence and achievement was an especially difficult one. So was that of the social worker who was unfamiliar with this type of client, and had to gain skill in handling him without affronting his sensibilities. As one refugee put it, "To help an educated person requires an enormous amount of tact."

All told, the service agencies were very effective in cushioning the shock of refugee immigration, in preventing the refugees from becoming a public burden, and in promoting their adjustment.

Citizenship and Loyalty

According to the questionnaire returns, the number of refugees who have not applied for citizenship papers is negligible. Of those eligible for citizenship by being over twenty-one years of age and resident in this country for five years or more, 82.7 percent already have attained citizenship and the rest are in the process of doing so.

The refugee community proved itself to be overwhelmingly loyal and aided in the war effort in every way. The Selective Training and Service Act made aliens as fully liable to service as citizens. Eligible refugees, aliens and citizens alike, therefore entered the armed forces to the same extent as native Americans.

According to the report of the director of selective service, aliens comprised one percent of the inductees, which was practically the same as the proportion they constituted of the total population of that age group (1.02 percent). According to a study conducted by the National Jewish Welfare Board in twenty-seven widely scattered cities, the percentage of Jew-

ish male refugees of military age serving in the armed forces was 34 percent—almost exactly the same as that for the total number of men in the armed forces in the United States. The questionnaire returns of the Study Committee parallel this figure, indicating that 33 percent of the male respondents of military age were in the armed forces.

The refugees were already geared to the necessity of fighting for a democratic way of life. Some of them had a special and personal reason for fighting Nazism. Many rendered special services because of their intimate knowledge of the languages, culture, psychology, economy, and geography of enemy countries. Those who remained at home contributed generously to the various war activities on the home front. Nine tenths of them bought war bonds, and one third made blood donations. Important contributions were made either in government services or in private industries by refugee scientists and highly trained technicians, including work on the atomic bomb.

The vast majority of the refugees in the United States, according to the study, have no intention of returning to Europe. They are grateful for the freedom and opportunity that this country provides. Their hopes, especially for their children, are now centered here. The break with the past is definite and final.

This was the reaction of 96.5 percent of those who replied to the questionnaire. The extraordinarily high indication of permanency is characteristic of the refugee type of immigration. Throughout our history, immigrants who came here to escape persecution and oppression have remained to a much greater extent than have immigrants whose motive in coming was to improve their economic condition.

Impressions of America

Through interviews, life stories, and replies to the questionnaires, the Study Committee gathered much material on the refugees' reaction to American life, the nature of which can only be suggested here.

Having lived, especially the Germans, under authoritarian regimes and ruthlessness, they were impressed with the freedom and security they found. To the question, "What aspects of American life do you regard as most satisfying," a typical response

was: "That nobody bothers you. If somebody is knocking at the door, you have not to be afraid. It's the laundryman and not the Gestapo."

The new arrivals were also impressed by the lack of regimentation here, and the absence of *Verboten* signs. They were amazed to discover that government officials were public servants instead of petty tyrants to be feared and distrusted. The educational opportunities available aroused their great admiration, though they did not think highly of American art and music.

In their eyes the American people are distinguished by certain traits, of which generosity, friendliness, and helpfulness are outstanding. At the same time, they found it difficult to get accustomed to the informality of Americans, the lack of distinctions in forms of address, and the free use of first names. It was a jolt to the Herr Doktor Professor to be called "Doc." At first they found it disconcerting when Americans said, "You must come and see us," and issued no formal invitation. "In Germany," a refugee states, "people were perhaps more rude and straightforward, but, at the same time if they asked you to dinner you knew they meant it."

They also find Americans overactive, lighthearted, optimistic. They consider the women better informed and less restricted in social life than their sisters in Europe. On the other hand, they disapprove of "the exaggerated value of money as a measure of social prestige," the ballyhoo of American newspapers, the lack of thoroughness. The amount of racial and religious prejudice and discrimination appalled them because they had thought America free from such intolerance.

The American Response

The general reaction of Americans toward the refugees has been one of compassion for the victims of persecution seeking a haven here, and of appreciation of the contribution this superior group of immigrants is making to our country. On the other hand there has been a certain amount of antagonism. Refugees have been looked upon as serious competitors, especially by certain professional and wage earning groups and in certain communities. Much adverse propaganda, frequently circulated by

American nationalist groups, has been directed at them.

It is an old custom of ours to depict the latest arrivals on these shores as strange creatures, whose presence threatens to undermine the American way of life. This is not to say that refugees, like other immigrants, have not created problems. Nor is it to deny that an inevitable culture conflict exists between different customs, manners, and values, which can be lessened only through assimilation. It is to say, however, that the attitude toward newcomers is often alarmist and grossly exaggerated and that, in some instances, it represents a deliberate attempt to foster enmity.

It was alleged, for example, during the depression that refugees were usurping the jobs of Americans. The total number of immigrants admitted in the Thirties, however, was so small that it could have had but slight effect on unemployment. Moreover, the majority of them were not wage earners but housewives, young children, and people too old to work, and some of the refugees, instead of taking jobs away from Americans, started new enterprises which gave employment to Americans.

Among professional groups, American physicians particularly have complained about the competition of refugee physicians. Yet their total number was only 3 percent of the total number of physicians in America. Moreover, not all of them were practitioners. And not all of them succeeded in entering private practice because of barriers erected against them, such as the citizenship requirement for admission to a state licensing examination or the restriction of licenses to the graduates of American or Canadian schools. Many refugee doctors settled in small towns and rural areas previously lacking the services of a physician. As a matter of fact, the nation has been experiencing a dearth rather than a surplus of doctors.

Another group of refugees singled out for adverse comment has been the "cafe-society" group, numerically insignificant but highly conspicuous. Some Americans have assumed, quite erroneously, that all or most refugees are of that type, whereas they constitute but a small percentage even of the wealthy, who in turn are a small percentage of the total group.

Some of the wealthy have engaged in speculation in real estate and in

the stock market (a few taking advantage of our law which exempts "non-resident aliens" from the capital-gains tax). Most of them, however, have used their funds to establish manufacturing or other business enterprises or to invest in well established American firms. They have had a stimulating effect on American business and have done much to develop our export trade.

A much more common complaint concerning refugees relates to certain of their personality traits and attitudes. It has frequently been complained, for example, that many of them have been arrogant, demanding, ungrateful. The air of superiority of some, the habit of contrasting unfavorably their condition here with their former social and economic status in Europe, have irritated many Americans, including their well-wishers.

There is no doubt that these traits characterize certain individuals, as is true of any large group. In many instances, however, what is interpreted as arrogance is really compensation for the loss of status and for the indignities that many refugees have suffered. Some of it is merely characteristic of the behavior and attitudes in the countries from which they came. The alleged ungratefulness is certainly the exception rather than the rule. The study indicates that most refugees feel a profound gratitude to America and are highly appreciative of the opportunity given them to start life anew.

The reaction of the refugee to the trying experience of having his world upturned, his life shattered, and of being driven from his native land, varies, of course, with the individual. Some, never able to get over the shock, succumbed to emotional disturbances, or developed inferiority feelings and various displeasing reactions. Yet the great majority have shown extraordinary adaptability, have not let the change of fortune affect their outlook, but have set out courageously to rebuild their shattered lives.

From the countrywide standpoint, there has been little reaction favorable or unfavorable to the refugees. Except in a few large centers, the number is so small that unless attention is drawn to them the community as a whole is hardly aware of their presence. Most communities have no

firsthand knowledge and hence no real opinion about the refugees in their midst. Whereas the attitude toward the individual refugee is generally friendly and helpful, there is a hesitant feeling about refugees or other immigrants in the plural. Individuals are accepted, but the thought of an immigration movement provokes apprehension.

In general, the refugees have been well received, and their coming has caused little concern. On the positive side, their special skills have been recognized as an asset and their contributions in many spheres appreciated.

An Asset to the Nation

The refugees comprise an utterly negligible proportion (two tenths of one percent) of the total population

of this country. The record shows that they have not offered serious competition to Americans nor endangered their way of life. On the contrary, the indications are that they have had a beneficial influence upon this country out of proportion to their numbers. It is significant that despite the short time they have been here, at least a hundred have attained the recognition of being listed in "Who's Who in America." Some 225 are in "American Men of Science," a number proportionately twice the representation from the general population in the U. S.

As a representative in Europe of the Emergency Rescue Committee, Varian Fry helped hundreds of refugees to escape. What he has said of the successful adjustment here of

the writers* could be said also of other classes:

"It is not only good to know that they were able to come, and to go on working. It is also good to know that so many of them have had very considerable success. It shows not only how much opportunity America still has to offer the newcomer to its shores; it shows also how much the newcomer to its shores has to offer to America. It was no purely humanitarian gesture of ours to let these people in. We profited enormously from it. We got some of the best minds Europe has produced in a generation.

"And yet there are some people who still want to cut off all immigration!"

*"What Has Happened to Them," *Publishers Weekly*, June 23, 1943