

take an evaluation of all that had been accomplished in so incredibly short a time.

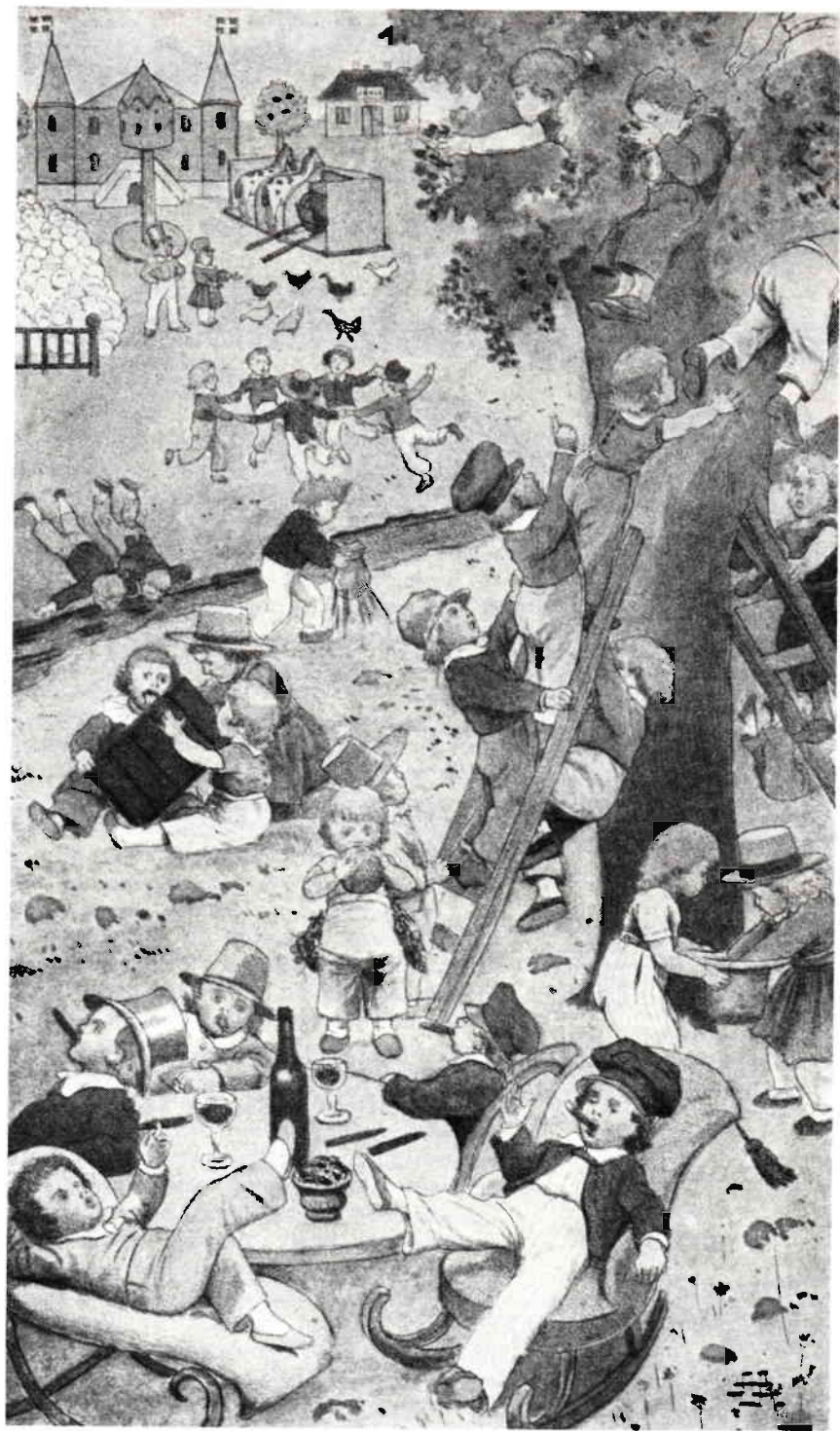
Time would tell, for our first key word, *freedom*, had now been joined by a new one, *wealth*. That America was in itself a rich land had already been known in colonial days, long before the discoveries of gold and silver around the middle of the last century. In the Danish poet Christian Winther's "Flight to America", the two little boys, who plan to run away to America interpret in their own way what they had heard the grown-ups say about America as a land of milk and honey:

»... Sugarplums and almonds which
from all the bushes drop.
And hail and snow with sweets aglow,
and rain is lemon pop! ...»

The poem, here roughly translated, bears a striking resemblance to the old American folk-song about *The Big Rock-candy-mountain*. But Chr. Winther, writing about the middle of the last century, could hardly have known the American song. It is one of these strange cases, where the American dream and the dream of America blend into perfect identity.

The truth behind that childhood dream emerges from letters sent home by Danish emigrants collected by the Royal Library: "All the Danes who live here own homes, land, and animals", writes one of them. "Generally, a day laborer earns two dollars per day. During harvest time he gets four, or instead, four bushels of wheat. A poor man who comes here and works hard can soon become a man of means. A bricklayer tops all craftsmen, earning three dollars per day, both winter and summer, but the noblest work is animal husbandry. There is freedom in everything; there are no legal restrictions. Everybody can earn his living the way he wishes and in as many ways as he pleases. If God grants us a good harvest this year, my son Fritz can become proprietor or earn \$ 500 to \$ 600 in wages. What could a poor hired man or day laborer become in our own fatherland?"

No, there really was no question. And when such a letter was read out aloud and discussed in the family circle it was no wonder that the children adorned their dream about the wonderland with words and images drawn from their own world of phantasy. The naive dream which was fed by the pioneer wagon trains' phantastic treks across the prairies, sky high mountains, rushing rivers, fighting against the fury of uncontrollable elements and against wild Indians, the adventure of the railroads,



the chase after gold and silver – all these colorful events were kept alive by a popular literature flourishing wild and woolly in form of illustrated dime novels until in the beginning of our own century, motion pictures took their place, at first slavishly prolonging in other countries an epoch which the Americans themselves already had put behind them.

America was paradise also for the children, as shown by Alfred Schmidt's charming illustration of the poem, »The Flight to America«, 1909.

NO CITY IS MORE BEAUTIFUL

Around the turn of the century, the young butcher's apprentice who was to become Denmark's most popular humorist, Robert Storm Petersen, founded a boy's club, a sort of early scout movement with high ideals, which was copied from the Anglo-Saxon world. He called it "Uncle Sam". In a fine report to the club,