

Italian Emigration Movements up to 1940

(Analysis of the bibliographical and statistical sources)

1. Italian emigration prior to 1914. - 2. Italian emigration during the First World War and in the period between the two wars. - 3. Regional and occupational analyses of Italian emigration. - 4. The main countries of destination of Italian emigrants. - 5. Repatriation of emigrants. - 6. Economic and social consequences of emigration.

Prior to the upheaval caused by the Second World War the average annual rate of increase of the Italian population — after 1860 — amounted to 7 per mil inhabitants. This figure was the net outcome of the natural increase (*i.e.* the difference between births and deaths), and the volume of emigration, which each year — and more especially in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the First World War — took away hundreds of thousands of Italians of whom a large number never returned to their native country. It was in 1913 that the maximum emigration figure, never since exceeded, was reached; that year the number of persons who left to work abroad reached 872,598, equivalent to 2.5 per cent inhabitants.

Emigration has been a characteristic feature of Italian life ever since the country's unity was attained. This phenomenon, which in some parts of the Peninsula has deeply modified economic and environmental conditions, has, in others, merely acted as an integrating and equilibrating factor. For since 1870 emigration has fulfilled in Italy an important and delicate task, that of establishing a balance as far as possible between two great factors of social life, population and economic resources. Both these factors have been affected by it at the same time.

As it is evidently now in the interests of Italy to follow an active emigration policy, it may be useful to draw a synthetic picture of the course and character of Italian emigration up to the present time.

1. Italian Emigration Prior to 1914.

The information available on movement that took place before 1869 is very poor. The number of permanent emigrants fluctuated above an annual average of some 30-35 thousand persons, of whom two thirds held passports, while the others were more or less clandestine. In addition to these, some 90,000 persons emigrated with passports of limited duration almost all of whom returned to Italy (1). It is certain that after the unification of the country emigration grew rapidly: according to the census of 1871 the number of Italians residing abroad amounted to some half million, of whom 216,030 (47 per cent) were in North and South America.

We possess data collected by Leone Carpi for the period 1869-75. In 1870, 101,815 persons emigrated legally, of whom 23,270 left by sea. To these must be added 8,463 clandestine emigrants. The emigration of that year amounted to about 4 per mil of the Italian population of 1861, a rate which is equal to the average annual rate of natural increase (2).

As from 1876, the first year in which official statistical returns (3) were made, we possess more reliable data even if they are not fully comparable with the earlier ones

(1) See EPICARMO CORBINO, *Annali dell'Economia Italiana* (Città di Castello, 1931), Vol. I, p. 18.

(2) See LEONE CARPI, *Delle colonie e dell'emigrazione di italiani all'estero* (Milan, 1874), Vol. I, p. 19.

(3) The statistics were collected first by the *Direzione Generale della Statistica*, and later (from 1902 on) by the *Commissariato Generale dell'Emigrazione*.

because of the several modifications introduced into the methods of making the returns.

These official data enable us to construct the following table showing the number of emigrants in search of work who left Italy in the period 1869-1915:

TABLE I
EMIGRANTS IN THE PERIOD 1869-1915

Years	Total (annual averages)	Per 100,000 inhabitants (a)	By Area of Destination		Index (first period = 100)
			European countries	Oversea countries	
1869-1875	123,391	—	—	—	100.—
1876-1880	108,797	390.2	82,201	26,596	88.2
1881-1885	154,141	535.6	95,146	58,995	125.0
1886-1890	221,699	743.3	90,694	131,005	179.8
1891-1895	256,511	830.8	109,067	147,441	208.0
1896-1900	310,435	972.3	148,534	161,901	251.8
1901-1905	554,050	1,681.9	244,808	309,242	449.3
1906-1910	651,288	1,908.6	257,594	393,694	528.3
1911-1915	548,612	1,546.4	243,535	305,077	444.9

(a) Includes permanent and temporary emigration.

The table enables us to note a few simple facts:

(1) The total number of emigrants grew steadily, at first slowly, then more rapidly. The maximum was attained in the years running from the beginning of the century to the outbreak of the First World War. In the third quarter of the nineteenth century Italy occupied, among emigration countries, the place held by Germany in the first half of that century.

(2) In 1876 permanent emigration accounted for 19,756 units, while temporary emigrants numbered 89,015. Ten years later the former group exceeded the latter; this trend continued substantially unchanged until 1915.

(3) In the quinquennium 1906-1910 the annual average number of emigrants exceeded 650,000; in the four year period 1911-1914 the figure rose to 660,000. As already stated, the maximum figure was reached in 1913 with 872,958 emigrants: the heavy rate of exodus continued in the first half of 1914, after which it fell off as a result of the outbreak of war.

(4) As compared with the figure reached in the first years after the unification of

Italy, the average annual number of emigrants was almost twice as high in the last five years of the nineteenth century, and four and a half times as high in the years preceding 1914. The figure of 9.1 emigrants for every thousand inhabitants in the second quinquennium of the twentieth century was the highest of any of the European States.

The result of this Italian exodus was that around 1910 more than 5 and a half million Italian citizens were living abroad: in less than forty years their number had increased fivefold (4).

In fact, however, the number of Italian abroad around 1910 was more than this since hundreds of thousands of Italian emigrants had become citizens of their countries of adoption. Significant in this connection are the figures of the French census of 29th March, 1896; these show that at that date 291,886 Italians were living in the Republic, but the French officials estimated the number of naturalised citizens of Italian origin at 300,000.

The following remarks hold good for the period around 1910:

(1) A very small number of the people of Italian origin residing abroad dates back to currents of emigration of earlier generations, some even prior to Italian unity. They consisted mainly of communities who had settled in European countries, more especially Western ones, and on the Mediterranean coasts of Africa and Asia.

(2) Almost four fifths of Italian emigrants had settled in North and South America. Of the 5,550,000 — a figure no less than 22 times that given in the 1871 census — residing beyond Italy's national frontiers in 1910, 1,801,623 (32 per cent of the total) were in North America and 2,638,952 (47 per cent of the total) in Latin America.

This shows that the expansion of Italian emigration coincided with the period of rapid growth of world wealth which characterised

(4) Many particulars and quotations from articles and publications of the period on the dispersion of Italians over the world are to be found in GIOACCHINO VOLPE, *L'Italia moderna* (Florence, 1949), Vol. II, Chapt. 4, *L'Italia fuori d'Italia* (pp. 195-272).

the thirty years preceding the First World War, a period in which international migration of labour was a vital feature of the economic system. The economic liberalism of the nineteenth century made this striking phenomenon possible (5), and the policy followed by Italy in this respect was inspired at first by definitely liberal principles and by the abstinence of the government from interference.

In 1875 a Congress of Economists considered the growth of emigration and adopted a resolution expressing the hope that, while emigration should continue to be free, a law for the protection of emigrants should be enacted as soon as possible on lines similar to those adopted by the most advanced nations. In that same year a « Society of Patronage for Emigrants » was formed in Rome, whose purpose was to safeguard our emigrants abroad. The first action taken by the Government in this field was a police circular issued on 18th January, 1873, by the Minister of the Interior, Lanza.

The first members of Parliament to study the matter were Minghetti and Sonnino. Minghetti advocated measures to prevent the deceptions and oppressive treatment practiced on emigrants by individuals and agents who recruited them, by sea captains, and also by overseas governments (6).

But taken as a whole, Government action in the matter of emigration was not, until 1900, adequate to meet the needs of so complicated and large scale a phenomenon, and one of such importance for the economic life of the country. Until 1888 emigration, like all other collective activities, was subject to the regulations of the general law for public safety. The first *ad hoc* law enacted on 30th December of that year, still did not go beyond police regulations.

In the following twenty years Italian law and legislation made such progress in this matter that they became models for the other Western countries (7); of special importance

(5) See JULIUS ISAAC, *Economics of Migration* (London, 1947), especially, pp. 10 ff.

(6) See EPICARMO CORBINO, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 21.

(7) See GENNARO MONDANI, *La legislazione coloniale italiana nel suo sviluppo storico e nel suo stato attuale* (Milan, 1941), p. 20.

was the Act of 31st January, 1901, a social law of high juridical importance which set up the General Commissariat of Emigration of which Bodio was the first Commissioner. This law aimed at protection of the emigrant (8).

2. Emigration during the First World War and the Inter-War Period.

In the years from 1915 to 1918 emigration fell to a yearly average of 30,000 units, of whom one third were workers employed in the French munition industries (9).

Indeed, our emigrant communities who had settled in the belligerent countries of the European continent, often found themselves in a very difficult situation (10). The uncertainty as to Italy's position led in the first weeks of the European war to disorderly repatriations. Before the 25th of September 1914, no less than 466,503 Italians returned, by way of the frontier stations or the mountain passes. The provinces most seriously affected were those from which emigration to other European countries had been heaviest (Udine 71,052 repatriates; Turin 44,365, Belluno 32,801, Novara 26,527). Large numbers also returned from neutral countries; thus of the 250,000 Italians residing in Switzerland at the outbreak of hostilities, 80,000 returned from August to October 1914 (11). When Italy entered the war the repatriation movement continued. While this was a symptom partly of the fact that the labour markets of the countries to which our emigrants had gone were depressed by the war, it also show-

(8) Remark made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Visconti Venosta, during the debate on the law at the meeting of the Chamber of Deputies, 27 November, 1900.

See also ATTILIO ODLATH, *Problemi dell'emigrazione italiana*, especially Chapt. I, *L'evoluzione nella politica e nella disciplina dell'emigrazione italiana* (pp. 311 ff.), in « Atti della Commissione per lo studio dei problemi del Lavoro, Ministero per la Costituente » (Rome, 1946).

(9) See B. NOGARO and L. WEIL, *La main d'oeuvre étrangère et coloniale pendant la guerre* (Paris, 1926), pp. 37 ff., in « Histoire économique et sociale de la guerre mondiale ».

(10) Cf. ROBERTO MICHELS, *Cenni sulle migrazioni e sul movimento della popolazione durante la guerra europea*, in « Riforma Sociale », 1917, pp. 1 ff.

(11) See FELICE CALIMANI, *I profughi di guerra italiani rimpatriati attraverso la Svizzera*, in « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », No. 3, 1916, pp. 5 ff.

ed that many Italians gave ear to the appeal of the motherland in danger; those who returned to serve in the army from 24th May, 1915, the date of mobilisation, till 31st December 1918, numbered 303,919, of whom 155,387 came from America. From 1914 to 1918 the number of Italians who returned to the country totalled 1,198,770 (12).

As soon as the armistice was proclaimed, the migratory currents were set going again; a large number of the repatriates returned to the places from whence they had come (thus 85,779 re-emigrated in 1919 and 76,045 in 1920), while many others wished to try their luck in places that had suffered less from the crisis and which offered better opportunities for employment than did Italy. In 1920 the number of departures rose to 614,611, a substantial figure but one that was still one third below the record level of 1913.

TABLE II

ITALIANS RESIDENT ABROAD, 1831-1910

Continents	1831	1891	1901	1910	Percentage distribution in 1910
Europe	380,352	461,843	654,053	900,562	16.20
Africa	62,203	75,212	167,837	191,919	3.45
Asia	7,531	8,602	10,641	12,500	0.23
Oceania	2,971	4,365	6,141	7,709	0.14
N. and S. America	579,335	1,433,184	2,505,876	4,445,056	79.98
Total	1,032,392	1,983,206	3,344,548	5,557,746	100.00

The steadily declining number of Italian emigrants in the following twenty years, *i.e.* in the period preceding the Second World War, is summed up in the Table III.

In the post-war period we are now examining, some aspects of emigration and the causes of its shrinkage were the following:

(1) The number of emigrants — even apart from the quite exceptional year of 1920 to which we have already referred — continued until 1927 at an annual figure

(12) See COMMISSARIATO GENERALE DELL'EMIGRAZIONE, *Anuario Statistico della Emigrazione italiana*, dal 1867 al 1915 (Rome, 1927), p. 1525.

that always exceeded 200,000; the progressive shrinkage, due in part to the restrictive policies followed by the Fascist régime, began in 1928 (13).

TABLE III

EMIGRANTS IN THE PERIOD 1921-1940

Years	Total (annual averages)	Per 100,000 inhabitants	By Area of Destination		Index (first period = 100)
			European countries	Oversea countries	
1921-1925	303,264	787.4	172,360	130,904	100.0
1926-1930	212,245	500.6	89,373	122,872	70.0
1931-1935	91,628	218.6	63,447	28,181	30.2
1936-1940	48,901	111.2	29,172	19,729	16.1

(2) From 1922 the direction of the emigrant movement was reversed if compared to that of the war years; the number going to European countries exceeded the number going to transoceanic countries and the main direction was France, since Germany and Austria-Hungary, which had received such a large proportion of the temporary emigrants from Italy before the war, were now suffering from acute economic depression.

(3) The United States were among the first to adopt restrictive measures soon after the First World War against immigration in general and against Italian immigrants in particular. Their example was followed by the other immigration countries and policies were adopted which practically closed their frontiers to our emigrants in the years of the world economic depression, 1929-32 (14).

In view of these measures the decline of Italian emigration can only be ascribed in

(13) The statement contained in the text is weakened only very little by the fact that a new system of making the returns was introduced in 1928, and in 1931 the sources of information were improved. The data for 1928 onwards are therefore not fully comparable with those of previous years. An exhaustive explanation is given of the new principles and new sources in « *Statistica delle migrazioni da e per l'estero, anni 1928, 1929 e 1930, con confronti dal 1921 al 1927* » published by the Istituto Centrale di Statistica.

(14) The phenomenon of migration is thus mainly due to a function of the economic conditions prevailing in the countries of immigration. See JULIUS ISAAC, *op. cit.*, pp. 226 ff.

part to Fascist policies, which in this matter can best be described as contradictory:

(a) In the early years of the régime emigration followed the traditional lines, even if the Royal Decree Law of 18th January, 1923, deprived the government emigration services at home and abroad of their character of an independent administration by placing the Commissariat of Emigration, which had done such good work, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(b) As the nationalistic trend became more pronounced, and with the adoption of the so-called « demographic policy », which held that each emigrant meant the loss to the country of a worker, a father and a soldier, the General Commissariat of Emigration was suppressed (Decree of 28th April, 1927) and it was replaced by a General Bureau for Italians Abroad, which was a regular office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (15).

When in 1929 the world economic depression led to an increase in unemployment, some administrative restrictions were temporarily reduced (16). In 1930 the number of emigrants attained a new peak figure of 280,097; of those 167,029 (60 per cent) went to France. The mitigation was, however, of brief duration and soon made way for a policy of extreme nationalism.

The high birth-rate, characteristic of Italian demographic expansion, persisted among our emigrants abroad. Indeed it is because of this excess of births that the number of Italians abroad showed a marked increase in spite of the notable decline in the number of expatriates. The following table compiled from the census taken by the Ministry of

(15) In evidence of the policy followed we quote a passage from a circular of 3rd June, 1927, addressed by Mussolini in his capacity as Minister of the Interior to the prefects: « The Prefects are to explain to their subordinates that those provinces which succeed in preserving for the Country all the arms of her children to assure her progress and her defence will have deserved well of the Fatherland ». And the Minister Grandi, in a speech delivered in the Chamber of Deputies on 31st March, 1927, declared in his turn: « We Fascists must have the courage to declare that emigration is an evil, when it is directed, as now, towards countries that are subject to a foreign sovereignty... Why should our people provide a kind of nursery to feed other nations demographically poor or impoverished? Why should our mothers continue to give birth to children who will be soldiers for countries other than Italy? ».

(16) Circular of August, 1930.

Foreign Affairs in 1927, illustrates the situation (17).

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF ITALIANS RESIDENT ABROAD IN 1927,
BY AREA

Continents	Italians resident abroad	Percentage distribution
Europe	1,267,841	13.95
Africa	188,702	2.06
Asia	9,674	0.01
North and South America	7,674,583	83.95
Oceania	27,567	0.03
<i>Total</i>	<i>7,168,367</i>	<i>100.00</i>

In 1927 the largest Italian communities were:

(1) in the Americas: in the United States (3,706,116), Brazil (1,839,579), and Argentine (1,797,942); and

(2) in Europe: in France (972,281) and Switzerland (135,943). Whereas in 1871 for every 100 residents in Italy there were 1.01 Italians residing abroad, the corresponding percentage had risen in 1927 to 23. The two largest bodies of Italians were to be found in North and South America and in the Mediterranean Basin. But the shifts that had occurred in the direction of emigration, and more especially the growing importance of the movement towards North and South America, is shown by the following comparisons:

(a) In 1871, 47 per cent of the Italians living abroad were residing in the countries of the Mediterranean Basin. In 1927 this percentage had fallen to 13.

(b) In 1927 the percentage residing in North and South America stood at 81 per cent of the total; in 1871 that percentage had been only 22 (18).

(17) MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, *Censimento degli Italiani all'estero alla metà del 1927* (Provveditorato Generale dello Stato, Rome, 1928).

(18) See EMILIO PAZIO, *Sviluppi e carattere del movimento migratorio dei Paesi mediterranei*, « Annali di Statistica », Series VIII, Vol. II, Rome, 1948, pp. 215 ff.

3. Regional and Occupational Analysis of Italian Emigration.

If emigration is almost always accounted for by the desire to escape from economic difficulties (it was only in the decades following 1914 that it increased considerably for political and radical reasons), this is especially true in the case of Italian emigration. Emigration may acquire a « select » character, as in the case of the Armenians and the Jews,

of the whole body of emigrants, who at that time went mainly to the European Continent (19).

In the following years just before 1900, Venetia still held the first place but emigration from Southern Italy was rapidly increasing, so much so that the Campania region came to rank second, followed at a short distance by Piedmont.

In the third period, when Italian emigration was at its peak, the emigrants from the

ITALIAN EMIGRANTS WHO LEFT FROM 1876 TO 1914, CLASSIFIED BY REGION OF ORIGIN TABLE V

Regions	Annual averages				Number per 10,000 inhabitants at middle of the period	
	1876-1886	1887-1900	1901-1909	1910-1914	1876-1886	1910-1914
Piedmont	25,929	27,447	55,076	61,733	96	190
Liguria	5,218	4,325	6,793	7,859	59	73
Lombardy	19,622	21,660	50,178	70,034	53	155
Venetia	37,662	98,107	98,765	108,445	134	318
Emilia	4,966	11,866	33,209	32,575	23	131
Tuscany	8,856	13,764	30,700	37,489	40	151
Marche	945	4,261	21,907	23,913	10	294
Umbria	32	608	9,824	13,141	0.5	203
Latium	33	1,104	12,273	15,001	0.4	135
Abruzzi-Molise	4,083	14,320	48,744	42,035	31	323
Campania	9,921	29,405	70,766	60,749	34	201
Apulia	618	3,106	20,906	27,832	3.9	135
Basilicata	5,636	9,245	14,460	12,324	108	311
Calabria	5,542	15,355	43,279	41,421	44	833
Sicily	2,010	14,596	70,265	86,592	7	251
Sardinia	101	501	5,101	8,555	1.5	106
<i>Italy - Total</i>	<i>134,774</i>	<i>269,670</i>	<i>597,246</i>	<i>649,701</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>203</i>

from among whom the best elements emigrated by reason of finding themselves in a particularly unfavourable situation in the country of exodus; or it may have a « declassed » character, as in the case of the Italian emigrants who formed by themselves the largest element in European immigration into the United States in the period prior to 1914.

This assertion is confirmed by an analysis of the regional distribution of Italian emigrants and their occupational status.

In the first decade (1876 to 1886) for which we can avail ourselves of reliable statistical data, the first place was held by Venetia, Piedmont and Lombardy; these three North Italian regions supplied 64 per cent

South numbered almost twice those from the North. In this period we also note the considerable emigration from Central Italy, more especially from Tuscany and Latium which in earlier days had made only a very small contribution. The following table is instructive in these points.

The examination of the percentage figures for the emigrants classified by areas also shows that the participation of Southern Italy and the Islands was acquiring a relatively

(19) In 1858 ANTONIO GALLENZA, in his book published in London, « Country life in Piedmont », spoke of the summer emigration of bricklayers from Biella, of house-painters from the Valsesiana, and of carpenters from the district of Canavese, as being among the economic characteristics of the Region.

growing importance. From 1876 to 1890 the number of Southern Italians who emigrated increased tenfold; in 1900 the number was twenty times and in 1906 55 times that of 1876.

TABLE VI
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF EMIGRANTS BY AREA
OF ORIGIN, 1876-1914

Area	Periods			
	1876-1880	1891-1895	1901-1905	1911-1914
Northern Italy . . .	80	64	42	44
Central Italy . . .	7	6	11	14
Southern Italy and Islands	13	30	47	42
Total	100	100	100	100

Looking again at the main aspects of emigration, we note that:

(1) The emigrants to European countries and to the Mediterranean Basin came largely from Northern Italy (76 per cent in the period 1911-14).

(2) Overseas emigration was fed mainly by Southern Italy and the Islands (69 per cent in the period 1911-14).

In the case of the emigration from the South, uncontrolled and almost chaotic in the early days, we must unfortunately recognise that it was, to borrow a description used by an Italian sociologist, Giuseppe Prato, « the emigration of the hungry » (20).

It has been noted that Northern Italian emigrants had a preference for South America, whereas those from the South went to North America. This is clearly shown by the U.S. Statistics for the period 1881-1907, although after 1903 emigrants from Northern Italy increased rapidly, whereas after that year emigration to Brazil was mainly from Southern Italy, and the number of Southerners going to Argentine also increased at about

(20) The title of an article published in the « Rassegna Nazionale », No. 1, May 1903: « L'emigrazione della fame in Basilicata ».

that time. The explanation was in the fact that in the years 1880-1905 the Northern Italians who went to the Americas wanted to become farm settlers and therefore preferred the vast still uncultivated lands of Argentine and Brazil; while the Southerners preferred to work for a wage and were thus attracted by the factories and mines of the United States (21).

As we have already said the currents of migration underwent great changes after the First World War both in numbers and in origin. Venetia, followed by Piedmont, were again at the head of the list for the reason that temporary or European emigration had once more become the most important form, and these two regions are those that prefer this form. The percentage distribution of the total number of emigrants according to the area of origin is shown for subdivisions of the inter-war period in Table VII.

TABLE VII
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF EMIGRANTS BY AREA
OF ORIGIN, 1919-1938

Area	Periods			
	1919-1925	1926-1930	1931-1935	1936-1938
Northern Italy . . .	50	60	55	41
Central Italy . . .	11	11	12	13
Southern Italy and Islands	39	29	33	46
Total	100	100	100	100

These data are very significant inasmuch as they show the deterioration of the North-South ratio in the inter-war period as a result of the almost complete standstill of emigration. The result is that the disequilibrium of the Italian population, aggravated by the high birth rate of the Southern Provinces, has become more acute (22).

A study of the occupational classification of the emigrants seeking work — both before and after the First World War — also leads

(21) See on this matter the important study by A. SARTORIUS VON WALTERSHAUSEN, *Die Suditalienischen Auswanderung und Nationalökonomie*, Vol. 41, 1911, pp. 1 and 189 ff.

(22) For a detailed analysis of migration movements, considered region by region, see F. COLLETTI, *Dell'emigrazione italiana* (Milan, 1912), pp. 132 ff.

to the conclusion that Italian emigration has been, on the whole, that of « declassed » persons; hence the unfavourable judgements expressed by superficial observers of this impressive phenomenon. But those who take a synthetic view of the economic history of Italy since 1860, who recognise the undeniable progress that has been achieved since unification, and who take into account the backward conditions of the large mass of the population, will at once realise that those who, by dint of hard effort, had acquired a training as experts and skilled specialised workers were readily taken up by the great railway works, building enterprises, and by newly established industries. The mass of the emigrants consisted of unskilled labourers. These working masses who, at least in the early days, were neither directed nor assisted, were often the victims of the speculative ambitions of foreign entrepreneurs, thus incurring the disfavour of the local labour forces because they were ready to work for wages which were often below standard levels. Hence the charge of acting as « blacklegs » often brought against the Italian emigrants (23).

As is shown by Table VIII, the unskilled agricultural labourers were the most numerous class in the early days.

TABLE VIII
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF ITALIAN
EMIGRANTS, 1878-1897

Occupation or profession	Percentage figures		
	1878-1880	1881-1890	1891-1897
Farmers and farm workers . .	43.95	52.98	47.47
Labourers	20.20	21.22	23.66
Bricklayers, stonemasons . . .	14.15	10.79	13.92
Artisans, industrial workers . .	11.72	7.43	6.62
Trades and businessmen . . .	2.23	1.77	1.63
Liberal professions	0.99	0.71	0.84
Servants	1.33	1.23	1.26
Others and unclassified	5.43	3.87	4.60

(23) See LIVIO MARCHETTI, *L'emigrazione italiana in Francia e i nuovi pericoli che la sovrastano*, « Giornale degli Economisti », 1904, I, pp. 137 ff.

From 1900 to 1914 the major contribution was still made, in decreasing order, by farmers and farm workers, followed by labourers and then, little by little, by bricklayers, bricklayers-labourers, and stone-masons, by craftsmen and industrial workers in general. Taken as a whole, these several classes accounted for more than 90 per cent of all emigrants over 14 years of age: and they accounted by 92 per cent of all emigrants in the last years of the nineteenth century.

Indeed, according to the statistical tables drawn up by the statistician Augusto Bosco, who included labourers under the class of farmers and farm workers, this class accounted for more than two thirds of the total number of emigrants, a ratio even higher than that of the agricultural classes to the total Italian population. This shows that the flow of emigrants was fed mainly by the rural classes, and that there was a demand for their services abroad. It is also a symptom of the fact that in Italy agricultural labour, as Bosco says, « is either superabundant or cannot obtain an adequate rate of remuneration, the rate of growth of industry and trade being insufficient to absorb it ». The over-crowding of Italian agriculture seems to us fully documented by the international comparisons contained in the table IX, compiled by Bosco.

While agriculturists supplied the largest contingent of transoceanic or permanent emigration, the contrary was true for the bricklayers, miners, stonecutters, kiln-burners, who found a ready demand for their labour in the great works on land-levelling, railway building, ports, canals, fortifications, house building in European countries, and more especially in France and Germany.

After the 1914-18 war, among the emigrants to European countries the most numerous were still bricklayers, masons, industrial workers, and labourers; while in transoceanic emigration the first place was held by agricultural workers, followed by factory hands. As the principles followed in collecting and classifying the statistics of the occupational grouping have been changed, it is not possible to make accurate comparisons even for the twenty year period between the two

TABLE IX

AGRICULTURAL EMIGRATION FROM EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (a) AT TURN OF CENTURY

	Emigrants from agricultural categories		Ratio agricultural population to total (%)
	Absolute figures	Per 100,000 inhabitants	
Italy (1899-1903)	284,613	70.7	56.7
Austria (1899-1903)	41,447	70.2	64.3
Belgium (1898-1902)	1,526	12.4	22.9
Switzerland (1898-1902)	3,445	30.4	37.4
Germany (1899-1903)	8,889	32.6	37.5
Great Britain and Ireland (1899-1903)	30,069	17.9	15.1
Denmark (1899-1903)	414	14.4	27.1
Sweden (1897-1901)	5,032	27.8	54.0
Norway (1899-1903)	5,249	57.8	49.6

(a) For Italy, Belgium and Sweden, the figures of the emigrants from the agricultural categories refer to their total number, while for the other countries they refer only to emigrants going overseas.

(See AUGUSTO BOSCO, *Le correnti migratorie fra i vari Stati ed il collegamento degli emigranti*, in « Raccolta di Studi dell'Istituto Internazionale d'Agricoltura », Roma, 1905).

world wars. The structural change can, however, be gathered from these two figures:

(a) In 1921 agricultural workers and assimilated classes (shepherds, wood men, etc.) accounted for 32 per cent of the total number of emigrants.

(b) In 1938 these groups accounted for only 8 per cent of the total number of emigrants (24).

(24) We give here for the last four years of peace the occupational classification of emigrants of 15 and over:

Occupation or profession	1935	1936	1937	1938	
Workers and wage earners	Agriculture and hunting	9.5	9.2	10.2	8.1
	Industry and handicrafts	35.0	31.0	34.1	46.6
	Transport and kindred	8.3	6.3	5.9	5.3
	Servants	6.0	5.4	4.7	4.4
Sundry occupation	5.8	5.8	4.2	4.1	
Not in labour force	33.6	39.9	36.2	29.3	
Unclassified	1.8	2.4	4.7	2.2	
Total	100.-	100.-	100.-	100.-	

On the whole, males are always more numerous than females, adults than minors, single emigrants than family groups.

TABLE X

EMIGRANTS BY SEX AND AGE AND CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO WHETHER THEY LEFT INDIVIDUALLY OR IN FAMILY GROUPS, 1891-1938 (percentage figures)

Years	Sex distribution		Age distribution (a)		Proportion leaving individually and in family groups	
	Men	Women	Above 15 years	Under 15 years	Individually	In family groups
1891	84.9	15.1	72.0	18.0
1901	81.2	18.8	89.5	10.5
1911	80.7	19.3	89.6	10.4	78.7	21.3
1921	64.0	36.0	84.0	16.0	65.0	35.0
1930	70.4	29.6	87.0	13.0	77.5	22.5
1938	61.7	38.3	87.4	12.6	71.2	28.8

(a) For 1891 and 1901, the percentage figure has been calculated with reference to the emigrants aged over 14 years.

In Northern Italy the prevailing tendency is for the emigrants to go alone, leaving their families in Italy; this may depend on the fact that Northern Italians emigrate mainly to European countries, and on the special character of that emigration. The tendency in the South is for the emigrant to be accompanied by his family; this is accounted for not only by the psychology of the local populations but also by the fact that the emigrants go mainly to transatlantic countries, which helps explain the permanence or at least long duration which characterises the emigration from Southern Italy (25).

In the years following the First World War the ratio of female to male emigrants was considerably higher than in the period immediately preceding it.

(25) See COMMISSARIATO GENERALE DELL'EMIGRAZIONE, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

4. The main Countries of Destination of Italian Emigrants.

Some retrospective data concerning the countries to which Italian emigrants mainly went seem to us of importance as a background against which to view the present-day problem (26). Let us first look at the data for transoceanic countries.

TABLE XI

EMIGRATION OVERSEAS, 1881-1940

Periods	Total (annual average)	United States	Brazil	Argentine
1881-1885	58,995	14,952	8,371	26,532
1891-1895	47,444	41,319	65,981	31,117
1901-1905	309,242	199,670	40,021	55,702
1911-1914	364,716	250,745	25,955	62,799
1921-1925	130,904	45,194	9,705	64,497
1931-1935	28,181	13,244	1,491	10,165
1936-1940	19,729	9,683	1,008	5,986

One fact is obvious:

(a) Transoceanic emigration, mainly to North and South America, has been directed towards three leading countries. In the period 1911-14 the United States Argentine and Brazil took no less than 93 per cent of the total.

(b) Emigration towards other continents has been insignificant. (Italian statistics classify emigration to the African and Asiatic countries of the Mediterranean basin with that to European countries). The largest number of emigrants leaving for Australia in any one year was 5,271, reached in 1925.

The figures indicate that in the course of a century, from 1820 to 1920, 4,651,195 Italians were admitted into the United States. In 1870 the Italians residing in the great American Republic numbered only 17,000. After that date the number of emigrants rose year by year reaching 15,000 in 1881 and 100,000 in 1900. In 1906 the number exceeded 300,000, and in that year the influx of Italians alone equalled the total number of immigrants from Western and Northern Eu-

(26) For full particulars see the study by EMILIO FAZIO, *Sviluppi e caratteri del movimento migratorio dei Paesi mediterranei*, loc. cit., especially, pp. 221 ff.

rope, the area who in the previous decades had fed the demographic expansion of the U.S. The maximum was attained in 1913 with 376,776 persons, representing 43 per cent of total Italian emigration in that year.

After the parenthesis of the war, the emigration to the United States of 349,042 Italians in 1920 was an exceptional event. After the enactment of the laws restricting immigration (27) passed in 1921 and 1924, the last of which fixed the very low quota of 3,845 for Italy, emigration fell off. Nevertheless in the decade 1921-30 no less than 415,315 emigrants entered — or rather reentered, the United States, most of them being « outside the quota ». In the years immediately preceding the Second World War an average number of 12 to 13 thousand Italians went each year to that country.

The U.S. census returns of 1930 showed that 4,546,875 persons of Italian origin were resident in the United States, of whom 1,740,422 were born in Italy. In 1930 4 per cent of the United States population could therefore be described as Italian; and the percentage could be expected to increase, as the Italian birthrate is higher than the average (28).

From 1900 to 1914 emigration to the United States had accounted for two thirds of Italian emigrants to the American continents; but up to 1898 emigration to Brazil, and in some years to Argentine, had received the largest numbers, and those countries owe their development in no small measure to Italian labour and Italian brains.

In the early decades of the past century Argentine could avail herself of only one of

(27) These measures were motivated not so much by the protectionism fastened by the trade unions, as was mistakenly believed in Italy, as by the wish to maintain a population racially and culturally homogeneous. See ROY LA GARIS, *Is Our Immigration Policy Satisfactory?*, « The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science », Vol. 156, 1931, p. 20. The same Review devoted a whole number (March 1949) to « Reappraising our immigration policy », containing a full treatment of American policies in this matter. For an analysis of the restrictive legislation quoted in the text, see especially EDWARD HUTCHINSON, *Immigration Policy since World War I*, pp. 15 ff.

(28) The fertility of white immigrant women is higher than that of women of United States stock; it tends however to decline with the cessation of war immigration. See WARREN S. THOMPSON, *Die Bevölkerungsbewegung in den Vereinigten Staaten*, « Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv », Vol. 46, 1947, especially Tables on pp. 379 and 387.

the three factors needed for the expansion of production, land. While the capital needed for the development of the country came from Britain, the labour was in a marked degree supplied by Italy. The largest national group of immigrants, 47 per cent of the total, consisted of Italians. Between 1857 and 1926 the number of Italian immigrants entering Argentine totalled 1,228,000.

To be precise, it was towards 1880 that immigration began to reach conspicuous figures, and as from that year it kept on increasing, fed chiefly by Italians. Prior to 1860 the Argentine's statistical returns showed an average immigration of 3000 Italians per annum; the highest figure was that recorded in 1913 with 111,500 from Italy. But differing in this from the United States, the Republic of La Plata continued, even after the conclusion of the First World War, to receive a large flow of Italian immigrants; the average for the years 1921-25 was 64,497 per annum, or nearly half of the total number of Italian transoceanic emigrants. The flow, however, dwindled after the economic depression of 1930 by which Argentine, as an exporter of foodstuffs, was seriously affected. After 1932 the number of Italian emigrants to that country never reached 10,000 in a year.

The third country receiving Italian transoceanic emigrants was Brazil to which from 1820 to 1930 a total of 1,480,000 Italians went. Of the 2,963,767 European immigrants entering Brazil during the period 1820-1911 45 per cent were Italians. Italian emigration to that country reached its peak during the last decades of the nineteenth century. The highest figure recorded was that of 108,414 in 1891.

In 1888 the Italians in Brazil already numbered 80,000; that was the year in which negro slavery was finally abolished. This coincidence clearly shows under what conditions the Italian immigrants entered that country. Most of them were hired to replace the slaves on the coffee plantations (29).

(29) See ENRICHETTA CHIARAVIGLIO GIOLITTI, *L'emigrazione al Brasile*, a report submitted to the First Italian Women's Congress, Rome, 1909.

As a result of the ill-treatment suffered by Italian peasants on the « fazendas », the Italian Government suspended emigration to that country in 1911 (30).

Even after 1920 Italian emigration to Brazil showed no marked recovery; it was only in 1923 that the number of emigrants rose to 13,574, and after 1930 their number was always only slightly above 1,000 per annum. Of the 2 million Italians now settled in Brazil one half are in the State of San Paolo.

Turning to the European Continent, we find that prior to 1914 France, Switzerland and Germany were the three countries which received the largest numbers of Italian workers.

In the twenty year interval between the world wars, Austria and Hungary, even as successor States, were no longer able to absorb Italian emigrants. This was the case also for Germany, except in 1938 when there was some revival of emigration to that country in connection with German rearmament (31).

The low birth-rate from which France has been suffering for many years, has led to a low level of emigration and a high rate of immigration from and to that country. The French statistics show that Italians, who are preferred even in normal times because of their linguistic and racial affinity, hold the first place among the foreigners resident in France. Italian calculations place their number in 1931 at about one million.

While prior to 1910 the average number of our emigrants to France stood around 30,000 per annum, that figure rose considerably, partly owing to improved political relations between the two countries, in the pre-war years 1911-1915, when it reached an annual average of 65,063 persons. But it was

(30) See the Final Report of the Enquiry made by Inspector ADOLFO ROSSI, for the Italian Government, *Condizioni dei coloni italiani nello Stato di San Paolo*, « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », 1902, n. 7, p. 3.

(31) On the importance of the old Central Empires for Italian emigration prior to 1914 see, *inter alia*, PIETRO SIRTA, *L'emigrazione italiana nell'Europa centrale e orientale*, « Giornale degli Economisti », 1894, II, pp. 23 ff. About 1910 the number of Italians residing in Germany during the summer months stood around 200,000; the census of 1st December 1910, registered the presence of 104,204 Italians. See the full monograph on *Gli italiani in Germania* by GIACOMO PERTILE, « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », nos. 11 and 12, 1914.

after 1919 that, as a result of the Labour Agreement of September 30, 1919, Italian emigration found important outlets in that country. In 1924 a record figure of 201,715 emigrants to France was reached, equal to 88 per cent of total Italian emigration.

TABLE XII

ITALIAN EMIGRATION TO EUROPEAN COUNTRIES,
1881-1940

Periods	Total (annual average)	France	Switzerland	Germany
1881-1885	295,146	44,500	7,032	6,927
1891-1895	109,067	26,898	12,166	15,246
1901-1905	244,808	54,299	53,288	56,009
1911-1914	284,544	72,255	82,615	69,391
1921-1925	172,360	131,894	10,247	1,447
1931-1935	63,447	35,153	12,888	628
1936-1940	29,172	7,603	4,284	10,993

But this favourable development was arrested, and if an opinion may be expressed it would be that of all Italian communities living abroad the one that suffered most, morally and economically, from Mussolini's policies was that residing in France (annual average 1936-40 = 7,603 emigrants) (32).

As towards France, so towards Switzerland Italian emigration dates back many years. It touched a maximum of 90,019 units in 1913, but after the war there was no substantial recovery as a result of the depression caused in Switzerland by the impoverishment of the markets of Central Europe. The highest figure was reached in 1930 with 26,024 emigrants.

The communities of the Mediterranean Basin occupy a special position in the picture of Italian emigration. Before the last war some 50,000 Italians, mostly traders and small employees were settled in Egypt, chiefly in the towns. But the largest groups of Italian emigrants were to be found in French North

(32) On political emigration in France during this period see especially ALDO GAROSCI, *La vita di Carlo Rosselli*, Florence, 1945, especially Pp. II, Vol. I, « Giustizia e Libertà » (pp. 175 ff.) and Vol. II, Pp. III, « L'Europa sconvolta » (pp. 7 ff.). One may also consult MARIO MONTAGNANA, *Ricordi di un operaio torinese* (Rome, 1940), especially the chapter « Nell'emigrazione », Vol. II, pp. 5 ff.

Africa. After 1815 the Consul of Tunis notified the presence in that land of many Ligurians, seamen engaged in trade and Jews from Leghorn. In 1834 according to the *Archives de la Résidence générale de France à Tunis*, the Italians numbered 7,130 (33). After the Treaty of Bardo of 1881 which set up the French Protectorate, the Italian community, instead of shrinking, gained in importance with the steady increase of its numbers, fed by arrivals from near-by Sicily. Tunisia was developed by French capital and French entrepreneurs, but the third factor of production, labour was provided by Italy. The census of 16th December 1906 recorded 81,156 Italians (of whom 45,049 or 55 per cent were Sicilians) as against 11,000 in 1881 (34).

Up to 1887 Italians owned only 7 hectares of cultivated land; in 1905 there were 991 landowners owning 57,851 hectares. In 1912 the French owned 9,000 hectares under vines and the Italians 5,600; in 1918 the figures for the French had remained stationary at 9,436 hectares whereas the Italians had almost doubled their area which had risen to more than 10,000 hectares (35).

The attitude of the French Authorities to the Italian community is well known, and it became more hostile when in 1921 a decree was passed declaring persons born of foreign residents to be French citizens. Fascist policy exacerbated the already tense situation. Official statistics relating to 1931 gave the number of Italians as 91,000, whereas their number cannot in reality have been less than 120-150 thousand. In the period preceding and during the war many Italians became naturalised French citizens; this was especially true of the Italian Jews (numbering about 15,000) as a result of the racial persecutions (36).

(33) See AUGUSTO GALLIO, *Tunisi e i consoli sardi* (Bologna, 1935).

(34) See UGO SALETTA, *Condizioni economiche della Tunisia in rapporto all'emigrazione italiana*, « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », 1910, n. 2, p. 3.

(35) See *La crisi della popolazione francese in Tunisia*, « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », 1920, No. 6, p. 235.

(36) See T. CARLETTI, *La Tunisia e l'emigrazione italiana*, « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », 1903, n. 2, p. 5; and MASSIMO SALVADORI, *La penetrazione demografica europea in Africa* (Turin, 1932), p. 22.

5. Repatriation of Emigrants.

The General Commissariat of Emigration arranged as far back as 1902 for systematic statistical returns to be made concerning transoceanic migrations movements. But it was not until 1921 that returns were first made for emigrants repatriating from European countries.

For the period prior to the First World War we have the following figures:

TABLE XIII
REPATRIATIONS FROM OVERSEA COUNTRIES, 1902-1915

Periods	Repatriations from oversea countries					Ratio of returning migrants to outgoing oversea migrants (per cent)
	Total (annual averages)	U.S.A.	Brazil	Argentine	Other countries	
1902-1905	136,071	89,547	23,052	21,929	1,543	42.8
1906-1910	200,072	141,025	15,502	41,552	1,993	50.7
1911-1915	195,178	131,063	11,339	48,138	5,296	63.7

It has been noted with reference to returning emigrants that:

1) In the case of the United States an average of 60 per cent of the emigrants returned, whereas from the South American countries not much more than 40 per cent returned to Italy.

2) Generally speaking, emigrants from Northern Italy more often return than do those from the Centre and more especially from the South. This confirms that emigration from Northern Italy, even when transatlantic, is mainly temporary.

Leaving aside those emigrants who returned during the period of neutrality and belligerency under the influence of factors of an exceptional nature, and looking at the repatriations of the post-war years, we may sum up the movements as follows (Table XIV).

This summary analysis of the repatriation movement during the period between the two

TABLE XIV
REPATRIATIONS 1921-1938

Periods	Repatriations (absolute figures)			As percentage of new emigrants		
	Total (annual averages)	European countries	Oversea countries	Total	European countries	Oversea countries
1921-1925	143,281	78,961	64,320	47.3	43.6	49.0
1931-1935	67,208	39,902	27,306	73.0	63.3	97.4
1938	36,892	24,375	12,517	58.0	73.9	44.6

wars allows us to draw some conclusions which are of present-day significance, namely:

1) During the world economic depression the percentage of repatriations was very high, and as regards the transoceanic countries the number returning was almost equal to the number of new outgoing emigrants. This shows that Italy, in a period when the interdependence of international markets causes economic depressions to spread to all countries, cannot hope to solve the problem of surplus labour by means of emigration only.

2) Both before and after the war the percentage of repatriations has always been a high one. While this points to the attachment of Italians to their mother country, it also justifies the accusation of excessive mobility brought against our workers abroad and the criticism that Italians are difficult to assimilate.

The calculations made by the General Commissariat of Emigration confirm this point:

1) The length of residence of Italian emigrants in transatlantic countries before the First World War was from 3 to 4 years; only about 7 per cent of the emigrants remained in normal times for over ten years; in the period from 1920 to 1925 this last percentage rose steeply, varying from 21 to 28 per cent of the total.

2) In the years 1920-25 the emigrants who left for transatlantic countries amounted to some 4.92 million persons; over that same

period 3.08 millions returned to Italy. The reduction of population suffered by Italy was therefore greatly attenuated by the repatriations which were equivalent to 62 per cent of the new emigrants.

3) From 1876 to 1914 the statistical returns show that 14 million persons emigrated; but of these a large number returned, as is evident from the fact that the net emigration, calculated indirectly as the difference between the real and the natural increase of the population over the period between the two censuses, amounted from 1871 to 1911 to only 4 million persons.

These figures show how ill-grounded were the statements made during the Mussolini régime to the effect that Italy was experiencing a demographic « haemorrhage », of which the cause was emigration. In any case this « haemorrhage » — as we have seen in the preceding paragraphs — would have been staunched without need of recourse to the measures taken by the Fascist Government.

From October 1922 to October 1942 the Italian population rose gradually from 38.2 to 45.4 million, the increase amounting to 7.1 million, or to 18.5 per cent. « The natural rate of increase (excess of live births over deaths) amounted for the 20 years to 8.3 million, with an annual average of 416,000. The deficit due to migration (excess of emigrants over immigrants) amounted to some 1.2 million persons, or about 15 per cent of the natural increase. Thus in the twenty years of the Fascist Régime by far the major part of the natural increase remained within the national territory; and in the 30 years prior to the 1915-18 war only 2.5 per cent of the natural increase was lost as a result of the excess of emigration over immigration » (37).

This confirms the opinion expressed by Bodio in the early years of this century that « the numerical loss of people is very small when compared to the total population of the Kingdom; total emigration to non-European countries is roughly equal to half of the annual excess of births over deaths. After

(37) See MARIO DE VERGOTTINI, *Lo sviluppo della popolazione italiana nel primo ventennio dell'età fascista*, an Appendix to the « Compendio Statistico Italiano », 1942, p. 213.

deducting losses by emigration there remain each year from 150 to 200 thousand individuals more than there were at the close of the previous year. There was one year (1897) in which the excess of births over deaths reached 406 thousand, which amounts to as much as adding another province full of people to the kingdom without the corresponding increase of territory » (38).

6. Economic and Social Consequences.

What were the economic consequences and the social effects of emigration for the nation as a whole and for its individual members?

Looked at from the standpoint of the Italian economy, the most important of the beneficial consequences was the contribution to the credit side of the balance of payments in coin made by the emigrants' remittances.

For the period prior to 1914 Pasquale Jannaccone, in a well-known study (39), estimated that the net amount of the emigrants' remittances was generally in excess of 700 million gold lire; this is a higher estimate than that first given by Bonaldo Stringher, who placed the amount at 500 million. In his calculations on the Italian balance of payments, Stringher, however, included among the other credit items 100 millions of « postal accounts », consisting largely of emigrant remittances and not of payments for commercial transactions.

After the interval of the First World War, and the revival of international economic relations, net remittances amounted for the three year period 1922-24, still according to Jannaccone's estimates, to 7,400 million lire. In other words, the net annual amount was some 2,500 million lire. There had therefore been no very serious reduction, if we allow for

(38) See LUIGI BODIO, *Terza relazione annuale sui servizi dell'emigrazione*, « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », 1904, No. 7, p. 17 and Table XV in the appendix. In only one region, Basilicata, where transatlantic emigration had the character of a real flight, was there a temporary reduction of the population. See also the study by CARLO F. FERRARIS, *Il movimento generale dell'emigrazione italiana; suoi caratteri ed effetti*, « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », 1909, No. 5.

(39) *La bilancia del dare e dell'avere dell'Italia*, quoted in the volume « Prezzi e Mercati » (Turin, 1936), pp. 297 ff.

the depreciation of the lira as compared with the pre-war period (40).

The savings of the Italians residing abroad reached Italy by three main channels:

(a) The remittances made through the Bank of Naples which rose from an initial figure of some 3½ million (149 lire on an average for each remittance) in 1902, to a maximum of nearly 1 billion lire in 1920. In 1925 they again exceeded 679 million (1998 lire on an average for each remittance), but in 1934 they had fallen to 154 million.

(b) Deposits on postal accounts. These started in 1890 with the modest amount of 87,311 lire; in 1910 they had already risen to some 62.7 million. In 1925 the amount deposited reached 787.6 million lire; in 1930 the figure had fallen to 332.4 million. The amount deposited in 1938 barely exceeded 41 million. In 1925 the deposits outstanding due to customers resident abroad amounted to 3,686.2 million lire; in 1938, in spite of the depreciation of the currency, the amount outstanding had been to 2,232 million. The reduction of the remittances had been accompanied by drawing on the accounts in Italy, which clearly showed that the families of the emigrants had been forced to live during the second part of the inter-war period by using up their hard-earned savings.

(c) International postal orders rose from an initial total of over 55 million lire in 1901 to nearly 228 million in 1914. In 1925 they amounted to 253 million lire; in 1930 they still reached 223 million; in 1938 they probably amounted to about 100 million (41).

(40) Remittances had acquired fundamental importance for the economic life of some regions. Friuli alone received before the First World War some 50 million gold lire per annum; in some post-war years the amount rose to 150 million. « The shock to these territories caused by the stoppage of emigration is evident » wrote RONCHI in his monograph on « Venetia » in *Inchiesta sulla piccola proprietà agraria coltivatrice nel dopoguerra* (Rome, 1936), p. 21.

(41) For fuller particulars see *Commissariato Generale dell'Emigrazione, Annuario*, pp. 1637 ff. The subsequent data are taken from *Istituto Centrale di Statistica « Annuari Statistici Italiani »*, 1931, p. 467, 1935, p. 193, and 1939, p. 244. The importance of emigrants remittances is stressed in the section dealing with them in the volume « Bilancia dei Pagamenti - Cambio » (pp. 63 ff.) by GINO BORGATTA, Vol. IV and V of the « Trattato Elementare di Statistica » edited by CORRADO GINI (Milan, 1943).

If we bear in mind that in the quinquennium prior to the first world war (1909-13) Italy's trade deficit amounted to some 1,200 million lire a year, arising mainly from the import of raw materials, it can be said that:

1) the earning of our emigrants covered about 60 per cent of our trade deficit;

2) that there is some truth in the statement that for each worker who emigrates, two jobs are created for workers in Italy, one for the man who takes the place of the emigrant and a second arising from the new opportunities for industrial employment created by the increased possibility of purchasing raw materials due to the savings the emigrant remits to Italy.

Foreign observers have noted that the Italian emigrant saves, at a like rate of pay, more than any other European worker. Italians have often been reproached for this in the countries in which they have emigrated; it is in any case a proof of the deep attachment of the Italian to his family. On this point the American comparison reported in Table XV is instructive.

TABLE XV
UNITED STATES:
IMMIGRANTS' REMITTANCES, 1900-1906

Nationalities (a)	Number of immigrants (b)	Total of postal cheques remitted to native countries from 1900 to 1906 (Dollars)	Average amount of postal cheques per immigrant (dollars)
Italians	1,717,095	50,716,668.45	29.54
Austrians	3,485,466	69,041,227.41	19.81
Hungarians			
Russians			

(a) For more detailed information, see CARLO F. FERRARIS, *Il movimento generale dell'emigrazione italiana: i suoi criteri ed effetti*, « Bollettino dell'Emigrazione », 1909, No. 5, p. 33.

(b) Number present in 1900 plus those that arrived from 1901 to 1906.

These figures quoted in the text come remarkably close to the estimates made by Charles F. Speare concerning the remittances from the United States in 1907, amounting to a total of 250 million dollars. Of this total 70 millions were estimated as having been remitted to Italy, representing an average sum per head of all the Italian immigrants in the United States of 30 dollars. See also JULIUS ISAAC, *Economics of Migration*, p. 245.

The Bank of Italy estimated that in 1926 net emigrants remittances amounted to 120

TABLE XVI

EMIGRANTS' REMITTANCES AS AN ITEM HELPING TO COVER DEFICIT IN THE ITALIAN BALANCE OF TRADE, 1927-1939
(in millions of current lire)

Years	Trade deficit (colonies excluded)	Emigrants' remittances	(2) / (1) (Per cent)
	1	2	3
1927	4,969	2,110	42.5
1928	7,538	2,064	27.4
1929	6,623	2,120	32.0
1930	5,428	1,806	33.3
1931	1,605	1,550	96.6
1932	1,639	892	54.4
1933	1,602	648	40.4
1934	2,618	551	21.0
1935	1,187	370	31.2
1936	2,859	670	23.4
1937	5,629	832	14.8
1938	3,015	726	24.1
1939	1,508	767	50.9

million dollars. In view of the lira-dollar exchange rate then existing, this figure is still in line with those given by Jannaccone (42). Later on, as a result of the world economic depression and the consequent currency restrictions, and to the shrinkage of emigration, remittances fell to 80 million dollars in 1936 and to 40 million in 1937 (43).

There is, however, a negative side to emigration in its effect on the country's economy which should not be neglected. It represents in a certain sense a loss of productive potential. We refer to the cost met by the Italian nation for bringing up and educating the emigrant who on reaching productive manhood goes to work in another country. Economic literature is full of calculations on this matter. According to the German statistician, Ernst Engel, the country of immigration is enriched (in the simplest case) to the extent of the cost of rearing the emigrant, or i.e. to the extent of the loss of capital (invested in human beings) which is borne by the mother country.

Referring to these theories and taking the statistical data for 1903, Beneduce came to the conclusion that emigration deprives Italy in various ways, of some 287 million lire per annum (44).

(42) The American statistics estimated at 120 million dollars the remittances sent each year from the United States alone in the years 1922-29, and they underlined their importance as a means covering the trade deficit between the two countries which at that period stood around 70 million dollars per annum. See COSTANTINO PANUNZIO, *The United States Immigration Policy*, in « The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science », Vol. 156, 1921, p. 22. Nearer to the facts and more in keeping with Italian estimates, though still higher than these, is another estimate which places remittances from the U.S. to Italy at \$ 100 million a year. See F.W. RYAN, *The Balance of International Payments of the U.S. in 1925*, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Trade Information Bulletin, No. 399 (Washington, 1926), p. 10.

(43) See *Rapporto della Commissione Economica del Ministero per la Costituente*, Part III, *Problemi Monetari e Commercio Estero* (Rome, 1946), p. 180.

(44) Regarding the theory in question, see ERNST ENGEL, *Der Preis der Arbeit* (Holtzendorf Collection, Berlin, 1866). The estimates made by ALBERTO BENEDEUCE are contained in the study *Capitali sottratti all'Italia dall'emigrazione per l'estero*, « Giornale degli Economisti », 1904, II, pp. 506 ff. In the same Review COLETTI dissented from Beneduce and denied that « one can calculate the economic value of emigration and the economic loss it entails for the country of origin », in his article *Il costo di produzione dell'uomo e il valore economico degli emigranti*, 1905, I, pp. 260 ff.

On the other hand, Francesco Ferrara denied the possibility of making such estimates. In his opinion the capital of which the emigrants' departure deprives the mother country, yielded her little or nothing. If the emigrant was unable to earn an adequate income in his own country, he represented capital that was dead or destined to die. And in such a case what leaves the country is something which is deprived of capital value and which reacquires a capital value only when it finds itself in a more favourable position. In order to prove a loss of capital it is not enough to show that something has disappeared; you must show that the something that has gone was productive. In fact that which has gone was unproductive; it becomes productive again in a distant country, and in so doing becomes valuable also to the former home country (45).

Even if we are not willing to accept the opinion on this matter of the eminent Italian economist, the account closes with a profit

(45) See *Ragguaglio biografico e critico su G.B. Say*, preface to Vol. II of the Series of the « Biblioteca dell'Economista », republished in *Esame storico-critico di economisti e dottrine economiche* (Turin, 1899), p. 668.

when we consider the social effects of emigration. Among the beneficial effects not last nor least is the growth of small farm holdings. The remittances made by emigrants, or their return with a small capital, gave great impetus to the purchase of real estate, first houses, then land. The peasant, and more especially the South Italian peasant who emigrates to the American continents, has always lived and lives awaiting the possibility of buying for himself a piece of land or of enlarging the small holding he owns. General economic conditions may vary, but his land hunger is permanent; and as soon as his personal economic conditions allow of it he will satisfy this hunger whatever sacrifice it may cost him, and even if general economic conditions are precarious.

In the fifty years from 1876 to 1925 an average of 38 per cent of the emigrants over 15 years of age who left Italy were peasants, and the percentage rose to 45 per cent for the period 1876-1905. It is therefore easy to realise the importance of this phenomenon, which was felt above all in certain parts of the country. In Calabria «the savings coming from the Americas contributed at least to the extent of 90 per cent to the purchases of land intended for forming small holdings farmed by their owners». On the other hand the progress made in all over the territory of Upper Venetia has been largely due to temporary emigration. There one can see on very poor land handsome buildings and daring land-reclamation works.

While in Venetia the trend was definitely towards the formation of small independent farms, in Campania the «prevailing trend was towards fragmentary holdings, and it was frequently the custom to buy gradually small lots of land one after the other as savings accumulated». Generally speaking the

emigrants buy the land at high and often very high prices (46).

While the emigrants who returned bought strips of land and farms, the slow laborious ascent in the social and economic scale of the Italians abroad could also be noticed.

If, viewed from the social standpoint, emigration has contributed greatly to the spread of education and to the disappearance of illiteracy in the more backward areas, yet some negative sides of the phenomenon cannot be forgotten. The several enquiries made show as results of emigration:

- 1) a certain increase in drunkenness in areas that were immune from that evil;
- 2) the spread of certain social diseases (tuberculosis, syphilis);
- 3) a certain corruption of morals with larger percentages of adultery among the women who have remained alone at home separated from their husbands who have emigrated.

These negative aspects have made themselves felt more markedly in Southern Italy where, however «there can be no doubt that the higher standard of living and the progress in sanitation of the homes has been due almost exclusively to emigration, while for the most part the disgraceful conditions of the rural and urban centres continue unchanged, running counter to the most elementary rules of hygiene» (47).

GIANDOMENICO COSMO

(46) The particulars and the quotations in the text are taken from several regional monographs contained in the *Inchiesta sulla piccola proprietà coltivatrice formatasi nel dopoguerra*, directed by Prof. LORENZONI for the *Istituto Nazionale di Economia Agraria*, Rome, 1931-36. See also LUIGI ACOSTINO CAPUTO, *L'emigrazione della provincia di Cosenza*, «Giornale degli Economisti», 1907, Vol. II, p. 1164.

(47) See GINO ARIAS, *La questione meridionale*, Vol. I, Bologna, 1921, especially Part III, Chapter III, *Gli effetti economici, sociali e morali dell'emigrazione*, pp. 371 ff.