profits were about £75,264, the expenses being £64,664. The sponge divers brought up sponges valued at £24,630. The estimated hauls of tunny fish were 5534 tons, valued at £110,324.

The majority of the scanty Sicilian industries are directly con­nected with various branches of agriculture. Such, for instance, is the preparation of the elements of citric acid, which is manu­factured at an establishment at Messina. Older and more flourishing is the Marsala industry. Marsala wine is a product of the western vineyards situated slightly above sea-level. In 1899, wine was exported to the value of more than £120,000, while in 1906, 24,080 pipes of the value of £361,200 were shipped. The quantity consumed in Italy is far greater than that exported abroad.

Another flourishing Sicilian industry carried on by a large number of small houses is that of preserving vegetables in tins. Artichokes and tomato sauce are the principal of these products, of which several dozen million tins are annually exported from Sicily to the Italian mainland, to Germany and to South America. Manu­factories of furniture, carriages, gloves, matches and leather exist in large number in the island. They are, as a rule, small in extent, and are managed by the owners with the help of five, ten or at most twenty workmen. There are several glass works at Palermo, a cotton dyeing works at Messina, and a large metal foundry at Palermo. Large shipbuilding yards and a yard for the construction of trams and railway carriages have been constructed in the latter city. There are dry docks both at Palermo and Messina.

*Communications.—*Before 1860 there was no railway in Sicily. The total length of Sicilian railways is now 890 m., all single lines. Their construction was rendered very costly by the mountainous character of the island. They formed a separate system (the Rete Sicula) until in 1906, like the rest of the railways of Italy, they passed into the hands of the state, with the exception of the line round Mount Etna and the line from Palermo to Corleone. Messina is connected with the railway system of the mainland by ferry-boats from Villa S. Giovanni and Reggio, on which the. through carriages are conveyed across the straits. From Messina lines run along the northern coast to Palermo, and along the east coast via Catania to Syracuse: the latter line is prolonged along the south of the island (sometimes approaching, sometimes leaving the coast) via Canicatti as far as Aragona Caldare, Girgenti and Porto Empedocle. From Catania another line runs westward through the centre of the island via S. Caterina Xirbi (with a branch to Canicatti) to Roccapalumba (with a branch to Aragona Caldare) and thence northwards to Termini, on the line between Messina and Palermo. This is the direct route from Catania to Palermo. From Catania begins the line round Etna following its south, west and northern slopes, and ending at Giarre Riposto on the east coast railway. From Valsavoia (14 m. S. of Catania on the line to Syracuse) a branch line runs to Caltagirone. From Palermo a line runs southwards to Corleone and S. Carlo (whence there are diligences to Sciacca on the south coast) and another to Castelvetrano, Marsala and Trapani, going first almost as far as the south coast and then running first west and then north along the west coast. The only part of the coast of the island which has no railways is that portion of the south coast between Porto Empedocle and Castelvetrano (Sciacca lies about midway between these two points), where a road already exists, and a railway is projected, and the precipitous north coast between Palermo and Trapani. A steam tramway runs from Messina to the Faro at the north-east extremity of the island, and thence along the north coast to Barcelona, and another along the east coast from Messina to Giampilieri: while the island is fairly well provided with high roads, but is very backward in rural communications, there being only 244 yds. of road per sq. m., as compared with 1480 yds. in north Italy. The communications by sea, however, are at least as important as those by land, even for passengers. A steamer leaves Naples every night for Palermo, and vice versa, the journey (208 m.) being done in 11 hours, while the journey by rail (438 m.), including the crossing of the Straits of Messina takes 19½ hours; and the weekly steamer from Naples to Messina (216 m.) takes 12 hours, while the journey by rail and ferry boat (292 m.) takes 14 hours. Palermo, Messina and Catania are the most important harbours, the former being one of the two headquarters (the other, and the main one, is Genoa) of the Navigazione Generale Italiana, and a port of call for the steamers from Italy to New York. Emigrants to the number of 37,638 left Palermo direct for New York in 1906, and no less than 46,770 in 1905, while others embarked at Messina and Naples.

The movement of trade in these three ports may be shown by the following table:—

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Palermo. | Messina.@@1 | Catania. |
| 1900  1904  1906 | Tonnage of shipping  „ goods landed  „ shipping  „ goods landed  shipping | 1,658,848  398,718 2,298,054  445.036  2,403,851@@2 | 1,683,244  213.624  2,265,381  315414  2,574.872 | 1,245,954  235.575  1,593,678  309,514  1,542,520 |

Of the other harbours, Porto Empedocle and Licata share with Catania most of the sulphur export trade, and the other ports of note are Marsala, Trapani, Syracuse (which shares with the road­stead of Mazzarelli the asphalt export trade). The total importation of coal in 1906 amounted to 519,478 tons, practically all British.

In 1904, 75,779 Sicilians were registered as seamen, and no steamships with a gross tonnage of 145,702 were registered in Sicily.

*Economic, Intellectual, and Moral Conditions.*—As a general rule, trade and the increase of production have not kept pace with the development, of the ways of communication. The poverty of the Sicilian population is accentuated by the unequal distribution of wealth among the different classes of society. A small but comparatively wealthy class—composed principally of the owners of *latifondi—*resides habitually in the large cities of the island, or even at Naples, Rome or Paris. Yet even if all the wealthy landowners resided on their estates, their number would not be sufficient to enable them to play in local public life a part corre­sponding to that of the English gentry. On the other hand, the class which would elsewhere be called the middle class is in Sicily ex­tremely poor. The origin of most of the abuses which vitiate Sicilian political life., and of the frequent scandals in the representative local administrations, is to be found in the straitened condition of the Sicilian middle classes.

Emigration only attained serious proportions within the last decade of the 19th century. In 1897 the permanent emigration from the island was 15,994, in 1898, 21,320, and in 1899, 24,604. Since then it has much increased: in 1905 the emigrants numbered 106,000, and in 1906, 127,000 (3·5% of the population). Of these about three-fourths would be adults; but the population has in­creased so fast as more than to cover the deficiency—with the dis­advantage, however, that in three years 220,000 workers were replaced by 320,000 infants.

The moral and intellectual defects of Sicilian society are in part results of the economic difficulties, and in part the effect of bad customs introduced or maintained during the long period of Sicilian isolation from the rest of Europe. When, in 1860, Sicily was incorporated in the Italian kingdom, hardly a tenth of the population could read and write. Upon the completion of unity, elementary schools were founded everywhere; but, though education was free, the indigence of the peasants in some regions prevented them from taking full advantage of the opportunities offered. Thus, even now, 60% of the Sicilian conscripts come up for military service unable either to read or to write. Secondary and superior education is more diffused. The pupils of the secondary schools in Sicily number 3·94 per 1000, the maximum being 6∙60 in Liguria and the minimum 1∙65 in Basilicata.

Brigandage of the classical type has almost disappeared from Italy. The true brigands haunt only the most remote and most inaccessible mountains. Public security is better in the east than in the west portion of the island. Criminal statistics, though slowly diminishing, are still high—murders, which are the most frequent crimes, having been 27 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1897-1898 and 25∙23 per 100,000 in 1903, as against 2∙57 in Lombardy, 2∙00 in the district of Venetia, 4·50 in Tuscany and 5∙24 in Piedmont. Violent assaults with infliction of serious wounds are also frequent. This readiness to commit bloodshed is largely attributable to the senti­ment of the Mafia (*q.v.*). (G. G. C.; G. Mo.; T. As.)

History

The geographical position of Sicily led almost as a matter of necessity to its historical position, as the meeting-place of the nations, the battle-field of contending races and creeds. For this reason, too, Sicily was never in historic times (nor, it seems, in prehistoric times either) the land of a single nation: her history exists mainly in its relation to the history of other lands. Lying nearer to the mainland of Europe and nearer to Africa than any other of the great Mediterranean islands, Sicily is, next to Spain, the connecting-link between those two quarters of the world. It stands also as a breakwater between the eastern and western divisions of the Mediterranean Sea. In prehistoric times those two divisions were two vast lakes, and Sicily is a surviving fragment of the land which once united the two continents. That Sicily and Africa were once joined we know only from modem scientific research ; that Sicily and Italy were once joined is handed down in legend. Sicily then, compara­tively near to Africa, but much nearer to Europe, has been a European land, but one specially open to invasion and settlement from Africa. It has been a part of western Europe, but a part which has had specially close relations with eastern Europe. It has stood at various times in close connexion with Greece, Africa and Spain; but its closest connexion has been with Italy. Still the history of Sicily should never be looked on as simply part of the history of Italy. Lying thus between Europe

@@@1 The high proportion of shipping entering Messina is due to its position in the Straits.

@@@2 Steamships only.