

THE EFFECT OF FASCISM ON ITALIAN EDUCATION

THESIS

**Presented to the Graduate Council of the North
Texas State Teachers College in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements**

For the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

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Loving, Texas

August, 1938

69911

PREFACE

Perhaps no other movement in the history of Italy has caused greater social, political, economic, and educational reorganization than the rise of Fascism. It has been my ultimate aim in this thesis to show just how the education of Italy has been affected by this movement. For a more comprehensive understanding of this subject, I made a study of the early educational system from 1870 to 1918, showing what affect the early features had upon the lives of the Italian children. I have examined carefully the changes wrought by Professor Gentile, Mussolini's first Minister of Education. I have sought to explain the meaning of Fascism and to show the part, if possible, that it has played, and is playing, on modern education in Italy. Certainly Fascism must have its advantages as well as its disadvantages. I have attempted to give an unbiased summary of the benefits to be derived, or the losses Italy may suffer in forcing Fascist principles upon the young boys and girls who will be educated under the Fascist regime. Time, and time alone, will determine what the outcome will be.

I should like to express my appreciation of the many admirable works from which I have fully drawn facts, and my gratitude to my professors, especially to Dr. J. L. Kingsbury for his invaluable suggestions and criticisms.

J. T. O.

Denton, Texas
August 10, 1938

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CHAPTER I

SCHOOL SYSTEM OF ITALY BEFORE THE WORLD WAR AND THE FASCIST REGIME (1870-1918)

For many centuries the world has looked down on Italy as a backward nation. Her educational standards would have been considered up-to-date in the Middle Ages. It is true that a small part of the Italian people were well-educated in music, art, literature, and history, and it was this small group that kept the light of education burning through the past centuries. Most of the Italians have remained unlettered and untrained people, going about as their fathers and grandfathers did before them. In 1870, the first year of Italian unification, Italy roused herself from her slow, unprogressive stride and began to formulate the educational program that is presented in the following pages.

It is possible to trace the origin of Italian education back to Roman society in the Middle Ages and on up to the twentieth century. When anything is told of the Bishop's schools, or Abbey schools, Italy is almost always mentioned. The universities of today began in Italy. Even the cultural development of the Renaissance had its origin in that country. Should we study that period, it would form but one period in the evolution of Italian education. Of the orders issued

during that time, few if any were used. The first seminaries were set up in 1545 for the purpose of teaching the clergy. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Italy had academies, elementary, private, and secondary schools. Most of the early schools were established by private individuals such as teachers, princes, and well-to-do people. A number of endowments were made by clubs and societies for the establishment of special schools. Many parts of Italy were ordered to maintain their own public schools. When the government did not see to the welfare of the schools, they often fell to a very low plane, but the writer believes it can be truthfully said that the Italian people have always tried to have as their goal a better educational system. The state of Lombardy was the first to secure a substantial system.

The Casati Act (1859) regulated the Italian public schools. The national system has as its head the Minister of Instruction, who is a member of the cabinet. It was his business to settle all business and to adjust all questions that arose in any school. The under-Secretary of State and Public Instructions assisted the minister with his duties. The higher council, a group organized in 1909 corresponding to our school boards of the present-day independent school districts, was the highest body dealing with school affairs. It was composed of six senators, six deputies, twelve members nominated by the minister, and twelve professors from different universities, who served for four years. They had

to be absent from office at least two years before re-election. Only half of the council was elected every two years. For a time there seemed too much opposition from university professors, because they were afraid that politics would enter into these elections; but with this opposition, politics did not enter in any more than it had before. The council chairman was the minister. It was his duty to call sessions any time business came up. The king appointed the vice-president. The selection of teachers was made by the minister and his council. In 1906 a special act was passed to create a sub-council to take care of the business of secondary schools. This sub-council was similar to the chief council. It was made up of a committee, a chairman appointed by the minister, two teachers of government in secondary schools who had taught for a minimum of seven years, and at least one person from each of the schools in each district concerned. It was the act of June 4, 1911, that dealt with the primary schools. The minister appointed a director-general, a head-master and teacher who was selected by the members from his school, a director, and two teachers elected by all the directors from the primary schools. The minister appointed a man to represent him in all the meetings. The divisions of public instruction were: elementary and normal education, secondary education, higher education, and fine arts. All members of the educational system were subject to the general act of

June 25, 1908. To be appointed, all teachers were required to pass a competitive examination which was sent out by the Minister of Education. The provincial council, composed of fifteen people, included the Provveditor, who acted as chairman, the Consiglio supervisor of elementary schools, the administrators and directors of the schools in the respective communities. The Deputazione Scolastica, an educational committee composed of seven members and the Provveditor, made out the budgets of all the schools. A provincial council took care of all the secondary problems in each province. The schools of agriculture, ministry, industry and commerce took care of their own affairs.

Since 1870, Italy has devoted a great amount of time, money, and effort to improving her educational system. She has always tried to take care of the education of her people by dividing each province up into communities. In 1911 each community was given full charge of all its financial and administrative problems, provided the community had a population of 10,000 or more; otherwise, it was controlled by the Minister of Education if the census gave 25 per cent or more of the population to be illiterate.

The percentage of illiteracy in Italy has decreased from 69.8 in 1871, the year of the first census after the unification, to 46.7 in 1911, when, of a population of nearly 35,000,000, approximately 16,000,000 were illiterate. There were 8,323 communities in 1911, only 6 were without illiterates, and only 13 had less than 1 per cent. These were in northern Italy. Of the 456

situated in south central and southern Italy, 75 per cent and over were illiterate. Of 69 chief provincial cities and towns, 5 showed 10 per cent illiteracy and 10 more, 50 per cent. Turin had the lowest percentage, 5; Girgenti and Massini, in the extreme southern tip, had 57. The city of Rome showed 15 per cent. In 1916 night schools and in 1923 holiday schools for the illiterate adults were organized.¹

Most of the illiterate people were found in the low, warm parts of Italy. The Ministry of Education worked hard to decrease the number of illiterates. The schools showed within two years that 100,000 men and women had benefited by these improvements. Another reason for a decrease of illiteracy in northern Italy (Lombardy) was the rigid military service.

Religious subjects were not required, but were taught in at least 6,000 communities. In about 1900 the Minister of Education introduced the teaching of drawing, industrial work, needlework, and agriculture into the rural communities. In most schools a field was attached to the school so that pupils could learn something about farming. It is true that this was very crude training, but it was a beginning of the present-day agricultural system. Most of the buildings comprising school plants were unsanitary and overcrowded. There were few articles with which to work. Most of the things were taught from memory. One would find a few good elementary schools in communities where finances were available for their

¹Walter A. Montgomery, Education in Italy, p. 4.

upkeep. The early educational system of Italy reminds the writer of our own Texas schools, in that some children have good buildings and equipment with which to work, while other schools provide only the simplest of equipment, if any.

The first school the young Italian entered was an elementary, or private, school located in each of the 8,262 communes. Each school had to meet certain requirements set up by the Ministry of Education. All of the elementary schools were not alike. They were divided into five standards; of these, the first three were obligatory, unless the children had been taught privately by a person of standing in the community. By law the parents were fined if they did not comply with the requirements. In some communities the law was not well enforced; therefore, the number of illiterates remained rather large.

Federico Garlando, in his book The New Italy, gives the following as a picture of what the conditions were in some of the poor rural communities:

Thirty-two children were crowded into a small hut, without air, and almost without light. The school-master was a poor, tired-looking, used-up, almost broken old man, and very dirty, with his hair and beard long and unkempt, filthy fingernails, and coat covered with stains, shoes ripped and run down at the heels. How painful it was to me to see these children, with their sweet and intelligent eyes, sacrificed in such a way, placed in an unhealthy atmosphere, and under the guidance of a master who, whatever matters he might be able to teach them, could certainly never inspire them with any ideals of healthy virility.²

²Federico Garlando, The New Italy, p. 130.

For a time the Italian government left the schools under the control of the communities and authorized them to administer local education as they thought best, but this set-up proved to be a failure. In most places this is what happened:

On one side, the popular schools, consisting entirely of ignorant administrators, who were not even in a position to adequately appreciate the advantage of education for the simple reason that they themselves had not had them; hence, rickety schools, schools wanting in everything was the result. On the other side, there was an enormous accumulation of secondary institutions and universities; and this accumulation went on increasing each year, because the expenses of these institutions fell on the central government, and each city and each town drew to itself all the national resources possible.³

In some of the early schools a youth might have been very talented for mathematics, but he was not given a chance to study mathematics; instead, he must spend his time studying Greek or something else he did not remember. He was, as some say, "nipped in the bud," and his career was ended. A lot of the teaching was done by printed words. The memory of the students was over-exercised. Some youths would study Latin and Greek for as much as eight years, and when they left school they remembered very little of the subject matter that they had been taught. The schools wanted something practical; but instead, they forced the students to pore over Latin. Latin is a good language, but its interest can be destroyed very easily when it is forced upon any one, especially upon young students. A diploma was all the students were working for,

³Ibid., p. 134.

a career in Italy was a flight of stairs whose steps were diplomas. Another thing to remember about this system is that the students, even in most of their studies, never read any Latin except that prescribed to them to read and study in school. In this exclusive worship of language, the Italian school forgot that which should be the base of all education; viz., the formation of strong men. Physical education was taken so little into account that it could be put down as zero. Even those who spoke for the necessary inclusion of physical education in the curriculum from the point of view of hygiene and contentment, were silent upon that which should have been very important. In connection with public instruction, or education as we call it, there was still another thing I want to tell: in this country of music, music never entered into general instruction, either the classical or the technical. The Government had done nothing for the Italian stage, we knew only the actors, and these only because they themselves had come to us to give us proof of their valeur.⁴

It is easy to see that the passing of the Casati Act, November 13, 1859, which provided Italy with a full elementary system of education, did not come before it was needed. The elementary schools were divided into grades, each having a term of two years. A child of six could enter the first grade. During his first two years of school he was given instruction in reading, elements of arithmetic, Latin language, and writing. When a student passed to the upper grades, he was allowed to take courses in penmanship, elements of geography, composition, accounting, and history. In some courses the boys and girls were taught separately. The boys were given separate instruction in geometry and geometrical drawing. The girls were taught domestic science and needlework.

Italy saw at an early date the need for a compulsory edu-

⁴Garlando, op. cit., pp. 140-145.

ational system. With the passing of the Coppino Act on July 15, 1877, all children were required to attend school from ages six to ten. This law also stated that civics, reading, penmanship, Italian language, metric system, and arithmetic should be taught. The government left religious instruction to each community. A community had to have as many as 4,000 persons before it could have its own school. When the Orlando Act was passed in 1904, the community was obliged to establish the whole course of five classes whether it wished to or not.

The act of 1904 changed nothing, but it required those of the division to establish within three years a sixth class, reducing the teaching hours to three daily in the fifth and sixth classes, and assigning both of them to one teacher. In these communities the age limit was extended to the twelfth year unless the minister recognized that the expense involved was too great. The act forbade a community of dividing or closing any of the schools voluntarily opened. Here compulsory education has been extended to all existing school classes. As the child continued in school, new studies were given in the fifth and sixth classes, Italian language, Italian history of the nineteenth century, civics, arithmetic, accounting, domestic economy, natural science, and hygiene. The girls were taught needlework, singing, drawing, and penmanship. Other courses could be added if the community needed them, such as manual training, agriculture, etc. Pupils intending to enter secondary schools leave the elementary schools at the end of the fourth year, when they take a special examination, and a small fee of fifteen lire is charged for the examination.⁵

By the act of June 4, 1911, the conditions of the elementary schools were improved, because the state took on an additional part of the expense. A patriotic scolastic was established in each community to encourage attendance, efficiency, give free meals and clothes, and set up libraries.

⁵Paul Monroe, A Cyclopedia of Education, III, 501.

The Consiglio Provinciale scolastico and the council in some cases appointed teachers to retain the administration of the schools in some communities. The Minister of Education also had some voice as to who should take care of the business of the school. Direct attention of the Minister of Public Instruction was focused on the elementary schools. He tried to keep before the Italian people the importance of elementary schools. This and other things he accomplished, with the result that the number of children in school on January 1, 1916, exceeded that of the previous year by 500,000, while the increase in the Italian population had been only one million.

A royal decree of May, 1918, stated that there should be a library of at least fifty volumes in each elementary school. The books were to be purchased and maintained by the state and community equally. The purpose of this library act was for the education of older members of the community. By the adult citizens becoming interested in education it was believed that education in general would prosper. A great fear of dissatisfaction grew up in some rural communities, because the citizens thought that the subjects taught in the rural elementary schools did not co-ordinate with the environment of the children.

The expenses for elementary schools are borne by the community with contributions from the state. In 1899 the State paid nearly 4,000,000 lire, the provinces less than 400,000, and the comuni 64,000,000, making a total of 68,400,000 lire. This is less than three lire per capita while at the same time the expenses of Great Britain and the United States were

nearly twelve lire and those of Germany over nine per capita. Under the Education Acts of 1886 and 1900, and more especially those of 1904 and 1906, the state has increased its share of the expenditure. It amounted to nearly fourteen million lire for the fiscal year 1906-1907, to nearly eighteen from 1907-1908, to twenty in 1908-1909, and to nearly twenty-four million in 1909-1910. The act of 1906, applying to southern and United Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, provided for more than 18,000 lire, of which about 11,000,000 will be contributed by the state and 7,000,000 by the comuni. Five years were allowed for carrying out the provisions of the act. The act of June 4, 1911, has further provided that within three years all rural schools shall be reorganized. The higher expenses caused by the increase of salary of teachers, and the establishment of salary of teachers, and the establishment of new schools, will fall upon the state. The Bank of Deposit and Loans will lend to the comuni 20,000,000 lire a year for twelve years and the state will pay the interest on the sum; it is estimated that the total expense of the state will rise from nearly 34,000,000 lire for the fiscal year 1910-1911 to nearly 74,000,000 for the fiscal year 1920-1921. The share of the expenses of the comuni whose schools will be administered by the consiglie will be fixed at the highest figure of their expenses for schools for the years 1909-1910 and turned over to the Consiglie.⁶

The government schools issued a general report from their schools every five years. These reports were not always accurate, but they add something to the general picture of the progress of elementary schools. In 1907-1908 there were about 4,500,000 children from six to twelve years of age in Italy. Of this number, 3,002,168 children were enrolled in the public schools. This is proof enough to show what the state thought about education. Table I shows the distribution of children through the first six grades of the public schools for the school year 1907-1908.

⁶ Ibid., III, 503.

TABLE 1
ATTENDANCE FOR SCHOOL YEAR 1907-1908⁷

Grades	Pupils Enrolled	Pupils Who Passed the Final Examination
First.....	1,260,317	633,378
Second.....	856,587	479,792
Third.....	607,317	310,846
Fourth.....	181,323	106,656
Fifth.....	77,875	52,751
Sixth.....	18,749	13,052
Totals....	3,002,168	1,596,475, or 53.7 per cent of pupils enrolled.

The following table gives the figures on the increase of teachers, schools, and pupils in Italy for each five-year period from 1871-1908. A decided increase is perceptible during each period, especially during the last five years, 1902-1907.

TABLE 2
STATISTICS OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (1871-1908)⁸

School Year	Schools	Teachers	Pupils
1871-1872.....	33,556	34,309	1,545,790
1877-1878.....	39,702	39,702	1,830,794
1882-1883.....	42,390	43,659	1,823,723
1887-1888.....	42,247	47,998	2,125,207

⁷Monree, op. cit., III, 503.

⁸Ibid., III, 503.

TABLE 2 --CONTINUED

School Year	Schools	Teachers	Pupils
1892-1893.....	49,722	51,385	2,292,966
1901-1902.....	53,259	56,433	2,548,583
1907-1908.....	63,618	60,323	2,002,168

There was also an increase in evening schools and Sunday schools for adults. The Minister of Education was doing all he could, with the aid of the council, to help adult education. The following figures were largely due to the passing of acts in favor of adult education in 1904, 1906, 1907, and 1908. The results are as follows:

TABLE 3

EVENING AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS FOR ADULTS, 1908⁹

Enrolled	Who took the Examination	Who Passed It
Men, 148,233	78,314	61,543
Women, 34,140	19,689	16,174
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total 182,373	98,003	77,717

The above figures show great improvements in Italian schools, but other improvements were needed. In 1907-1908, there were 21,028 classrooms in good condition, while 39,239 were poor or unsatisfactory for use. This shows a total of 60,267 classrooms. With this number, 27,000 more classrooms

⁹Ibid., III, 503.

were needed. The private schools in 1907-1908 were steadily increasing: grades, 11,904; schoolrooms, 6,534; pupils, 148,081; principals, 2,063; teachers -- men, 1,318; women, 4,749; total, 6,067. By 1915 the number enrolled in the elementary schools had increased to 3,692,024 children six to eleven years of age. There were 17,243 men and 58,750 women teaching in these schools. This part of the educational system cost the nation about \$18,000,000 each year.

The writer believes that the Scuole Popalere played as important a part in the education of the Italian children as any other one school unit in all Italy. These schools were organized to bridge the gap between the elementary school and higher education. All the communities did not have a Scuole Popalere, but in the communities where these were located the children made much better progress. From the following one may derive an idea of just what these schools were intended to do:

The Scuole Popalere are essentially rural and scientific, of considerable freedom in courses and schedules, supported by the commune and state jointly, largely autonomous, and in the nature of continuation schools, being, in the words of Minister Berenini, "a bridge between the elementary and the vocational and technical schools." They are designed primarily for children hitherto unable through economic stress to continue in school. Scientific and vocational advantages, hitherto afforded only in schools of higher grade and at a distance, are now brought within local reach.

An interesting phase of the Scuole Popalere is offered in the tentative plans for the establishment of a marine popular school at Venice. As outlined, this school is designed to impart instruction in elementary navigation, making and managing boats, pisciculture

in various phases known in particular localities, and devices for catching, conserving, and transporting of fish. Promising pupils will be offered aid in proceeding to higher technical marine schools already established.¹⁰

TABLE 4

OUTLINE OF THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE ITALIAN STATE SCHOOL SYSTEM¹¹

		Vocational schools		Vocational classes			
		Popular constitution					
Lower primary	Higher primary	Superior primary	Normal school				
			Elementary Agricultural		Agricult'1. schools		
Elementary school 6 7 8 9		Commercial					
		Industrial					
		10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22					
		Approximate ages					
Secondary school		Ginasie		Licee		University	
		Technical schools		Technical institute			
		Complementary course					

¹⁰Montgomery, op. cit., p. 9.

¹¹Ellwood P. Cubberley, History of Education, p. 610.

Most of the secondary schools were either classical or technical. The classical schools were divided into ginasio and liceo divisions. Students attended the ginasio for five years, usually from ages ten to fifteen, and the liceo for three additional years. The most important subjects taught were Italian literature, Latin, geography, mathematics, and the elements of natural science. Modern languages were almost wholly neglected; in some cases a little French and German were substituted for Greek. An examination had to be taken and passed in all subjects before credit was given. Oral and written examinations were given in Italian, Latin, and sometimes Greek; only oral examinations were given for the other subjects. In most cases these examinations were not very difficult. Dictionaries could be consulted when necessary. The Italian essay was the hardest of all the subjects; while in school, each student had to write a certain number of essays, usually about two each week, on moral, historical, literary, or patriotic subjects. Most of these topics were somewhat above the intelligence of the average school boy. The program of Italian education was rather varied. The final examination was called the *licenza liceale*, which is practically the same as an entrance examination for the university. These papers were uniform and prepared for the whole of Italy by the Minister of Education.

There are certain set ideas on every subject, from which it is heresy to dissent. Thus a boy is not taught

to use his own judgment with regard to the authors studied, but is told he must admire a certain one more than another. Latin is more thoroughly taught than other subjects, and the majority of educated Italians conserve a smattering of it in after life.¹²

There were also numerous special schools for girls. They were most commonly called boarding schools, with plans of study to suit the girls. In these schools the girls were taught drawing, needlework, and gymnastics.

Ranking immediately above the industrial and commercial schools of the second grade were the technical schools, intermediates between the higher elementary and the highest division of secondary education.

The technical schools were established to enlarge and vary the curriculum between the elementary and normal or college training. More time was given to different subjects. Italian literature was co-ordinated with history or with the other subjects taught. The technical schools differed from the elementary schools in that they provided the individual with a modern education in the following: languages, arithmetic, book-keeping, algebra, and geometry, drawing, history, and geography. All the courses of the last seven years were completed with annual examinations, similar to those given in the classical schools.

The number of students in these schools was small due to the fact that they did not constitute a regular system. A number of the subjects failed entirely, as, for example, the

¹²Inigi Villari, Italian Life in Town and Country, p. 241.

school of sulphur mining in Palermo, which never had more than six pupils; this number declined to two in 1884 and to one in 1886 when the establishment was naturally closed.

Examinations were usually given in June. It was nothing uncommon to see mothers waiting to see the professors, or even visiting the government school inspector, and asking him to use his influence with the stony-hearted examiner, in favor of their boys. The mothers told the inspector that their boys were timid and became frightened on examination, and really, they knew a great deal more than they could write. In some cases they were given a second chance on their examinations. If they failed to pass this time, they were set back for another year. This retardation caused much disturbance at home. The boy was tormented for his laziness, or treated as a martyr to the unfairness and partiality of the examiners. In some cases due to outside influence the examinations were made easier. Physical punishment was abolished. The very idea of it was regarded as barbarous. The Italian physical education schools were very poor. Gymnastics classes were taught but twice a week. Occasionally a country walk was taken. The Italians did not connect outside sports with school activities.

These secondary schools were both classical and technical, with a few exceptions. In most of these schools the pupils attended classes every day, listening to lectures and showing their written exercises. The school day usually ran from 8 or 9 a. m. to 3 or 4 p. m. with one hour off for lunch. Some-

time during the week the students were given a half holiday. The school term, in most cases, ran from October fifteenth to June fifteenth. During this time the students were given the following holidays: a week at Christmas, a week at Easter, and four days for a carnival. Attendance was vigorously insisted upon. Should a boy fail to report at the beginning of a lesson, he had to bring a letter from his parents explaining why he was absent before he could be re-admitted. In some instances parents allowed their boys to be absent. Should a boy miss school too much, he was disqualified for his examination. A number of boys between nine and eighteen years of age could be seen studying in Italian libraries. Cribs were used by some students, but a diligent scholar would not use them because he thought he learned more without them. The schoolmasters did not absolutely forbid the use of them, because they knew they could not help it. Most of the work was done outside of school. The libraries were very popular places to find the students at work on uninteresting problems. Adults as well as the students used the libraries. The fees for secondary education were very low, ranging from four to five lire annually. In some cases no fees were paid at all provided the students could prove that they did not have any money, or could not get any from their parents. The result was that the schools, especially the classical ones, were filled with boys whose home training was not what it should have been.

Some boys never heard any talk about anything in their homes but the trivial details of daily life. The student who had never seen a book in his home could hardly be expected to acquire a love for study unless he was of exceptional ability. He had nothing upon which to base his education.

As has been previously indicated, the secondary schools were for all children of school age. The objective was to try and fuse the different classes, but in many cases this aim fell short of attainment. For this reason, only a small number of families sent their children to public schools; most of the parents preferred home education, which was very poor. They did this to prevent their children from mingling with those of lower social status in the community. In all public schools the students grouped themselves in accordance with the social standing of their parents. In private secondary schools fees had to be paid, but the instruction was usually inferior. This caused a hardship on the students when they went to take the state examinations, because all tests were prepared by the state. There were some boarding schools, but they were very unpopular because of their management. These schools were very closely supervised. All of the government's naval and military schools were run on this level.

A number of agricultural schools were established under the Casati Act. These schools were very practical. They were regulated under the act of June 6, 1885. With suggestions from the local authorities, the state established these schools

and paid three-fifths of their expenses. A committee appointed by the government under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture managed these schools. Students between the ages of fourteen and seventeen years were admitted to these schools after having passed an examination issued by the Minister of Education. The most important studies were in drawing, horticulture, vine raising, and wine making. These schools offered elementary and advanced training. Only the students showing high possibilities were enrolled in the advanced schools. There were more than 47,000 pupils in the agricultural schools in 1903-1904. The total expense of these schools was about 2,000,000 lire annually. At the same time there were over 2,000 teachers. Three hundred fourteen schools received aid from the state and 427 schools received no aid at all from the state government. In June, 1908, the agricultural schools were divided into industrial, manual training, artistic industrial, commercial, and schools for girls. It was the duty of the state and local communities to share the expenses of the new schools. Instruction for adults was given in the evenings and on Sundays. The law of 1912 stated that one vocational school should be established in each community of 10,000 people or more. There were 800 such communities in Italy. The expense of this experiment was 13,000,000 lire (\$26,000.00) a year. It was believed that only the young workmen between the ages of thirteen and eighteen would benefit by this act, but as a result many of the adult Italians re-

ceived valuable training from these schools. In 1917 there were 29 agricultural schools, and of these only one was for women. At this time there were a number of mining schools of secondary rank.

No one could teach in any type of a school unless he had a degree granted from a university or school of the same standing, or a special diploma, which could be granted only after examination and for such subjects as were taught in universities.

The status and compensation of teachers in government and equivalent schools were regulated by acts of April 8, 1906, which fixed the rules to be followed in appointing, dismissing, transferring from one place to another, censuring, etc., of any teacher. The first appointment was for three years, after which it was made permanent if the inspection officials reported favorably; if not, the appointment was extended for another year, when the teacher was definitely appointed or dismissed. Not all places were filled with teachers by appointment. In certain cases where a teacher would teach only a few hours a week, a temporary appointment was made. As a rule, the teacher was appointed for a single study or for two related subjects.¹³

A great deal was said about the training of elementary teachers before the World War, but little was done about it. After the war, teachers were trained in normal schools, separate for men and women. Special courses in pedagogy, lectures and theory, Italian language, literature, and history were given.

A young man had to spend usually from two to seven years of his time in the army. This might break into his present

¹³Monroe, op. cit., III, 505.

social and financial life, but in the end he gained what, at first, seemed to have been lost. When most of the young men entered the army, they cared very little how they looked, or dressed, or talked. From military training camps, which were very rigid, they returned stronger both physically and morally than when they entered. In military schools they were taught how they could discipline themselves as well as others. In the rural communities very little was done to educate the growing youths. In the military barracks the men were taught some kind of a trade. The life of Italian soldiers began early and ended late each day. They were given hard duties to perform. The food they ate was not fancy, but very substantial. When a strike occurred, or some law was broken, the soldiers in service were called upon to halt the disturbance. It was only in such cases as this that the soldiers were asked to display their disciplinary ability. There were many phases of army life. The most outstanding was the Italian cavalry, which was known all over Europe. Class distinction existed in all the camps, and this, of course, was a hard thing to fight against. So many of the officers felt that they were inferior to some other officer, or possibly to the men in their company. An officer's education, before he entered the army, depended upon the size of his purse.

It seems that only a very small percentage of the men remained in the army after they had served their allotted time for the government. Any time after they had served their time,

if the government needed some extra men, these men could be called back into service. The number of years a man was required to serve depended upon his occupation, social or political position. The government could not call a man to service before he was twenty-one or after he was forty years old. After he was forty, an Italian could call his life his own. But before that time he lived more for his country that required his service than for himself. "I venture to doubt whether there be any nation that could show so universal a spirit of determination and self-sacrifice as that shown by the Italian."¹⁴

Many of the wounded Italian soldiers were given instruction of an elementary nature while they were in hospitals. Teachers were assigned to them from various public schools, the most important ones being located at Milan and Naples. Some came as volunteers. These men were given examinations when the courses were completed. The organization of the work was along two lines: first, for illiterates; and second, for backward soldiers. Much interest was created by the teaching of choral singing.

These schools were not for the physical rehabilitation of the wounded men, but to teach such subjects as an average child of the elementary grades should have known. It seems that there should have been some trouble in teaching these men, but in most cases their minds had not passed the plastic

¹⁴Richard Bagot, My Italian Year, p. 165.

age. Most of the men were peasants, or from the lowest urban classes, socially. Very few men could read or write when they were admitted to the hospital schools. In most cases all had had some chance to attend an elementary school, but had dropped out because of poor clothes, the distance of their homes from the school, the family needed them at home, or just plain laziness. Most of the men, speaking different dialects, wished many times that their parents had forced them to attend school.

A child's mind, thoughts, and ideas can be molded and changed as desired, but men often revert back to former ideas despite efforts to teach them new conceptions after they have attained to adulthood. However, the men in the Italian schools did gain some of the knowledge they should have acquired in their youth. All were eager to learn. They always had their books and materials ready when classes were resumed. There were no disciplinary problems. They knew that the time for study was limited, therefore all tried to get as much as possible out of their lessons. Their attention was seldom distracted.

Even distinguished visitors so eagerly welcomed by children can not break the severe and imperturbable calm of these soldier pupils. Visitors pass from bench to bench, smiling, enthusiastic, patronizing. These model pupils look up, answer respectfully, smile from the depths of those inscrutable eyes -- and even, before the disturbing element is well out of the room, they have plunged again into their tasks.¹⁵

¹⁵Montgomery, op. cit., p. 19.

By the patience of study and determination to learn, they did the impossible under their physical conditions. Men whose hands were wounded grasped their pens and continued their work even though the pain might be ever so great. Men with wounded heads never missed a class, even though their suffering was almost unendurable. The writer believes that he can truthfully assert that nowhere else in the world has there ever been such a school for the unfortunate.

In 1900 there were about 52,000 elementary school teachers in Italy. The life of a teacher was hard. Their salaries were miserably inadequate, usually ranging from 40 to 150 lire a year, which is about as much as a skilled mason in this country makes in one month. A teacher's salary varied according to the size of the community and according to the subjects taught. All of these had to be of secondary level before the salaries were increased. Most of the teachers belonged to the lower middle class. Some were the children of domestic servants, peasants, and artisans. As a whole, they were honest and high-principled people working with all their abilities, though without sufficient means, to do their duty as teachers. Some of the social workers in Italy believed that an increase in the salaries would help to solve the problem of ignorant teachers. They based their beliefs on the facts obtained from the military camps where men were taught how to read and write if they were illiterate when they arrived in camp.

By 1912 the state had increased the elementary teachers'

salaries in large schools from 1,200 to 1,700 lire a year. In village schools the teachers were paid from 500 to 800 lire annually. "Some of the communities paid salaries as high as 3,000 lire; Milan from 1,850 to 2,900 for men and 1,850-2,600 for women; Venice from 1,700 to 2,200 for men and 1,400 to 1,800 for women."¹⁶

All teachers were pensioned upon retirement either from a special pension fund established for that purpose, or from the community, if the community had provided a system of pensions before the pension fund was created. Comuni contributed to this fund five per cent of the salaries paid to their teachers. The teachers paid four per cent. The state also contributed. There were about 1,000 supervisors in the country in 1911 who were paid salaries from 2,000 to 2,400 lire. Some with special duties were paid as much as 2,500 to 4,500 lire.¹⁷

Each teacher's salary, if a satisfactory one, was increased 500 lire each year for the first five years, or until it reached the maximum. The headmasters, who were appointed from among the highest ranking teachers, received, after their probation of five years, from 5,750 lire to 6,500 lire per year in the secondary schools. These headmasters worked somewhat as our county supervisors do today. They also collected data on any progress made during the last five-year period.

By a special act of 1909 the salaries of the university professors were raised from 5,000 to 7,000 lire minimum yearly. They were given an increase of 750 lire each year for the first five years, up to 10,000 lire, which was a maximum. Each instructor received an increase of 30 lire for each additional lesson taught. The same act fixed the salaries of women professors at 5,000 lire, if ordinary, with increases of 500 lire every five years up to 7,000 lire; and at 3,500, if extraordinary, with increases of 350 every five years up to 5,000 lire. Salaries

¹⁶Monroe, op. cit., III, 502.

¹⁷Ibid., III, 502.

of professors at the university schools were lower. The salaries of professors were regulated according to the difficulty of the subject taught. The state reserved the right to increase or decrease the number of professors. Each professor had at his command an assistant; a number of these assistants served only in the absence of the extraordinary professor. The salaries of the assistants varied from 2,000 to 5,700 lire.¹⁸

There were twenty-one universities in Italy. Of this number, seventeen were under the control of the state government, while four were free universities; the rest were colleges offering superior studies, such as the schools at Florence and Milan. The rise of universities came when Italy was divided into different states. The result was that each capital wanted to become a center of learning. At that time the number of universities was far more than needed; therefore, they were just an additional expense. But the government did not have the courage to close any of them. In 1895-1896 the total number of students was about 23,000, or 74 per 100,000 inhabitants.

Higher education was supported by the state and local bodies contributing in different ways. In many places, such as Genoa, Parma, Modena, Siena, Cagliari, Sussari, Messina, and Catania, these universities were founded as universities of second rank. In order to have these, as well as other universities, raised to the first rank, the citizens of the town had to pay to the state the difference in the funds required for this standing. Many towns contributed funds to establish a local university. Few of these existed for any length of time without the help of other individuals, or of the state. All

¹⁸Ibid., III, 502.

of the free universities were supported by local bodies, except the university of Urbino, which received a small allotment from the state. The universities of Florence and Milan were supported by private bodies.

To a number of schools in such places as Turin, Genoa, and Florence, the state contributes a fixed sum. All the institutions of higher learning are administered by special boards in which local bodies are represented. The professors are appointed by royal decree or ministerial selection. The laws regulating the universities were passed by the state on August 21, 1905.¹⁹

For each university there are the following: (a) a principal (Rettore); (b) an academic council (consiglio accademico); (c) a general assembly of professors (assemblea generale dei professori). For each faculty: (a) a dean (Preside); (b) a council of professors (consiglio di facoltà);.... Special schools have, as a rule, an organization like the faculties; the head, however, is usually called director (Direttore).²⁰

Government fine arts and music schools are under the direction of the Minister of Public Instruction. They have no uniform organization and vary in importance in every respect. The number of fine arts government schools was thirteen in 1901-1902, with 2,433 pupils (2,137 boys and 1,625 girls). There were thirteen non-government schools with 1,625 pupils (1,363 boys and 262 girls). The former had 167 teachers and the latter 65.

The government music schools were five in number with 952 pupils (353 boys and 419 girls); the non-government 51, with 4,431 pupils (3,408 boys and 1,023 girls). The number of teachers in the former was 146, in the latter, 395.²¹

Council: The academic council was composed of the following: (a) the Rettore in office; (b) the retiring

¹⁹Monroe, op. cit., III, 506. ²⁰Ibid., 508. ²¹Ibid., 508.

Rettore; (c) the dean of the faculties; (d) the relieving dean; (e) the director of the schools connected with the university. Among other functions the council (a) grants scholarships; (b) gives its advice on changes relating to the university regulations on any subjects submitted by the Rettore or the minister; (c) fixes the time schedule for classes; (d) decides upon the disposal of funds.²²

As a general rule the professors were men of great ability. It is true that some were only high-pressure politicians, but many others proved themselves useful to society. The main reason the professors could do no better work in some ways was due to the poorly constructed curriculum. The Italian government thought that its professors were paid a high salary, but in most cases they were not paid what they were worth.

The professors were listed as ordinary, extraordinary with a permanent appointment, and private and extraordinary professors were regulated by the acts of 1904 and 1907. Ordinary professors were appointed by a royal decree. An extraordinary professor was appointed for the first time by the minister for one year. After that he was appointed by a consultation with the faculty. In engineering schools, extraordinary professors are appointed by the minister.

In caricati are appointed by the minister on the suggestion of the faculty in the case of obligation courses. Besides official professors there were private teachers who were also appointed by the minister. All teachers and professors had to pass a special examination before they were allowed to teach.²³

Higher education is given at the universities (universita) and at other institutions the majority of which are designated as schools (scuole) or institutions (istituti). Some of these institutions are connected with universities, others are entirely independent. If under the control of the government, the universities are called regie; if under local bodies, libere. All universities are governed by the same laws and by-laws, the other institutions by special laws and by-laws.

The faculties, all of which are found in the largest universities, are: (1) law, (2) medicine and surgery,

²²Ibid., III, 508.

²³Ibid., III, 510.

(3) mathematical, musical, and natural sciences, (4) belles letters and philosophy. In addition, there are schools in the following subjects: pharmacy, engineering, veterinary, science, agriculture, commerce and social sciences, oriental languages, midwifery; and courses of notaries and attorneys, for secondary and elementary teachers and schools, the agricultural schools at Milan, Portici, and Perugia, and the forestry school at Vallem-brosa are under the Ministry of Agriculture, industry, and commerce; all other institutions are under the Ministry of Public Instruction.²⁴

Teaching in the universities was uniform regardless of the number of schools or how small the number of students might be. The value of a degree conferred by each institution was absolutely the same. The fees ranged from 18 to 34 lire for the entire university career. When a student wrote his name down for a course, he was to begin meeting lectures in November of the following year and continue until the course was completed. At the end of each year he was given an examination which permitted him, if he passed, to continue on to the next year's work. In order that a student be admitted to the faculty, he had to take up at least eighteen subjects. Most of these subjects were of theoretical nature; some were studied two years, others only one; very seldom was a student "ploughed" at a university examination because he failed one of the above courses. In the engineering and mathematical courses the examiners were more severe than in any of the other examinations given. A few weeks' cramming at the end of the term was sufficient to satisfy even the most exacting professors.

When a student had completed his course of study, he had

²⁴Monroe, op.cit., III, 510.

to write a thesis on some question dealing with his course of study. This work was read and passed on by at least two professors. Then a day was appointed when the student and his professors would meet and discuss the possibilities of his paper. In addition, eleven examiners were called in to help investigate the thesis. When the paper had been weighed and carefully checked, the examiners placed a grade on it. Then the candidate was given his doctorate degree. Should a professor give too severe an examination, or be too strict in checking the classrooms, or many other minor things, riots were apt to start in almost any of the universities. It is believed that most of these evils lay in the type of examinations and in the methods by which they were given. Classes were sometimes broken up on account of a dislike of the lectures on the part of some of the students; the dissatisfied ones often persuaded other students to stop meeting the classes. The professor in such an event was helpless, because if he should call the police, "there was at once an outcry that the freedom of study was violated, the minister of education was attacked in the chamber, and socialist deputies held up their hands in horror at the reactionary methods of the authorities."²⁵ The result of such a riot was that the universities were closed and the students were given a holiday. The only punishment given was administered to the leader of the riot, who was suspended for one year.

²⁵Villari, op. cit., p. 252.

As for university life, there was practically none. All the students had separate living quarters. The larger percentage lived with their parents in the city. The schools had very little, if any, entertainment. Most of the entertaining and possible speech-making was where the students gathered in large bodies. It seems that the chief form of entertainment was wandering about on the streets and rioting in cafes.

The public schools in general took very little interest in school sports; therefore, school spirit was very low. The schools were looked upon as places for unpleasant work. Students had little affection for the schools. Due to that fact students seldom came in contact with each other except in class; few friendships were formed. Idling about on the streets was almost the only amusement afforded the students. This disturbed traffic, as the schools were often situated in the heart of the towns. In many cases students cared very little for their teachers, either in or out of school. It was very uncommon for a teacher and his former pupil to be close friends. The private life of each student, as well as that of each professor, was unknown to his colleagues. In exceptional cases there were a few schools where the teachers influenced their pupils. Some teachers really tried to interest their classes in the subject they were teaching, but their task was always a hard one, because of the lack of proper relationships between the teachers, the pupils, and the personnel of the school. This

was not true in all schools, because in some few universities the relation between student and professor was more intimate than in the elementary and secondary schools. In some of the universities the professors had a great deal of influence on the student body as a whole.

The entire school system, from the time a child started into kindergarten until he received his degree, was regulated by the Minister of Education who, with his council, regulated the studies offered, made out programs, cared for disciplinary problems, filled vacancies, gave out examination apparatus and papers, and took care of any other business connected with any of the schools.

The instructor in the schools was authentic, therefore all the students on their examinations had to repeat what the professor had taught them. If a student said anything on examination that he had not been taught, his career was ruined. The Italians had no practical sense of what liberty is. The following statement by Federico Garlande in his book, The New Italy, gives a picture of the true Italian:

They fly into a passion, they riot, they cause tempests to break out in parliament, if it be prohibited to raise a flag which has not the orthodox colors, or if an officer of the police has interrupted the speech of a too-heated orator. But no one is occupied with, or grieves over, these administrative dispositions, which not only hinder the progress, but strangle the activity, and even suffocate the breath of all these citizens who have not had the leisure to complete the course of official study; and the circle grows even smaller, so that in a few years I can imagine that, when you will want to take

a wife, or to become a town-council man, you will have to go before the authorities with a well-certified diploma.²⁶

The Italian people held Lincoln and Garfield as their ideal Americans because one rose from a simple carpenter and the other from a boatman to become popular presidents of the United States. The Italians marvel at their ability and energy. If these two men had been born in Italy under the same conditions as they were in America, do you suppose they would ever have held such an important place in Italian affairs? "NO!" would undoubtedly have been the answer. They never could have elevated themselves above their social condition at birth. It would have been impossible for them to acquire the diplomas that would have opened their way to success.

For the above reason the Italian government finally, in 1918, formulated the following educational objectives:

(1) A thorough execution of all school laws and the overhauling of the national financial system to this end. (2) An organic inclusion, within the national system of education, of kindergartens and nursing schools by means of the subsidizing or nationalizing of existing means and the establishment of many others. (3) A continuous construction, within the period of five years, of all school buildings looking to population and the legal announcement of compulsory attendance upon them. (4) The establishment of at least one compulsory school of four grades in each commune. (5) The establishment of specially adapted secondary schools for the preliminary professional training of teachers. (6) The raising of the minimum salary of teachers to 3,000 lire (\$600) and the investing of the teaching profession with enhanced moral and social prestige. (7) The lengthening of the school year and the requirements of the teacher to take part in civic and communal tasks. (8) The fixing of the

²⁶Garlando, op. cit., p. 165.

final leaving age of pupils at 18 years. (9) The establishment of compulsory schools for illiterate adults up to 45 years. (10) The establishment, in case of application of communal authorities, of popular courses, schools of hygiene and sanitation, language, etc. (11) The subordination of national budget to the needs of greater attention to woman's place in the national life, with especial regard to the needs of peasant and laboring women.²⁷

Whether the above objectives were ever put into force by the government is doubtful; however, these objectives do show that the Italian government had realized that, if it were to succeed, all the people must be educated.

The following tables show the increase in the educational system in Italy before the World War.

TABLE 5
ITALIAN ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTION, 1912-1913²⁸

Type of Schools	Number of Schools	Pupils	Mean per 1000 Inhab.	Teachers
Public				
Infant asylums.....	2,112	271,500	8.3	5,587
Elementary, various.	53,259	2,548,583	77.9	57,331
Night.....	4,159	105,598	3.9	3,166
Festival and autumnal.....	2,394	72,713	2.01	2,517
Complimentary for girls.....	78	4,701	0.12	827
Normal for boys.....	32	1,921	0.05	264
Normal for girls....	105	19,818	0.5	1,556
Private				
Infant asylums.....	1,202	84,094	2.6	2,112
Elementary, various.	8,518	184,766	5.7	9,306

²⁷Montgomery, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

²⁸The Catholic Encyclopedia, p. 242.

TABLE 5--CONTINUED

Type of Schools	Number of Schools	Pupils	Mean per 1000 inhab.	Teachers
Night.....	?	?	?	?
Festival and autumnal.....	?	?	?	?
Complimentary for girls.....	155	4,646	?	1,077
Normal for boys.....	?	?	?	?
Normal for girls.....	?	?	?	?

TABLE 6

SPECIAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS, 1912-1913²⁹

Type of School	Number of Establishments	Students	Mean per 100,000 Inhab.	Teachers
Public				
School of Practical Agriculture..	27	1,251	3.6	124
Special school of agriculture.....	7	639	1.8	73
Schools of mines (Agordo, Iglesias, Caltanissetta).....	3	75	0.2	20
Industrial schools.	72	16,913	49.8	726
Schools of industrial arts.....	185	20,442	62.2	679
Commercial schools.	27	3,415	10	288
Professional schools for women	26	7,133	21	486
Oriental Institute (Naples).....	1	241	0.7	14

²⁹ Ibid., p. 242.

TABLE 6--CONTINUED

Type of School	Number of Estab- lishments	Students	Mean per 100,000 Inhab.	Teachers
Private				
School of practical agriculture..	...	...	...	...
Special school of agriculture.....	...	...	...	...
Schools of mines (Agordo, Iglesias, Caltanissetta).....	...	...	...	...
Industrial schools.	82	?	?	?
Schools of industrial arts.....	201	?	?	?
Commercial schools.	37	?	?	?
Professional school for women.....	107	?	?	?
Oriental Institute (Naples).....	14	...	...	...

TABLE 7

ITALIAN SECONDARY INSTRUCTION, 1912-1913³⁰

Type of School	Number of Schools	Pupils	Mean per 1000 Inhab.	Teachers
Public				
Gymnasias.....	284	34,219	102	5,400
Lyceums.....	159	13,812	41	2,175
Technical schools.....	298	55,597	166	3,202
Technical institutes..	73	13,830	41	1,388
Nautical institutes...	19	2,291	67	208

³⁰ The Catholic Encyclopedia, p. 242.

TABLE 7--CONTINUED

Type of School	Number of Schools	Pupils	Mean per 1000 Inhab.	Teachers
Private				
Gymnasias.....	442	24,850	79	?
Lyceums.....	187	4,962	16	?
Technical schools...	106	3,623	12	?
Technical institutes	7	378	19	?
Nautical institutes.	1	29	0.08	?

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION UNDER THE FASCIST REGIME

Under the Casati Law of November 13, 1859, compulsory attendance for all children of elementary school age was required. This law also recognized two divisions of secondary schools: the ginsasio, to be supported by the local communities, had a five-year classical course which the state-supported lecio completed in three additional years and which prepared the student for admission to the university. The word ginsasio is the Italian form for the German gymnasium; and lecio for the French lycee.

When Mussolini took over the Italian government in 1922, he called on the most able man in Italy to reform the entire educational system: Giovanni Gentile, a man of great knowledge and ability, who by a series of decrees, during his twenty months in the ministry, changed the whole traditional aim and content of instruction. The educational system had to be so reconstructed that it paid its respects to the Fascist party and to Il Duce. If a school were given free speech, many of the sayings were restrained indoors. Since taking over the system, the fascists control all forms of Italian education. The most important divisions of instruction are: "Party discipline, party membership, social pres-

sure, universal employment and activity, education of youths paralleling that of the schools, leisure time directions, and demographic controls."¹

At the beginning of the Fascist regime about 500 of a total of 10,000 teachers were dismissed. Most of these teachers were charged with incompetence, or were not desired for political reasons. All teachers in the elementary and secondary schools, as well as the university professors, were subject to the purification law of December, 1925. In most schools of any size, National Fascist school societies were organized for teachers and professors. The membership of these Fascist societies is over 10,000.

Most of the present-day Italian teachers are in favor of the Gentile program, but many are handicapped because of lack of physical equipment. For it must be remembered that the Italian government is still not in a position to finance its schools properly; each year, however, it is becoming more able. In some places there is a lack of the proper kind of didactic material, such as pictures, maps, and libraries. It is the hope of all under the new set-up to have, some day, all of the things they are so in need of now. The business men in each town are asked to contribute all they can to help improve the local school. It is the aspiration of the citizens to improve their schools as rapidly as possible. Italy is doing her best to keep in the front ranks of the civilized

¹Philip W. L. Cox, "Aspects of Italian Education," Ka-
delpian Review, XIV, 130.

world in school reforms. After having made Italy, the task will be to make Italians worthy of praise.

In 1927, the professional men in Alexandria had to sign the following document before they could practice their profession:

Although until now I have remained aloof from the Fascist party and Fascist regime, owing to my sectarianism and my prejudice, I consider it my duty to declare:

1. I denounce my part in everything concerning my open or secret disagreement with the activity of the Fascist party and Fascist system.

2. I have judged it necessary to make the apostasy myself in order to repair the consequences of my politically reprehensible conduct.

3. With sincerity and conviction I will, from today, give my adhesion to everything that party and system may do in the exercise of their duties.

4. I acknowledge that Fascism saved the country and that it has the right to the gratitude of all Italians.

5. From today I shall make use of my profession and develop all activities, not only without any factional opposition but with the aim of helping to strengthen Fascism as the saving religion of every Italian.

To certify the genuineness of this declaration, I sign it and authorize the Fascist party to use it in any way they may think fit.²

The professional men of Alexandria were not the only men who had to sign such a Fascist document. All of Italy had to comply with such regulations as mentioned or their practice was to be discontinued.

These disciplinary decrees not only affected professional men but also all institutions of learning. No one could work even at the humblest job until he had complied with the Fascist requirements by joining a corporation designed for the

²H. Hessell Tiltman, The Terror in Europe, p. 210.

type of work he was doing. The state press, as well as any other publication, is controlled by Mussolini. A nationwide bann is placed upon free speech. No outsider can come in and talk to a group of Italians in a club or any other place of amusement without the approval of Mussolini and the Fascist party.

"We are bound by the worst censorship ever imposed," wrote an American correspondent in Rome. "We must not write anything that might reflect on the Fascists. We are confined to an apology for political assassination. It broke my heart not to be able to report the Matteotti case as it should have been done, but it would have meant arrest and expulsion from Italy."³

By 1926 it was a crime to print or circulate any newspapers or periodicals unless they met the approval of the Fascist regime. Nothing is printed now but propaganda sheets. None of the evils of Fascism may be published, either about the ministry, Mussolini, or any of his close friends. "No correspondent who sends home news unfavorable to the regime is permitted to remain in Rome."⁴

It is the opinion of some that Fascist education is very dangerous to Italy as well as to the rest of Europe and possibly the entire world. The civilization of future generations is in the hands of the young Italians. Whether or not these young people will find it in this new type of government remains to be seen. There is a possibility that they may become slaves to what now seems to be very dear to them, Fascism.

In Fascist Italy the students' mind and personality have

³Ibid., p. 207.

⁴Ibid., p. 206.

to conform themselves to the pattern the state sets up for them. "Gentile even calls the state 'the supreme conscience of the people.' Art, that is, expression which as Froebel said, 'makes the inner,' religion, and philosophy are the formative subjects in this education."⁵

The school, the Fascists saw from the very start, was the best place to spread Fascist propaganda. No teacher was allowed to teach unless she complied with all the Fascist principles. In 1931 adult illiteracy had decreased to less than 25 per cent.

Italy had twenty-five universities and a number of higher institutes giving technical and professional training. Several attempts have been made, privately and semi-officially, to stimulate a new fascist art in Italy. Since Mussolini once said: "Without art there is no civilization," progress in this direction has thus far not been striking.....

One great asset that the Italian people now have is national discipline. They are constantly subject to a social, political, economic, and intellectual discipline. "Fascism," wrote the philosopher Gentile, "means to take life seriously." Life is toil, effort, sacrifice, hard work; a life in which we know very little time for amusement.⁶

The first compulsory school attendance law the Fascists passed was in June, 1933. The age of children attending school was raised to fourteen. This law seems to have been a failure, for in 1934, 9,932 certificates were issued to Italian boys of ten to work at different kinds of industries. Girls were also allowed to work in different kinds of industrial

⁵Stephen Duggan, "History of Education," School and Society, XXV, 454.

⁶Walter Connuelo Langsam, The World Since 1914, p. 330.

enterprises. In 1932 there were 24,070 girls of twelve and thirteen years of age working; at the same time, 19,404 boys below fourteen years of age were working in various types of factories. More girls were employed because they would work cheaper than boys. Women were employed to do hard manual labor. In January, 1934, a much more effective compulsory school law was passed. The minimum school age still remained at twelve. The location and type of industrial work had much to do with what the minimum school age should be. In some sections the minimum throughout all schools was fifteen years.

The elementary school in each community is divided into two divisions, one for boys and one for girls. The upper elementary grade schools are found in communities having a normal and secondary school and a population of over 4,000 inhabitants. No fees have to be paid in order to attend these schools, which are maintained by the communities; in some instances the state contributes funds. Children from six to nine years of age compose the lower divisions of the elementary school and children from nine to twelve years of age make up the upper elementary schools. Attendance in both of these schools is compulsory.

Italy provides schools for her children, beginning at ages three to six. These schools are modeled somewhat like the Pestalozzi and Froebel schools of the nineteenth century. During the past generation (1923) the Montessori houses for young children have come into use. These schools are for the physical care of the children. It is not until the students

enter the elementary school at the age of six that they begin the study of religion, Italian language, activities and exercises, gardening, household arts, drawing, science, government, economics, arithmetic, history and geography, in an elementary manner. These schools extend through five grades. When a student has finished the above courses, supplementary studies are added.

In the official statistics for the school year 1926-27 we find that the number of kindergartens suddenly rose to 17,076 with an attendance of 607,891. But according to the *Encyclopedia Italiana*, there were no more than 9,446 kindergartens in 1930; and in the school year 1931-32 the official figures gave 9,321 kindergartens with an attendance of 750,553. These figures would seem to show that kindergartens decreased in the first two years of the new era, increased rapidly from 1926 to 1930, then decreased again in 1931. In that year, according to the government commissioner who was at the head of the national organization, the latter was subsidizing 3,300 kindergartens. But according to another official communiqué of February, 1935, the kindergartens subsidized by the national organization numbered only 1,452 in 1933 and rose to 3,534 in 1934. Let us hope that some day at least a semblance of order will be brought to these statistics, so that they will be less inconsistent. However, all of this information has come from trustworthy sources; the reason for difference is due to the rapid progress in this field. The Fascist party seeks to make itself master of the new generations by imbuing them in their earliest years with its propaganda. Therefore it pays much attention to kindergartens. Lombardy, the richest part of Italy, got schools first. Conditions in southern Italy continue to be frightful, but today no one is any longer ashamed of this because every one is under a duty to repeat that Mussolini has solved this problem with his magic wand.⁷

Many of the students, after they have completed their elementary training, enter higher primary schools or some of the part-time vocational schools, which offer work in agricul-

⁷Galtano Salvemini, Under the Axe of Fascism, p. 325.

ture, industry, and commerce. Upon graduation from one of these schools a student may enter the fourth year of technical institute, a teacher's institute, or a ginasio. There are no tuition charges, but fees for practical work and learning certificates must be paid. When a student finishes the five years of work in the elementary school, he may, if he wishes, go to a teacher's institute. There he can prepare himself to be a teacher, returning when he has finished his courses to teach in the elementary schools he first attended.

The objective of elementary education in some of the more up-to-date schools is to educate for the secondary school. The secondary schools are in two divisions, the classical and the scientific, each giving an eight-year course preparing the student for the university; the last four years of the scientific school (instituto-technico) is devoted to studying surveying, commerce, and other technical fields. "No secondary school may be opened without the consent of the National Ministry."⁸ All supervision is carried on by the superintendent, assisted by the board of education in each district. Each one of the schools has as its administrative officers a principal and a council composed of at least three members. All private schools of secondary level have to submit to inspection by the state. Any contacts between any other school and a private school, such as admission, transfers, and pre-

⁸Stephen Duggan, History of Education, p. 458.

motions, must be approved by the state. In the secondary schools, a small fee is required of attendants. Tuition fees and fees for examinations and diplomas vary in the secondary schools. The courses offered in the classical or ginasio-liceo schools include Latin, Italian, Greek, mathematics, history, art, geography, science, economics, and philosophy. The time devoted to each of these courses depends upon its difficulty and the stress the state puts on the knowledge of each subject. These courses lead to admission to the university by examination. The technical institutes were organized to deflect students from the universities by preparing them for commercial and semi-technical pursuits. The liceo, or lower division of these schools, prepares students in Italian, Latin, mathematics, chemistry, physics, and drawing. All students who wish to study advanced science, medicine, and engineering, enter the university. When the school reform program was put into effect, a special liceo school for girls was devised.

With the educational reforms made in the secondary schools, scuola technical school was abolished. The work the students had been doing in this school was divided between the three-year complementary and technical school. Mussolini issued an order to have the technical institutes replaced when possible by a professional school from the department of National Economy. This order included

industrial institutes, mining schools, trade schools, industrial preparatory schools, laboratory schools, women's industrial schools, commercial institutes and higher in-

stitutes, higher agrarian institutes, higher institutes of veterinary medicine, secondary agrarian schools, and practical schools of agricultural associations.⁹

From tables of statistics on elementary schools, government schools, and Italian universities in 1935-1936, it is easy to see that the number of students in Italian schools had attained a record for the country. These tables are given below.

TABLE 8

STATISTICS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, 1935-1936¹⁰

Elementary Schools	Number	Teachers	Pupils
Asili for infants.....	9,691	21,900	734,581
Public elementary schools.....	102,388	105,392	4,719,573
Private elementary schools.....	2,798	5,543	155,771

TABLE 9

STATISTICS OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS, 1935-1936¹¹

Government Secondary Schools	Number	Teachers		Students		
		Men	Women	Males	Females	Total
Classical gymnasium.....	195	1,105	896	19,182	8,106	27,288
Classical lyceum gymnasium.....	305	4,649	2,357	93,300	28,811	126,111
Lyceum for science.....	63	599	148	6,931	1,130	8,061
Teacher's institutes.....	236	2,056	3,488	35,982	72,258	108,240

⁹ School and Society, LXVIII, 595.

¹⁰ The Statesman's Year Book, 1938, p. 1064. ¹¹ Ibid., 1064.

TABLE 9--CONTINUED

Government Secondary Schools	Num- ber	Teachers		Students		
		Men	Women	Males	Females	Total
Technical Sec- ondary Schools						
Agricultural schools.....	697	2,880	1,093	23,002	9,148	32,150
Commercial schools	696	3,412	5,514	118,869	49,077	167,946
Industrial schools	655	4,226	2,971	60,097	26,183	86,280
Nautical schools..	29	370	161	2,382	351	2,733
Art Schools						
Schools of art and academies...	68	652	94	6,531	1,596	8,127
High schools of music.....	19	430	106	1,504	1,404	2,908

The Fascist government has been active in the field of agricultural education. The national grain commission has been especially entrusted with the supply of seeds to the farmers and also with improving the supply of fertilizers, of which the home production has advanced very greatly during the past few years. Italy produces substantially more foodstuffs now than she did a few years ago; but her production is still not very much above the pre-war standard, for there was a business recession and a substantial falling off in the years immediately after the war. "This intensive drive to increase agricultural production is explained largely by the needs of a rapidly expanding population, and the increase has been at the rate of about half a million a year."¹²

¹²G. D. H. and Margaret Cole, The Intelligent Man's Review of Europe Today, pp. 338-339.

In the present Italian educational system, all matters must comply with the Fascist conception from the beginning to the completion of a college education. The first important step in the young Italian boy's education is to become a member of the Balilla. Boys between the ages of five and six years make up the Balilla. The Opera Nazionale Balilla is the name of this Fascist society. The Balilla society came as a result of the act of a boy by the same name, who threw a stone at an Austrian in Genoa in December, 1846. The throwing of this stone precipitated an insurrection. Girls between the ages of five and six are enrolled by the Opera Nazionale delle Piccole Italiane, and eventually become what is known as the woman Fasci.

The Balilla is especially charged with the physical education and care of the health of the young Italians. The moral and propaganda influence of this society is tremendous. The Balilla is of great educational significance.

Boys remain in the Balilla until they are fifteen years old; then they pass into the Avanguardite, where they remain rigid military discipline until they are eighteen. Then, if they qualify when they are given a rigid examination, the young men take the oath of allegiance to the king and to the Fascist principles and receive their rifles. The reason for an educational set-up like this is to instill into the Italian youth the Fascist principles so well that, when they come to maturity, citizenship and Fascism will be synonymous and

centerminous. Italy is relying on her youth to guide her in the future. Whether or not she will be successful remains to be seen.

The Fascist party believes that the education of young Italy should not be entirely in the schools. The Opera Nazionale Balilla, an organization similar to our Young Men's Christian Association and Boy and Girl Scouts, has charge of the education of young Italy. The Balilla in many places has almost done away with elementary education. In Italy it is believed that the early civic, moral, athletic, military, religious, health, and cultural training can be better taken care of in groups where rigid discipline is used. All of the school buildings, lunch-rooms, physical education, health inspection, medical treatment, and often school activities are directed by the extra-scholastic organization which is operated by the Fascist government. The Italian Red Cross and other health organizations are also entirely controlled by the Fascist party. All other activities are in some manner influenced or directed by the party set-up, and the things mentioned above are continued in the home by the Fascist party whose principles everywhere invade the privacy of the individual household.

The Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro ("O. N. D.") with its millions of members did much to help and direct the working classes in spending their hours of leisure time. The O. N. D. organized clubs and societies for the improvement of the men-

tal and physical culture of the average Italian. Some night and holiday schools were set up by the organization.

Membership is granted to clubs or societies, but not to individuals, and considerable reduction in price of railway fares, admission fees to museums, discounts, etc., etc., are allowed.¹³

Class distinction has not altogether disappeared from Italy. The O. N. D. is for the laboring classes of Italians. An organization similar to the O. N. D. is the Confederazione Olimpica Nazionale Italiana ("C. O. N. I."), for the Italians of the upper social strata. The main objective of Fascist education is physical culture. In Rome a school has been built to teach and train Fascist physical instructors. Much is being done to promote games and sports on every side. All the communities have a playing field. The state requires all professions and forms of employment which do not involve actual manual labor to devote a certain amount of their time, preferably in the evenings, to physical exercises. The time of the year has a great deal to do with the amount of time, and the time of day, spent on physical exercises. The Italians seem to enjoy these competitive sports. Many new games have been introduced into Italy, the latest adopted being Rugby football. This game in the future may become as important to boys and men in the Italian sport world as our own present-day American football games are to us Americans.

The after-school activities of both the teacher and the child are controlled by the *Dopa Scuola*, a Fascist organization.

¹³Encyclopedia Britannica, XII, 764.

The Balilla takes the students on excursions to places of interest. While on these excursions the children are to engage in social games, religious instruction, and military training. The health officer takes a regular health census of the homes in order to keep a close check on the health conditions there. Should any one in the home be suffering from any kind of disease, he is at once taken to a hospital or an institution specializing in the treatment of that particular disease. Tuberculosis associations, as well as many other institutions for contagious diseases, have been built and are controlled by the Fascist government. The Patrons' Association was organized to care for the poor unfortunates, to clothe, feed, and protect their physical and moral conditions. Begging is not allowed in Italy. Those who cannot work for a living are sent to special homes where they are cared for. Children are not usually employed; but if they should be, the government supervises the work very closely. It is the duty of the propaganda specialists to see that the younger generation thinks only of how great Italy is, and of all the advantages that Fascism offers them. It is believed that the only way to break the "frozen barrier of poverty, superstition, and social inertia,"¹⁴ is through close government control of and contact with the Fascist youth of Italy.

Italy has high hopes of improving the working conditions and leisure time of her adult population. The Opera Nazionale

¹⁴Cox, op. cit., XIV, 317.

Dopalevare is a club organized by the Fascist party to improve the intellectual, moral, social, and physical status of the Italian adult population. This group has as its main objective the spreading of Fascist government principles. There are several thousand clubs, societies, and sporting, educational, and artistic organizations appearing under the Opera Dopalevare. Most of the manual laborers of the state, postal, tobacco, railways, etc., are under the control of this Fascist organization. The Balilla has organized many night schools for the illiterate as well as for any adult who wishes to learn more about some trade. The Balilla offers courses for the encouragement of planting gardens, flowers, and other crops on the tiny Italian farms in the country or towns. Many lectures are given, telling how the country can stamp out malaria, cancer, tuberculosis, vagrancy, and drunkenness.¹⁵

It is the objective of the Italian government to improve all of the schools, especially from the hygienic point of view just as soon as possible. Most of the undesirable conditions in Italian schools exist in the rural sections where improvements come slowly. In some of the most up-to-date towns in Italy, it is possible to see a twentieth century institution by the side of an institution that has been standing for a thousand years, in a neighborhood that is sometimes none too

¹⁵ Edwin Ware Hullinger, The New Fascist State, p. 30.

friendly. It is possible to step from a transcontinental train de luxe through the station door "into streets filled with drowsy ox-teams, donkey carts, and even drowsier peasants."¹⁶

In the more modern towns and rural communities careful attention is given to the health of all of the school children, as well as the adults. In some places twelve doctors examine the school children in elementary grades regularly. Many children who are afflicted with some contagious disease are sent to hospitals and schools maintained for the purpose of caring for afflicted children. The children who are removed from the public schools are those afflicted with tuberculosis and other such diseases.

In all schools of as many as one thousand students, the state provides a doctor and a nurse to care for the children who may have become afflicted with some disease. Each school is provided with a room fully equipped for emergency cases. For abnormal children, the state has built special schools.

For the frail and weak children there are "colonies" in the mountains and at the seaside..... An official report published in the press of May, 1933, stated that of the 1,621 seaside and mountain "colonies" existing in Italy in 1932 for the children who were weak or threatened with tuberculosis, etc., hardly 60 existed at the end of 1935, before the new national organization began to function. But from the report on Lombardy made by Signora Garzanti in 1929, it appears that before 1926 there were 164 colonies in Lombardy alone, of which 127 existed before 1923. Since Fascist statistics for the period before 1926 are false, it is natural that they should appear suspicious even when they would have us believe that the

¹⁶Salvemini, op. cit., p. 315.

number of colonies rose from 1,621 in 1932 to about 2,000 in 1934, and that the number of children taken care of by the colonies rose from 100,000 in 1923 to 225,000 in 1931 and to 506,635 in 1934.¹⁷

In most cases, what is true of the secondary and elementary schools is equally true of higher learning in Italy today. The number of students was rather small at first in comparison with the number of institutions available in the country. The following table shows what the increase has been in attendance in various schools in Italy during different periods. The numbers do not indicate the number of students who finished each of these schools, but the number attending the various schools of higher learning for the following school years: 1882-83, 1902-03, and 1925-26.

TABLE 10
NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING INSTITUTIONS OF
HIGHER LEARNING IN ITALY¹⁸

Faculties	1882-83	1902-03	1925-26
Law.....	4,801	8,385	9,391
Philosophy and letters.....	419	1,703	3,649
Medicine and surgery.....	4,428	9,055	10,540
Professional diploma, pharmacy....	798	3,290	3,424
Mathematics and natural science...	1,364	3,500	6,122
Engineering.....	982	1,293	5,589
Agriculture.....	145	507	860
Commerce.....	128	167	4,909
Various.....	...	...	1,028
Totals.....	13,065	27,900	45,512

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 315.

¹⁸ Encyclopedia Britannica, XII, 764.

When the Fascist regime began, many of the students were found attending classes without credit on their work. Most of the students went to twenty-five state and five private universities. The Fascists gained control of the schools by degrees. The rector, or head administrator of each university, is appointed by the state. The rector also acts as the local inspector of schools. The professors are chosen by passing a competitive examination. They also have to swear an oath of allegiance to the Fascist government before their appointment is complete. In the universities, a professor has the authority to organize his courses according to his own ideas, provided they do not conflict with Fascist principles. The state reserves the right to appoint *libere docenti* (free instructors) on the basis of special qualifications in their respective fields. The professors are transferred from one place to another, and receive their pay from the students who attend their classes. The main objective of these visiting professors is to stimulate the regular teaching corps. In the last few years it has been to spread the Fascist doctrines. Of the professors who held positions before the Fascist regime, only a small percentage have been discharged. Many hold important positions but inwardly oppose the Fascist regime. These professors have to be very careful of what they say. They are watched at all times, and punished should they say something contrary to Fascist doctrine. The only reason the Fascists tolerate these anti-Fascists is because of their scholastic

rating. Many of the universities pay allegiance to the Fascist headquarters in Rome. This organization serves as a social center for the universities. The money contributed is spent in organizing sporting clubs; students, as well as professors, have special privileges, if they belong: financial aid in case such is needed; medical aid; reductions in railway fares, as well as other privileges. More than 27,000 students are members of this social organization. When reform came, an attempt was made to reduce the number of universities to ten, but this could not be done. It is true that the state did finance just ten of these institutions of higher learning. Only slight help was given to other schools. Instead of a reduction of the number of schools, there has been an increase. Some of the important schools founded since the beginning of the new regime are the universities at Milan, Florence, Bari, and a Catholic institution at Milan, which has been re-opened. In courses of political science and philosophy, Fascism has found its greatest strength. The universities at Rome, Pavia, Pailua, Perugia, have superior courses in economics. The greatest center of Fascist social science is at the University of Florence. In all of these institutions the Fascist employees, central, local, and colonial administrators, diplomats, consuls, vice-consuls, podesta and syndicate directors, are trained. The journalists should not be overlooked, because they print what the Fascists want the Italians to read.

The Fascists realized from the beginning how important it was to have well-trained leaders; therefore, let us see what courses were offered by the University of Rome. In Rome the Fascist professors taught courses in "comparative public law, internal public law, and the general doctrine of the state; and the (libere docenti) given courses in syndicalist law, the outline for a theory of the state, and general theory of the state."¹⁹ These, as well as other courses, are studied by the young Fascists. Each year a series of lectures is given on Fascism by visiting professors.

In Italy, after 1918, there was an increase in university graduates. The following figures show the increase from 1919 to 1923: 6,697 in 1919, 9,102 in 1920, 9,365 in 1921, 9,040 in 1922, and 11,140 in 1923. The war had taken 6,000 officers, besides many other men. At least a third of the total number came from the liberal professions. The influenza epidemic in 1918 also carried off a number of men. The new graduates took the places that had been left vacant by the war and the epidemic of influenza. Even with these losses, the Italian population from 1913 to 1923 increased from 35,000,000 to 39,500,000. This increase in population is another reason for the increase in the intellectual classes. By 1931 the population of Italy had increased to 41,000,000.

The Fascist regime has caused a slight decrease in the

¹⁹Herbert W. Schneider and Shepherd B. Clough, Making Fascists, p. 107.

TABLE 11
STATISTICS OF ITALIAN UNIVERSITIES, 1935-1937²⁰

Universities and Higher Institutes	Date of Foundation	Students 1936-37	Teachers 1935-36
State universities			
Bari.....	1924	1,944	145
Bolegna.....	1200	6,311	478
Cagliari.....	1626	899	127
Catania.....	1434	2,437	205
Firenze.....	1924	3,949	240
Genoa.....	1243	3,280	356
Macerata.....	1290	135	14
Messina.....	1549	1,930	127
Milan.....	1924	7,888	733
Modena.....	1678	509	122
Napoli.....	1224	10,282	753
Padova.....	1222	3,890	410
Palermo.....	1805	2,967	394
Parma.....	1502	739	130
Pavia.....	1300	1,417	192
Perugia.....	1276	566	95
Pisa.....	1338	1,668	271
Roma.....	1303	13,037	1,089
Sassari.....	1677	354	82
Siena.....	1306	339	115
Torino.....	1404	5,805	419
Trieste.....	..	531	43
Venezia.....	..	1,809	57
Free universities			
Camerino.....	1727	161	26
Fenora.....	1391	248	51
Urbino.....	1554	149	19
Total.....		72,944	6,693

²⁰ The Statesman's Year Book, 1938, p. 1064.

number of university graduates, but there are still more graduates than there were during the pre-war period. The following figures and years show how many students graduated with degrees: 8,237 in 1924, 7,493 in 1925, 7,400 in 1926, 7,033 in 1927, 8,702 in 1930, 8,600 in 1931, 8,651 in 1932. The increase was approximately 18 per cent over the pre-war period.

The freedom of university professors is strictly limited, and their words may at any time be weighed against them. All the professors, or any lecturer wishing to remain in the institution, must take the following oath: "I promise loyally to teach and to fulfill all other academic duties with the purpose of educating an honest citizen, faithful to the country and to Fascist regime."²¹ At one time in Italy foreigners were not safe, especially if they said something about Fascism, and they were severely punished for open disapproval. All of the employees on international trains were ordered to give the Fascist salute.

The following article tells what happened to a university lecturer who expressed the truth about the Fascist party. The lecturer was Count Guglielmo Salvaderi, of a university in Rome. The articles he wrote were published in the Westminster Gazette, March 24, 1924. On the afternoon of April first an armed squad of Fascists arrived at his home. The following ex-

²¹Erik Ashorn, European Civilization and Politics Since 1815, p. 582.

cerpt from an article written by Salvadori in the Mando on July 2, 1924, shows the methods to which the Fascists resort when any one does not agree with their beliefs:

I found myself in a room surrounded by some fifteen individuals. First, they flung at me the most infamous and wounding insults: swine, bastard, rascal, parasite, paid agent of the foreigner, etc. I then was struck violently in the face by one after the other with ever harder and more frequent blows. Blood was flowing from my cheeks, nose, chin, and ears. Resistance would have been useless. It was one against fifteen, and more. Exhausted by the blows, and almost fainting, I said: "Remember that I have three children waiting for me at home." On hearing an infamous insult against my mother, I said: "Let my mother be. She was a saintly woman, and she is dead." My protests only served to increase the fury of these maniacs. I was searched. At last they seemed to tire, and telephoned the police. While waiting for the police to come, one of them came up to me with a basin and sponge, and tried to wash away the bloodstains from my coat. They warned me that I should be shadowed and that there were people determined to kill me. When the policeman came, they handed me over to him, calling him to witness that I was not hurt and that, except for a few slaps, I had received no harm. I observed something tragic in the look the policeman gave me. I had the explanation of it when at home I saw my face in the glass: there were two slashes at right angles on my forehead, a gash in each cheek, and one under my chin. At the door of the Fascio I was assaulted with cudgels by some thirty maniacs. A revolver shot was also fired. They would probably have done for me but for the interference of my son, who was waiting for me in the street. He flung himself upon the assailants, drawing their rage upon himself. He was struck, man-handled, and thrown down half-stunned.²²

After November 9, 1926, no person could leave or enter Italy unless he had a passport issued by the Fascist government. Should any one try to do either, he was either fined heavily or imprisoned for a long period of time.

The education of the Italian teachers is very carefully

²²Tiltman, op. cit., p. 210.

planned. The Fascists know that it is very important that the teachers know and teach Fascist political views. A law is enforced in most of Italy whereby a teacher may be discharged if he has anti-Fascist views about the government. Before a teacher may be appointed to teach, he must pass an examination competitively administered. The government prefers men who have been decorated in war, have passed the examinations, have published their works, and have met other Fascist qualifications. The first examination was given in 1923. It is puzzling to know that such a large number would apply for the examination when the pay was from 5,600 to 9,500 lire per year, in the case of university professors. The pay for elementary teachers was much lower. All of the examinations were rather rigid, placing emphasis on Fascist principles. The prospective teachers must have read the following books: Da quarto Al Vattierne or La Storia dei Mille, as related for youths by Abba; Recordance by Settembrini; Villa Gloria by Pascarella; I Natiri de Belfiore by Luzia. These are some of the most patriotic works of Italian historical writers.

All teachers have to become members of the National Fascist Association of Primary School Teachers. This association has a membership of over 80,000. Its purpose is to encourage the cultural education of teachers, and to expound soundly in the minds of the teachers the concepts of Fascism, which form the keystone of Italian education. This association publishes a Fascist journal for its members, the La Scuola Fascista. The

following comprise a list of educational reviews: Educazione Fascista, Annali dell. Istruzione Elementare, and Educazione Nazionale. These papers place before the teachers the nationalist idea of Fascist education. Most of the articles in these magazines are written by leaders of the Fascist party who thus attempt to control the sentiment of the school teachers of Italy.

For any one to be a teacher, he must prove himself both competent and loyal to the Fascist regime. With this type of educational set-up, the state is free to carry out any kind of an experiment in any part of Italy. When a rule is made by the state, the citizens must obey the rule or it is contrary to the Fascist principles. All teachers have to be independent of each other. Each is responsible for a certain part of the school program. The church supervises all of the religious instruction offered in the schools. The examination given by the state tends to repress freedom of all the teachers. All teachers are watched, and the first time one is found teaching anti-Fascism, he is punished and dropped from the schools.

"The closed and airless schoolroom must be changed into classrooms open to the winds of heaven, in order to benefit puny and sickly children."²³ The schools of Rome, Turin, and Genoa will all bear comparison with the schools of other countries. In these schools a great deal of attention is

²³Juliet Turner, "Primary Education in Italy," School and Society, XXV, 184.

given to physical and intellectual activities. The schools not only teach skills and give information, but they also form new minds and hearts.

In many of the small towns the only elementary school house available today is a classroom in various sections of the town. Generally, a class occupies a single room in a one-story building that has been rented by the municipality. The new program is very specific in matters of cleanliness in all of these elementary schools. The teacher is required to inspect the pupils each morning and see that they look after their personal cleanliness. The teacher designates two boys to assist him in keeping everything around the school in ship-shape order.

In all of the Italian schools, new textbooks have been written. The Fascists are very careful of what the young Italians are taught from the very beginning of their school life. The Fascist government has censored all books published prior to the reform. The Fascist textbook commission examined 1,710 elementary readers and definitely approved but thirty-two of this number. Some parts of the others could be used for reference only. Three hundred seventeen histories were examined; 125 of these were approved, and only eighteen of this number were used in all of the schools. Of the 114 books for religious instruction, eleven were approved. The Fascist government dictates what is to be published in the school textbooks. Patriotism is preached in all the

schools, especially in the elementary schools. The following is a quotation taken from one of the elementary school texts:

Every good Italian loves Italy, this land so great and beautiful, and every little Italian should study in order to be an honor to his country, in order to be able to read some of the works of her poets, and in order to know her history and her beauty. And then, children, when you know how great your country has been through the centuries, what marvelous things Italians have always been able to do, then you will love her still more and say with pride, I am an Italian.²⁴

In another reader of 184 pages, ten of these pages are devoted to patriotic studies. A story in one of the elementary readers is about the great Garibaldi. The story tells about an old Garibaldian who fought in the World War. Before he went into battle he would kiss a handkerchief he always carried, stained with the blood of his gallant leader, Garibaldi. The old man knew if he had kissed the blood of Garibaldi, no one could call him a coward. On the field of battle a soldier, when dying, should kiss the Italian flag or bite one of his enemies. In this book were pictures of poppies and potatoes. The poppies represented red-shirted Garibaldians, and the potatoes the Austrian dead. Above the picture were these words, "Bing! Bang!" and, "The Austrians are dead!" Today in Italy, it is a greater honor than ever to die for the Fatherland.

The textbook commission maintained that the histories for elementary schools should be rewritten, because too much attention was given to pre-war Italy. Emphasis should be

²⁴Schneider and Clough, Making Fascists, p. 93.

placed on Fascism and what it stands for. Only national present-day events should be discussed in any of the new textbooks. The rural schools were given the same books as were used in the cities. In one of the elementary civics texts is found the following article about Mussolini:

Now we have the man who was needed and whom we wanted. He finds himself face to face with great problems. His task is very hard and he is charged with tremendous responsibilities: to reconstruct the patrimony of the nation; to restore the provinces; to free laws from demagoguery; to destroy parasitic forces and parasites; to affirm the rights and dignity of the nation abroad. This man with a Garibaldian spirit and with mailed fist will overcome these fearsome difficulties: of this we are sure. But all citizens of every class must follow him and aid him with faith and obligation.....²⁵

The young Italian boys and girls no longer have a large overflowing book satchel like their American cousins. Under the present regime they find that all of their training comes out of one book, not more than two at the most. These two books consist of several smaller books designed to be used in the five elementary grades in Italy. If additional grades are taken, additional readers are supplied. Most of the material in these books describes places of interest in Italy. Modern, brightly colored pictures attract the eye and hold the attention of the children in the first three grades. As a child advances in his work, another book is supplied which contains stories of how he can become good Balilla, "honor his country and grow up into a fine soldier for Mussolini

²⁵Ibid., p. 101.

and the king and queen."²⁶ The students are not troubled with arithmetic until they reach the text for the third grade. Then come additional courses in reading, religion, history, geography. All of these books contain a type of patriotism and respect for the established laws of the Italian government. In the last pages of the Fascist speller is found the following: "For Mussolini lia, lia, lia, alala." And in another place: "We children must salute the king, Mussolini, and our own great country, Italy. Italy is the greatest of all nations. Italian soldiers fear nobody."²⁷

From one to one and a half hours daily must be spent in religious instruction in the earlier grades, and two hours from the third class on. This is generally accepted due to the fact that most of the population is Catholic. Each morning, school begins with a prayer. Lessons are given on the life of Christ the Apostle, or on the Ten Commandments. It is the purpose of religious instruction to make good citizens of the students by civilizing their spirits. Often this is undone by the factors that Fascism teaches. Singing is recommended with an educational aim of teaching Fascist songs.

When they first gained control of the government, the Fascists realized that the conflict between state and church had to be done away with. They felt that religion should be

²⁶ Grace G. Ramsey, "New Italian Text-books," School and Society, XXXVI, 406.

²⁷ Francisco F. Nitti, "Fascist Education," School and Society, XXXVI, 824.

made to work for Fascism rather than combat it. Due to the fact that Catholicism had some personally disciplining features made it all the easier for the Fascists to adopt the same religious principles. Religious instruction was made compulsory in the elementary schools. Chaplains were assigned to the army and the salaries of clergymen were raised.

Catholic priests had to give religious instruction to the Balilla units for one hour per week. The final details of religious instruction were managed in Italy by Mussolini and for the papacy by the astute Cardinal Gaspari. Religious instruction, formerly required only in elementary schools, was made compulsory in secondary schools as well.

Mussolini had restored the crucifixes in the schools, where they hung below portraits of the king and himself, set up once more the large cross in the Colosseum, which had been taken down in 1879, and permitted religious processions to be held anywhere in Italy.²⁸

Religious instruction was given by state-paid instructors who were priests or other clerics. The church was not to interfere with the normal curricula or the school administration.

Most Italians are Catholic. When Fascism came to Italy, the question of many was: Can the two work together? Mussolini thought they could, but Pope Pius XI thought differently. The pope did thank Mussolini for driving out Bolshevism and Freemasonry, and for restoring religious teaching in the public schools. The conflict arose in 1920 when the Holy See had been deprived of its lands. The pope felt as though he

²⁸Hullinger, op. cit., p. 264.

and his closest associates were prisoners in their own country.

An open break between Church and State soon threatened, for besides this difference of opinion there existed conflicting views regarding the education of Italian children and the activities of the Catholic societies. Before long, Fascist students started destroying church property, trampling the Pope's portrait, and attacking priests. On the ground that it was engaging in political activity, Mussolini, on May 30, 1931, closed all the doors of the Catholic Action, and on the following day he dissolved all Catholic societies not directly connected with the Fascist party. Mussolini announced "that the child as soon as he is old enough to learn, belongs to the state alone. No sharing is possible." He also charged that the Action was controlled by former members of the supposedly dissolved Catholic People's Party, who were making secret preparations to overthrow Fascism.²⁹

Due to the fact that Mussolini was in favor of the Catholic religion, he began negotiation with the Vatican in 1926. After two and a half years of discussion, a treaty and concordat was signed in February of 1929. This treaty made the pope the temporal sovereign of the Vatican State, surrendered a territory of 44 hectares (108 acres), and there were 600 citizens living within the walls of this tiny city. This agreement brought to an end an impasse which had bothered Italian politics ever since Italian unification in 1870.

Through the ages the Italian people have contributed to religious institutions. In 1926 the valuation of buildings was 4,380,000 lire and 423,485,000 lire of capital and interest. Monastic pensions represented a diminishing sum of 4,643,000 lire payable to 587 persons. The most important expenditure was the upkeep of the priests -- 53,145,000 lire

²⁹Langsam, op. cit., pp. 331-332.

distributed among 17,993 parishes; the minimum for each parish was 3,500 lire. Thus the standing capital was not enough to care for the priests and parishes; therefore, the remainder had to be made up by the community, and a small contribution from the state.

Catholicism is the sole religion of the Italian people with certain exceptions made by Mussolini in regard to marriage, birth control, etc. The pope did not like the idea of boys becoming members of the Balilla. In order to quiet the pope, Mussolini re-opened the Azione Cattolica schools, which had been closed for some time. This was done so the Italian children could study religion. Nothing else was to be studied in these schools. This gesture smoothed out the differences between Mussolini and the pope for the present, but it is doubtful whether all the differences between Fascism and Catholicism have been solved and mollified.

The Italian school children are surrounded by Nationalist symbols. The lictor's rods, emblem of imperial Rome and Fascism, must be worked into every new educational building. In the classrooms of both elementary and secondary schools there must be a crucifix, a picture of the king and a picture of Mussolini. Many of the classrooms have the announcement of victory drawn up by General Diaz. The Fascists desire that every day's work begin with a prayer, praising God, Mussolini, and a national hymn; that the schools have pictures of the heroes of the risergiments, of the Great War, and of the Masters of Italian culture; that every schools have its flag and on the eve of every vacation a patriotic speech be made and that the children respond with the Roman salute.³⁰

All schools have to devote a certain amount of their time

³⁰ Cox, op. cit., XIV, 317.

to religion. Mussolini is always held up before the children as the dominant figure. Here is a prayer for Il Duce:

Oh, Lord,
Who from on high watches over the peace of the world and
ever the safety of Italy;

Thou, who hast given to Rome the privilege of cus-
todianship of the throne of Peter which represents Thee
on earth, and of keeping this custodianship eternally;

Thou, who hast permitted to Italy to be unified from
the Alps to the sea and hast confided its destiny to the
valor of the House of Savoy;

Oh, Lord, who hast sent in this century the man who
shall preounce among the people the word of justice and
of truth;

God of Italy,
Intercede to protect always from every danger and free
from every evil Il Duce whom Thou hast given to us;

Grant long life for our welfare and for the glory of
Italy to Benito Mussolini.

Amen.³¹

This prayer is repeated by all the elementary school child-
ren of Italy just before they sit down for their noon-day meals.
Other prayers are repeated by the children on various occasions.
Mussolini strives to place before the young Italian the idea
that he is the master of all living things, and is always
right. The children are taught that it is a noble sacrifice
to serve their country, even if it takes their lives. Musso-
lini assigns or asks the Italian people what he wants done
and they at once do what they are told. To the Italian people,

Mussolini is more than a man, he is a symbol of a protest,
an ambition, a social will, the Fascist party, the patent
elite of the new Italy. So that when it is said that he
commands, he is always right, he is omniscient.^{32a}

The Italian Fascists realized early the importance of
military service in creating the lives of the Italians and im-

³¹Ibid., p. 317.

^{32a}Ibid., p. 318.

planting in them a patriotic state of mind; therefore, they have established a highly developed system of training for their men and women. Military life in some form begins at age eight and continues until eighteen or twenty-one. The Balilla and Avanguardia are organizations for the young Fascists. While in these organizations, the boys are given a sound physical education, along with their military training. Here in their youth the state teaches these boys drill in modern warfare.

When a boy reaches eighteen, he passes into the Fascist party and militia automatically. Here they are given their first rifles, and become a part of the armed force of the nation. The state has organized a number of military schools for non-Fascist boys. In 1927-1928, there were 3,744 of these schools with 222,864 boys attending them. Usually the instructors in these schools are officers in the Fascist militia. The following statement given by Mussolini on October 28, 1926, in Rome at the Colosseum gives some idea of what the Fascists think about military training:

You are at the sunrise of life. You are the hope of the Fatherland, you are above all the army of tomorrow. From this moment you must live every instant of your lives with faith in the destinies of the nation.³²

When the young Italian reaches twenty-one years of age, he is called into the army. No exceptions are allowed. All Italian immigrants have to report for military training if they

³²Schneider and Clough, Making Fascists, p. 112.

are less than thirty-three years of age when they come to Italy. If they are over thirty-three, they go into what is known as a military reserve. The service of all citizens in Italian colonies is voluntary. There are something like 34,750 troops in service in Italy all the time. The regular length of service is eighteen months. All of the men do not serve the entire period. The period of training for the boys who have passed all the pre-military training varies from three months to three years. The amount of time they serve depends upon whether or not they have any dependents, any relatives in the army, and political pull. Something like 220,000 new men are called to arms each year. There are more in training in the summer than winter months. It does not take the men long to become accustomed to military life. These young men find themselves in close contact with professional officers, and soon learn the traditions of the Italian army. Most of the men are allowed to enter the phase of the army they are most familiar with in civil life.

While the Italians are in the army, they undergo rigid military life, but are also given a most definite patriotic education that stays with them all their lives. They are instructed to teach others as they have been taught. The voluntary militia is one of the strongest arms of the Fascist party. This organization is often traced from the Black Shirts who marched on Rome in 1922, and took over the Italian government. For a time Mussolini demobilized the Fascist forces, but in

February, 1923, he definitely re-established the militia as a part of the Italian army. It was to act as the police force of Italy. It was in 1924 that the militia took the oath of loyalty to the king and Mussolini. The army found it somewhat more difficult to adjust itself to new conditions than did the militia, because the army was a pre-Fascist organization. The army suffered at the expense of the militia, which took away everything that belonged to the army, including rifles. Not until 1927 did Mussolini succeed in working out a plan which was in harmony with both the army and militia.

The government had at its service 50,000,000 lire for the militia, should they need it. The militia is organized somewhat like the Roman armies of old.

Its units are made, with the corresponding regular army units in parentheses, as follows: equal (equal), manipule (platoon), century (company), cohort (battalion), legion (regiment), zone (division). There are fifteen zones exclusive of the colonies, and at present there are 150 legions, exclusive of two legions at Lybia and exclusive of the special militias (railroads, ports, forests, etc.). The number of militiamen in active service varies considerably from time to time.³³

In 1927 there were 700 active officers and 7,000 in reserve. The number of men in different organizations varies from year to year. Most of these men wear some kind of uniform that renders them conspicuous in a crowd. Most of them wear black shirts, caps, and ties. A common phrase with the Fascists is, "A book and a musket, a perfect Fascist." This phrase is all too true because the knowledge of the average

³³Ibid., p. 123.

Fascist Italian would more than likely not fill more than one book. He is taught correct use of the musket. Fascism teaches him to be absolutely obedient to any one who is his military superior. One soldier cannot speak; the voice of a Fascist is the voice of several. Fascism was born on a war party, and has continued thus far to thrive on a spirit of militarism. The Italian Fascists have spent a great amount of money in developing their military program. The expenditures in thousands for the year 1924-25 were 4,036,323 lire; for 1926-27, 4,897,208; and for 1927-28, 4,956,740. In 1925 Italy spent 1,364,091,000 lire for public education. This seems like a large sum of money, but we must remember that 4,434,310,000 lire were spent for national defense alone.

Another important agent of military training and enthusiasm is the National Union of Reserve Officers founded in 1926 by the union of various small associations of officers. Its purpose is to maintain a military spirit among reserve officers and to furnish them with the latest information concerning military affairs. Although a comparatively young association, this Union has become the most important society of officers in the patriotic life of the Italian nation. Similar organizations exist for almost every branch of the Italian military establishment.

The entire Italian military system is based, so far as the ordinary soldier is concerned, on love for the nation. His service is a great economic sacrifice, for he is paid only forty centesimi (a little over two cents) a day. Soldiers are, of course, given their food, clothing,

and lodging and a small bonus when they do extra service, long marches, etc.³⁴

Regardless of extraordinary work, or how well it is done, none of the soldiers receive rewards. The state has several hundred rifle ranges in the country and encourages the citizens to try their skill in shooting. The government has set up several sporting clubs, for the development of the physical condition of the citizens. The Fascist military requirements were not limited to personal service only. Only January 11, 1923, the entire country was divided into seven zones, with an army, navy, and air force. This was done in order to protect Italy from possible foreign invasion. If necessary, both men and women would have to mobilize themselves to protect their country. If needed, the state claims the right to take an individual or his property. Should another war come, all Italy will become an "armed nation"; all her industries, universities, the press, agriculture, and everything that might help in any way will be taken. For a nation of this kind the Italians must have an aggressive leader, and they believe that Mussolini has the necessary qualifications. Italy has tried to break down all the family traditions of family militarism. All the officers have to go through the same schools of learning. The best are selected from the group by competitive examinations. Since 1927 all students of the secondary schools have to do a certain amount of training in reserve training

³⁴Schneider and Clough, Making Fascists, p. 115.

schools. Each year about 6,000 boys attend these schools.

An Italian officer in a way is called the spoiled child of the nation. His smart dress uniform makes him a mark of admiration to all. Some effort has been made to keep him socially above the average classes.

In Italy there are several special armed corps. These are maintained for the country's defense. The Royal Carabinieri is composed of men selected from the army, who are used to maintain order in any of the social or political groups. In their dress uniforms they look like actors from some opera. There are about 60,000 of these men and 1,246 officers stationed at different places in the country. Wherever one of these men is found, there is always a second. Their duties are similar to those of our police officers. They are to be found even in the most remote corners of cities and states. Another group of men is known as the Bersaglieri, the members of which wear green feathers in their caps. At one time these men were organized into bicycle corps. It was their duty to control disturbances in small villages and rural sections. The appearance of alpine soldiers was slightly different, for they wore special uniforms including a felt hat. Their duty now is to correct all disturbances occurring in the Alps. The tallest men in Italy are grouped into what is known as the king's guards. They wear uniforms similar to those of Roman soldiers. The tax-police wear uniforms similar to these of the alpine soldiers. They are to serve as cover troops in case some nation attacks Italy. In 1926 these men collected

eleven billion lire.

The Minister of Education, Signor Ercole, in 1934 issued an official circular to all schools of learning from the elementary to the university, stating that a special amount of time had to be devoted to military training. The circular stated that in conformity with the new Mussolini conception of a military nation, based on the principle that the junctions of citizens of a nation and soldiers are inseparable in the "Fascist State." The Fascist formula "Book and Rifle" now finds application in the Italian educational system, from elementary school to university. This has been achieved by the regulations for pre-military instruction, now compulsory for all citizens from the ages of eight to twenty-one. The educational system is the great force of the Fascist regime; therefore, much attention is given to the organization of an effective military educational program. Militarization has been an important part of the Fascist educational program since the introduction of the law of December 31, 1934, making instruction in military subjects compulsory for all grammar schools, high schools, and universities.

In every country of Europe boys and girls are drilled in using gas-masks or seeking prompt refuge in cellars to protect themselves against destruction rained down upon them from heavens to which they once had been taught to lift up hands for blessings.³⁵

The state-supported schools in Italy have increased more rapidly than private schools. Many school buildings have been built or improved by the state government. The qualifi-

³⁵Herman Thomas, War No Glory, No Profit, No Need, p. 2.

editions of teachers have been raised in many ways, other than complying with Fascist principles. With these improvements, along with many others, schools are still defective, both from the hygienic and the instructional viewpoints.

The state pays for all the materials used in any of the schools, especially in the secondary and normal schools. In some cases the state pays a part of the expenses of the private schools. The expenditure for the school year 1927-28, which can be taken as an average of what the Fascists spend each year for education, was 1,359,473,000 lire.³⁶

Since 1870, illiteracy has steadily declined in Italy. The widespread ignorance of the people was the greatest obstacle the Fascists had to face when they gained control of the government. The census of 1871 stated that 73 per cent of the people were illiterate, while in 1921, 24 per cent of the males and 30 per cent of the females could not read or write.³⁷ By 1925 the Piedmont district gave a census report showing that only 5 per cent of the people in that section were illiterate. Piedmont has long been the most literate section of Italy, but now illiteracy in all districts is decreasing, although in some southern provinces illiteracy is still distressingly high. But this fact does not dishearten the Fascists. They attack their problem vigorously by in-

³⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica, XII, 764.

³⁷ Ibid., III, 503.

creasing the educational budgets, "by enforcing more strictly the laws for compulsory school attendance up to the age of fourteen, and by introducing newer pedagogic methods."³⁸

One of the indications of economic and social progress in Italy during the half century preceding the advent of Fascism was the decrease of illiteracy. In 1872, after the crisis which had wiped out all the despotic governments from Italy, scarcely 31% of the population knew how to read and write. The number of persons knowing how to read and write went up to 38% in 1882; to 52% in 1901; to 62% in 1911; to 73% in 1921. The last figure drops to 72% if the territories formerly subjected to Austria and annexed to Italy as a result of the World War are eliminated from the reckoning; these regions were in better condition than the rest of Italy and therefore raised the general average by one point. On the eve of the "March on Rome," illiteracy had practically disappeared among the rising generation of northern Italy, and had been sharply reduced among the youth of southern Italy. Of the young people who attained their twentieth year in 1927, and therefore had gone to school before the war, 87% knew how to read and write. In the spring of 1929, Deputy de Francisci, who in 1932 became Minister of Justice, published a table showing that the number of illiterate persons had decreased to 21%.³⁹

In all parts of Italy everything has changed so completely that any one comparing some of these figures should make his own allowances. Regardless of what may be said, there has been much improvement in the educational system of Italy. The Fascists know what they want, and they will give everything they possess, even life, to obtain their objective. The new educational system in Italy definitely teaches the dignity of useful work.

³⁸ Langsam, op. cit., p. 330.

³⁹ Salvemini, op. cit., p. 327.

CHAPTER III

FASCISM IN ITALIAN EDUCATION

The first three years (1922-1925) of the Fascist regime were days of terrorism. Different groups of Fascists as well as Reds were killed or punished. In June, 1924, when young Matteotti, the Socialist, was murdered, the democratic parties again united against Mussolini. Even though Matteotti had a minority group of followers, his death caused the Fascists to be almost swept from power. In order to retain power, Mussolini threw his best friends overboard temporarily. He set out to reconstruct his ministry, but the opposition was so great it seemed that he was going to be forced to resign. He had to withdraw from the chamber to Aventine Hill, where he remained and governed his rump parliament, which still contained over a hundred non-Fascists.

The governing class, in turn, must be led by a man who can crystallize its ideas. Fascism has found such a leader in Mussolini, who believes that he has been chosen by fate to create a new and a greater Italy. The rising generations are being trained to accept Fascist ideals as the established and only natural order of things, as deliberately as were the Spartan young trained in Spartan ideals, or as the Bolshevik young in Russia are trained to be anti-Christian. Every little

boy or girl who is born alive will not be liberal or conservative, but Fascist. Clearly, Mussolini confutes in this to make the Fascist regime permanent and looks forward to the future Italy as being surely Fascist, because it will know no other political or educational faith. Fascism has a definite public morality policy which is explained officially thus:

Be strong to be pure; be pure to be strong. The Fascist government and educational system is doing all it possibly can to impress physical and moral integrity upon the Italian people. Italy of tomorrow must be strong to be pure; she will find in the purity of her children and in the strength and health of her mothers the secret of her forces. Fascist education intends to remove from the list of traditional rights the liberty to be weak. Weakness is a crime not only against one's self, but against one's country.¹

In the years that are to come, the forms of Fascismo education, and perhaps even its theories, will be altered, but its terminology ^{still} will remain. As long as Mussolini lives, the government that he has created ~~will~~ endure substantially unchanged. (Who and what will follow him no man can predict. One thing, however, is certain: there can be no second duce. No one who may follow him can wield the authority that has been his; for it is an authority predicated upon a combination of personal force and remarkable achievements that cannot be repeated. He has ^d evolved a new theory of government and made

¹Frank Fox, Italy To-Day, p. 219.

a new state, both peculiarly adapted to the genius of the Italian people. He has ruled that state with an eye single to its best interest. He found it suffering from the loss of its self-esteem due to the settlement of the World War, and has made it one of the great powers of Europe. He found it distracted with internal disorder, with almost ruined finances. He was faced with overwhelming problems, but he has restored peace at home and good will abroad, and the financial credit of his country. With infinite patience, a patience seldom met with anywhere, but most rarely in Italy, he has taught his people the habit of Fascismo education, and by so doing has broken down regionalism. For the first time there is a united country of men and women who, forgetting what differences lie between them and that they come from this or that province, under the inspiration of the duce remember only that they are the children of one great nation. Mussolini has taught his people to think nationally and has, after many years, fulfilled the hope of d'Azeglio, for as Cavour made Italy, Mussolini had the ability to deal with people and hence has made Italians.²

The governing class, in turn, must be led and animated by a man who can give expression to its ideals.³ This is what Italy has found in Mussolini. With Mussolini in Rome, every Italian ditch-digger realizes that he is no longer a Dago, but

²George B. McClellan, Modern Italy, p. 281.

³Raymond Leslie Buell, New Governments in Europe, p. 64.

a fellow citizen of the Empire. Mussolini has always said there has been enough and too much of program making; what Italy needed was men and will-power. *In 1935 he said...*

In practice, Mussolini has undertaken the work of several ministers in addition to the office of head of the government. At the present time Mussolini holds six out of thirteen cabinet posts -- foreign affairs, interior, corporations, war, marine, and aviation. It is expected that the latter three ministries will soon be combined into a single Ministry of Defense.⁴

Whatever Mussolini's shortcomings, his nerve is manifest; he has never lacked self-confidence.

Mussolini has been able not only to change the lives of human beings, but he has also changed their minds, their hearts, their spirits. He has not merely ruled a house; he has built a new house. Mussolini, as the writer has come to know him, is an opportunist in the sense that he believes that mankind itself must be fitted to changing conditions rather than to fixed theories, no matter how many hopes and prayers have been expended on theories and programs. Mussolini takes the responsibility for all, he asserts. He says it publicly with jaws firm; he says it privately with eyes somewhat saddened; he takes responsibility for everything. Mussolini has a dutiful and superstitious faith in himself. Mussolini, like Roosevelt, gives the impression of energy which cannot be battled, which bubbles up and over like an eternally effervescent, irrepressible fluid. The battle becomes a game, the game becomes a romp. It is absurd to say that Italy groans

⁴Ibid., p. 64.

under discipline. Italy chortles with it! It is volant victory!⁵

Fascist literature is replete with such expressions as "Three cheers for war!", "Long live war!", "The instinct of war is in human nature," "War is one of the most fruitful mystic manifestations," "Strife is the origin of all things." One of the leading "intransigent" publicists, Mario Carli, wrote: "The war-like spirit is the fundamental character of Italians; it is not a Fascist invention nor a post-bellum attitude. Find me a single moment of history in which we have not fought -- for whom or for what little matters; Mussolini himself, in an article on Fascism in the *Encyclopedia Italiana* declared: 'Only war carries human energies to the highest level and puts the seal of nobility upon peoples who have the courage to undertake it.'⁶

Mussolini believes that the destiny of Fascist Italy lies in the hands of young men and women.

As early as 1890 there were some signs of Fascism in the ranks of the socialists of Sicily. At the beginning of the World War, the Fascists were increasing rapidly in numbers. The most important group was in Milan under the leadership of Mussolini. The Fascism we know would have developed had it not been for Mussolini, because Italy has had other leaders with more obvious symbols than his. There were many Fascisms, each springing spontaneously from local causes and each local situation having its own peculiarities. The earliest symptoms of the movement were agrarian, and came from the valley of the Po. Great financial interests controlled vast areas which were worked to a large extent by day laborers who often caused industrial troubles.

⁵Benito Mussolini, My Autobiography, p. 17.

⁶Langson, op. cit., p. 339.

Fascism boasts of being a party of action rather than a party of theory. Mussolini has never been worried by the marked inconsistency of some of his speeches, or even of his policies. He did everything for education he could, when improving his programs in all emergencies. In this respect his dictatorship has differed from that of Lenin and of Stalin in Russia. If Fascism has had a consistent ideal, it has been that of Italian nationalism. For the nation to succeed, it must be lifted above all differences of class, party, creed, or individual interests. This, the writer believes, has already been accomplished in most parts of Italy. A great mistake of the liberals, say the Fascists, was in assuming that society was merely an aggregate of individuals whose rights were the chief concern of government; the great mistake of democracy is in substituting the opinion of the common man for the expert leadership of trained minds; the great mistake of the socialists is in elevating class above national interests. In its worship of authority, discipline, and devotion to the state, Fascism deliberately copies ancient Rome. Fascist social and political traditions can be traced back to Rome in the fifteenth century. In 1923 Mussolini said: "Men are tired of liberty; Fascism is the only way out."

The motives and elements that went to make up Fascism were extraordinarily complex. Some were men home from the war, too restless to settle down to civilian life and genuinely horrified at the unpatriotic communists. Some were ultra-nationalists who were disgusted at the meagerness of Italy's gain from the war. Some were Socialists who, like Mussolini himself, had

deserted for opposing entrance into the war. Some were embittered and impoverished recruits from the lower middle classes, the men whose small salaries had been reduced in buying power by the inflated currency and extravagant expenditures of the government. Some were hero worshipers, attracted away from the somewhat flighty and fanciful D'Annunzio by the studious personality of Mussolini. An increasing number as time went on were landowners, factory owners, conservatives and frightened bourgeoisie, who had at first held aloof from Fascism, remembering Mussolini's radical antecedents, but eventually slung to it as the last barrier against Bolshevism.⁷

Mussolini thought Italy had spent too much time dreaming. One of the favorite slogans that he repeats often is: "All Italy is but twenty years old today." He felt that the Fascist principles were the only thing that would arouse Italy from her slumbers.

In the beginning the Fascist beliefs did not belong to any organizations other than the Syndicalists. Before long many individual workmen, peasants, proprietors, and farm hands from the Po Valley, joined up with the Fascist beliefs. Soon the organization grew into a mass movement with Mussolini in charge. No one knew where the Fascist movement would take him. The first victory for the Fascists was in 1921, when 35 Fascists were returned to government positions, including Signor Mussolini himself and several nationalists. In the chamber they formed themselves into a band and fought the Reds who were the nucleus of the opposing party. In November, 1921, in the city of Rome, the Fascists organized themselves into a Fascist Congress and constituted the present-day Fascist party.

⁷Preston W. Slosson, Europe Since 1870, p. 648.

It is impossible for a person to be a Fascist one day and something else the next. Once a Fascist he is always a Fascist. This belief is so instilled in the Italian race that nothing but time will ever cause them to turn to something else. It is not a form of Democracy, as many of the Western nations think; instead: "Fascism denies that members, by the mere fact of being members, can direct human society; it denies that these members can govern by means of periodical consultations; it affirms also the fertilizing, beneficent, and unassailable inequality of man, who cannot be levelled through an extrinsic and mechanical process such as universal suffrage. Fascism above all does not believe either in the possibility or utility of universal peace. It therefore rejects the pacifism which marks surrender and cowardice. War alone brings all human energies to their highest tension, and imprints a seal of nobility on the people who have the virtue to face it. All other tests are but substitutes which never make a man face himself in the alternative of life or death. A doctrine which has its starting point at this prejudicial postulate of peace is therefore extraneous to Fascism.⁸

The squadre was the first armed group of any size to take on the responsibility of protesting Fascist principles. The first armed Fascist squadre was formed in the Po valley. The squadre is made up of young men, many of whom had been decorated with wound badges in the World War. Others were too young to have served in the war, and a third group of men too old for war service. There was no real Fascist doctrine beyond the vague sense of outraged patriotism when the squadre was organized. The squadristi were mostly armed with dull blades and cudgels, although many possessed revolvers and carbines; for at that time a large number of ex-service men had brought bail, arms of some sort from the war. Another weapon, a novelty in partisan conflicts, was castor oil, large doses of which were administered to opposing socialists and communists,

⁸J. Hampden Jackson, The Post-War World, p. 62.

and sometimes even to other opponents of Fascism.⁹ During 1921 and 1922 the Fascists and Reds had daily encounters. During the period many Fascists fell victims to their beliefs. These daily encounters caused the communists to break away from the Maximalist Social party. Then followed a series of murderous outbreaks. These skirmishes gave the squadristi a chance to show their devotion to their ideals. Many times when the communists would attack persons wearing black shirts or badges, these young boys would march on, and if necessary, give their lives for what they thought was a worthy cause. Many Italians turned to Fascism because they thought only Fascism could save the country from chaos. Others, such as landlords and manufacturers, joined for selfish reasons. Some accepted Fascism for adventure, or to secure a position of importance. In many other cases, people had been inspired by what, they thought, was genuine patriotism.

The Matteotti affair was not the big thing for Mussolini. His greatest job was to organize Italy into a corporative state of Fascist reconstruction. Mussolini knew that he had achieved power in Italy by force; he knew also that he could retain power only by improving the economic conditions of the average Italian. He went about this by improving the agricultural sections, of which two-thirds were mountainous; renewing her foreign policy with the rest of the world by paying for all imports and back debts. He wanted to make Italy a self-supporting

⁹Encyclopedia Britannica, IX, 102.

nation, especially in feedstuffs. Italy has no coal, but it is Mussolini's hope to produce electrical power from the waterfalls in the northern mountains.

The term *fascio* as applied to semi-political groupings in Italy was nothing new and was not confined to anti-socialists. It is derived from the Latin fascēs, the bundle of rods bound about the Roman lictor's axe; hence, indirectly, the *fascēs* symbolized the authority of the Roman state and its power over life and limb. By derivation, fascio means bundle, combination, union, group, band, or squad.¹⁰ A Fascist is the ideal Italian, who cannot regard himself or his relations to the nation without high emotions. To the mass of Italian people the new regime has given great benefits at the price of no apparent sacrifice. If they have lost liberties, they are not conscious of the fact. They indeed seem to have a higher pride in their status as citizens of Italy than they had before. But the future of Italy lies in her system of Fascist education. Should her present Fascist set-up fail, it would be hard to believe that she would turn to any other form of government. The real test of the permanence of Fascism will come, in the writer's opinion, when the present school boys have grown to adulthood. Now they are being educated; they are being trained as Fascists to follow the ideal of duty to the state regardless of personal liberty, or personal ambitions. Will their response to this

¹⁰ Achorn, op. cit., p. 577.

type of training be one of conformity, or one of rebellion? The definite answer must await the years; at present, one can only speculate. A complete change will not come until the attitude of mind which is generally accepted today in the western world has changed. Mr. Root, of Albany, New York, in 1915, before Fascism was known outside of Italy, made the following remarks:

There are but two underlying theories of man in the social relation to the State: One is the theory of the ancient republics, under which the state is the starting point from which rights are deduced, and the individual holds rights only as members of the state. That was the theory of Greece, and Rome, and the Italian Republics. The other is the theory of the Magna Charta, the theory of the Habeas Corpus Act, of the Statute of Treasons, of the Petition of Rights, of the Bill of Rights, of the Massachusetts Bag of Liberties, of the Declaration of Independence of the American Republic, that the individual has inalienable rights, of which no Government may deprive him, but to secure which all government exists.¹¹

Fascism demands of man a new habit of thought, and the rejection of many ideas which had come, in Italy, to be accepted as indisputable axioms. It is to politics somewhat as the Einstein theory is to physics. In regard to the artistic and intellectual development of the future, what is the destiny of Italy under Fascism? Of the artistic development, there is no cause for anxiety. Present indications show a quickening of artistic impulse under the new regime, and there must be a rich harvest of advantage in the future from the importance now given in the educational system to the aesthetic side of life.¹² Mussolini's idea of a man's duty to the state

¹¹Fox, op. cit., pp. 272-73.

¹²Ibid., p. 277.

could, in many ways, have been taken from what Socrates said while he was in prison facing death for a crime he had committed. Some of his friends made it possible for him to escape, but he refused to leave the prison, saying to his friends that his duty as a citizen was to the state regardless of what it saw fit to do to him.

Our country is more to be valued and higher and holier far than mother or father or any ancestor, and more to be regarded in the eyes of the gods and of men of understanding; also to be gently and reverently entreated when angry, even more than a father, and if not persuaded, obeyed. And when we are punished by her, whether with imprisonment or stripes, the punishment is to be endured in silence: and if she lead us to wounds or death in battle, thither we follow as is right; neither may any one yield or retreat or leave his rank, but whether in battle or in a court of law, or in any other place, he must do what his country orders him: or he must change their view of what is just; and if he may do no violence to his father or mother, much less any violence may be done to his country. For the laws will say to him: "After having brought you through birth into the world and nurtured and educated you, and given you and every other citizen a share in every good which we had to give, we have further proclaimed to every citizen that if he does not like us when he has come of age and has seen the way of the State, he may go where he pleases and take his goods with him, and we will not forbid him nor interfere with him. But he who has had experience in the manner in which we order justice and administer the State, and still remain, has entered into a contract that he will do what we command him. And he who disobeys us is thrice wrong: firstly, because, in disobeying us, he is disobeying his parents; secondly, because we are authors of his education; thirdly, because he has made an agreement with us that he will duly obey our commands."¹³

Fascism offers a philosophy which prescribes discipline and acquiescence in authority and at the same time glorifies the romantic element of national tradition.

¹³Ibid., pp. 278-79.

Fascist writers declare that Fascism is above all, action and sentiment; Fascism as an idea is indefinable. (It is a fact which is taking place.) Individuals are merely the means by which society achieves its ends. The individual, according to Fascism, is subordinated to society, but not eliminated. He owes a duty to the state and in the exercise of this duty may be called on to sacrifice veritably all that he has, including his life. Individual rights are recognized by Fascism only in so far as they are implied in the rights of the state; the legitimate will of the citizen is that which coincides with the will of the state. "Discipline must be accepted," says Mussolini. When it is not accepted, it must be imposed.¹⁴

The awakening in education came, strangely, at a very opportune moment. It came when the country was already in the advanced stage of social and economic disintegration, due to the spiritual chaos that followed the World War. Fascist education came at a time when modern Italy was scarcely sixty years old. Mussolini set up under his guidance the principles of education. He says today what the Italian youth shall study. He exerts today, over a population of over 42,000,000, more power than the Kaiser ever dreamed of wielding. There has been none since Napoleon who has so impressed his personality on a nation. Fascist principles and education stand out today as one of the world's most interesting national ex-

¹⁴Buell, op. cit., p. 52.

periments.¹⁵

The public school is by far the most effective means of winning the allegiance of the nation's youth to national ideals. The educational experiments of the French revolutionists demonstrated to the world the use of schools for civic training.¹⁶ Most of the school laws passed in Italy since the Casati Law in 1859, have favored national educational instruction.

Fascism may be described as the ripening fruit of a world-wide movement of ideas, which for various historical and psychological reasons have first emerged in Italy into something sufficiently definite for the student with an acute sense of history to appraise, and sufficiently universal in appeal to enable him to realize the importance of the part they may be destined to play in the history of the world during the coming generations.¹⁷

The basic idea of Fascism, indeed, is the spiritual interpretation of history. Fascism is a definite revolt against materialism -- that is, against all forms of interpreting the universe from a purely naturalistic standpoint. All Fascists have a reverence for the supernatural and are resolved that the new generations shall be brought up in a religious atmosphere and be protected from the dissolving

¹⁵Hullinger, op. cit., p. 6.

¹⁶Schneider and Cleugh, Making Fascists, p. 83.

¹⁷J. S. Barnes, Fascism, p. 11.

poisons of materialism in all its forms. This is the paramount reason of Fascist intransigence in Italy, now, of Fascist intolerance, if you will: for Fascism is resolved to build up a generation of believers as the only means of reaching out of the present chaos, cost what it may. Italy may in this respect, be compared to a nursery garden of young saplings, which have to be protected from the wind and from frost until they become sufficiently grown to withstand alone the inclemencies of the weather.¹⁸

The Italian people have sacrificed more than money for the cause of Fascism. Italy gave up her liberty when the Fascists marched on Rome in 1921. (In Italy today, eighteen years since she gave power over into the hands of Mussolini, Italy is still ruled by the Grand Fascist Council, master of the nation.) In 1926 the Fascist government established the following forms of punishment: imprisonment up to thirty years, or a sentence to die, if any one was found guilty of: attempts against the life of the king or any other government head; attempts against the independence and dissolving of the Fatherland; violation of secrets concerning the state in any way; attempts at any kind of internal peace. In the month of October, 1931, alone, 1,056 anti-Fascists were serving sentences in different parts of Italy. The number who had paid with their lives was unknown or else undivulged. This shows what methods the Fascist regime resorts to to put over

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 43-44.

its program. By 1934 the Fascist party had grown to over a million and a half men, acting as semi-official police, besides all of the other Fascist organizations composed of women and children.

The Fascist state rests on three basic principles. First, that man, besides being an individual, is by nature also a social animal, by which is implied the nation of necessary cooperative existence. Secondly, that human actions are subject to the moral law, itself based upon the eternal law of God. Thirdly, each differentiated human group is a natural phenomenon which possesses an organic life embracing a series of generations of individuals composing it, possessed of a community sense and subject to national sociological laws of conservation, integration, and growth.¹⁹

"Liberty," declared Lenin, "is a bourgeois dream." Let it be known, once for ever, that Fascism knows no idols, nor does it adore fetishes, shouts Mussolini, "it has walked before now over the somewhat putrefied corpse of the Goddess Liberty and, should it be necessary, will calmly do so again."

The dictators of Europe, if they agree about nothing else, are completely at one in their opinion that the will of the people must not prevail.²⁰

The Italian Duce himself seems to take considerable delight in referring to the educational reforms of Gentile as the most Fascist of the Fascist reforms. In fact, one of the greatest achievements of Benito Mussolini as premier of Italy deals with a very important phase of the national education of the people. He, with the cooperation of such men as Professor Giovanni Gentile, who entered Mussolini's cabinet as Minister of Public Instruction in 1932, has completely revolutionized the traditional system of education

¹⁹Barnes, op. cit., p. 80.

²⁰Tiltman, op. cit., p. 2.

in Italy.²¹

Fascism aims at the creation of a new school system which imparts energy of thought and will to rising generations; it aspires to develop a culture that will represent the consciousness of all the manifold and fertile powers accumulated by the Italian race throughout its history. Fascism seeks to realize the ideal of an organic and totalitarian state controlling the lives, while motivating the wills and consciences of its people. In Italy as in other totalitarian states, this introduction is carried out not only in the schools but also through a youth movement, which is controlled and directed by the state. The individual makes his world. But in a Fascist state, mind and personality must express themselves according to the pattern which the state furnishes.²²

Fascism is living in Italy due to the fact that it has been instilled into the people, especially into the young Italians, by every conceivable method possible. All children are forced to go to school; nothing but Fascism is taught in the Italian schools. All of the textbooks have been rewritten in favor of Fascism. The children sit under Mussolini's portrait and learn to spell out the motto on the walls: "Mussolini is always right."

All of the textbooks are written in praise of Il Duce. A summary of the first three general readers will reveal what

²¹Howard R. Marraro, "Education in Italy Under Mussolini," Current History, XXIII, 705.

²²Duggan, op. cit., p. 261.

the young Italian boy and girl study. The first sixteen pages are devoted to personal anecdotes about Il Duce, twenty-six pages to Fascism, and ninety pages to war. There are likewise five pictures of Mussolini, thirty-one showing the Fascist uniform or emblems, and thirty-six featuring rifles. The eleven maps in the third reader and its accompanying atlas are all of Italy or her colonies. Not one shows the rest of Europe or hints at the existence of other continents.²³

In the first primer as the child puzzles out "an orange," and "a pencil," he also learns "a toy soldier" and all are "little soldiers of il duce." The most interesting page is about Mussolini. In advance of the picture of Christ surrounded by little children, we find il duce, holding a small boy in his arms. "Benito Mussolini loves little children. The children of Italy love il duce." We read "vive il duce! Salute il duce!" On the opposite page is a prayer. "Italian children lift a thought to heaven each morning for il duce."

In the third reader, 72 pages are given to religion, 116 to arithmetic and geography, and some 97 pages, or a third of the book, to war.²⁴

It is true that the school books have many admirable qualities. They are attractive with their large type and lively presentation.

While in school, the children must chant in choruses which are decidedly Fascist. When outside the schoolroom, the children are mobilized into troops, the boys into black shirted Balillas and the girls into Picciole and Giorane d'Italia divisions. The larger boys from fourteen to eighteen

²³Emily Taft Douglas, "Education for War," The Christian Century, LIII, 36; No. 14, p. 496.

²⁴Ibid., p. 496.

are organized into the avanguardisti. All sports and play life of the students center around Fascist military organizations. When these young Italians reach eighteen, they may be admitted to the Fascist party. This is a high honor; many ask to join, but few are taken in.

In 1931, all university professors had to take the following oath or give up their positions:

I swear to be loyal to the king, to his Royal successors, and to the Fascist regime, and to observe loyally the constitution and other laws of the state; to exercise the position of teacher and to fulfil my academic duties with the idea of forming industrious citizens, upright and devoted to the Fatherland and to the Fascist regime. I swear I do not belong to and never will belong to organizations, associations, or parties whose activities cannot be reconciled with the duties of my office.²⁵

With the state controlling the instruction, the books, and all forms of military instruction and training, young Italy can be nothing but good Fascists. In 1932 there were over 1,300,000 boys in these Fascist societies in which the children are given special moral, religious, military, and physical training. The instructors always instill in the young Italians what the Fascists have achieved, and are going to build in the future. Decalogue of the young Fascist whose tenth commandment reads: "Only one thing should be dear to thee above all: the life of Il Duce."²⁶

It is clear that education for girls in Italy is not yet considered to be of equal importance with that of boys. The

²⁵Jackson, op. cit., p. 61.

²⁶Langsam, op. cit., p. 322.

teaching in the schools ^{is} done almost entirely by men, and only a few women are ^{employed} to teach, chiefly the modern languages, English and French. There are two schools for girls in Italy -- one at Rome and one at Florence. At the present time it is hard to say what the university women of Italy are going to do with their education.²⁷

Mussolini believes that the place for a woman ^{is} in the home. If she does anything else, it should be social welfare work. But despite this belief on the part of Il Duce, there are over 100,000 young girls about twelve years of age who are organized into about six hundred Fascist societies. These groups are controlled in the same way as the boys' Fascist societies. They have their headquarters in Rome.

Fascist education extends into every field, but it always stresses intellectual uniformity. That is its strong point. Soldierly virtues, especially manliness and the ideal of self-sacrifice, are preached and practiced, though religious sensitiveness is also cultivated, and each legion has its own chaplain.²⁸

Minister Goebbels said, "Revolutionary forces must be devoted to all channels of public life..... the state must stand for the principle of totality."²⁹ Education must be

²⁷ Marian P. Whitney, "The Higher Education of Women in Italy," Education Review, LXII, 37.

²⁸ Constance F. Stecher, "Education Under Fascism," The Social Studies, XXIX, 173.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 174.

modern; it must pursue practical ends, giving preferences to utilitarian subjects such as language, scientific data capable of a practical application, social, economic, and legal knowledge enabling the future citizen to understand the society of which he is to be a member. It must give up all claim to that abstract and aristocratic training of the mind formerly the perquisite of the small privileged groups.³⁰ Fascism may be defined as a subordination of individuals' rights to the advancement of national claims. It suppresses freedom of speech, discourages thinking and disfavors political, scientific, and even economic advancement by interference with the exchange of ideas.

The cornerstone of the Fascist doctrine is a conception of the state, absolute and of individuals and groups, conceivable only inasmuch as they exist in the state.

The state is the present, the past, and, above all, the future. Fascism wants the state to be strong and organic. In the totalitarian state, education is directed on unlimited subordination of all individuals to the will and guidance of the state as expressed by a dictator or by a party. In the totalitarian state, education is dominated by a body of social, political, economic, and national doctrines, convictions, and ideals which serve as a basis of national solidarity which it is dangerous for the individual to question.

³⁰Ernesta Codignola, "The Aims of Fascist Education," The New Era, XV, 178.

Actually, the people, who have never known real democratic self-government, have always been content to have their governing done for them by a ruling caste and have been satisfied to work out their lives as the most frugal and industrious people on earth, content if able to earn a bare living for themselves and their families without bothering with politics.³¹ These people make the best kind of Fascists.

For the first time, under the Fascist regime, the proletarian and the peasant find the government taking a direct interest in their welfare, an interest which lasts twelve months a year and is not limited, as formerly, to the kind words of the deputy seeking re-election.

The wage-earner, as a member of his syndicate, has become a part, although a very small one, of the actual propaganda for Fascismo, which he meets at every turn in the schools, the press, the speeches, the parades, and holidays. He has acquired the consciousness that he is a fascista and such a citizen of a great country and a loyal Italian. Of the former ruling class, the intransigent have either left Italy or been silenced. Most of them, without profound convictions, have elected to swim with the tide, and are as enthusiastic Fascisti as the best. The glamour of Fascismo appeals to the masses, and they support it; its solid accomplishments appeal to the hardheaded middle classes, and to the vast majority of

³¹McClellan, op. cit., p. 279.

thinking people in the kingdom.

To make society happy, and people easy under the meanest circumstances, wrote Bernard de Mandrille,

It is requisite the great numbers of them should be ignorant, as well as poor. Knowledge both enlarges and multiplies our desires, and the fewer things a man wishes for, the more easily his necessities may be supplied. The welfare and felicity, therefore, of every state and kingdom, requires that the knowledge of the working poor should be confined with the verge of their occupations, and never extend as to visible things beyond what relates to their calling..... Abundance of hard and dirty labor is to be done, and a coarse living to be completed with: where shall we find a better nursery for these necessities than the children of the poor?....by bringing them up in ignorance, you may inure them to real hardships, without being ever sensible themselves that they are such.³²

According to the Fascists' theory, the average man is unfit to govern, his function being to produce for the benefit of the state, the affairs of government being left to a carefully trained ruling class. The ordinary citizen enjoys only such rights as may be compatible with the national interests, his life and his affairs being regulated and guided by government from the cradle to the grave.³³

The objectives of the Italian educational system, as well as of the Italian party, *which is the party* are sometimes summarized as follows:

We are the elite; we are the elite not because we are better, able or wealthier, or more nobly born. We are elite because we will to create a unified Italy, a purified Italy, an economically self-sufficient Italy, an Italy that shall stand proud and unafraid in this

³²Kirby Page, Individualism and Socialism, p. 38.

³³Hullinger, op. cit., p. 264.

world dominated by powerful states, an Italy in which every man is secure in his property, in his reasonable expectations of economic returns and enjoyment of life and in his protection against sickness, old age, and poverty; an Italy of health, of disseminated culture, and of vigorous race.

We, the elite, will these things to become. We can only break through the stupid selfishness and inertia of our age by positive action. We seize leadership which involves work, restraint, puritanic lives, rigid honesty, great self-sacrifice. To this elite we admit only those who accept such discipline and who recognize that efficient organization implies hierarchy. All Fascists, will, therefore, give themselves wholeheartedly to carry out the directions and requests that come to them from the offices of the hierarchy, and in order to personify this appeal and this hierarchy, they will again and again pledge their implicit obedience to their leader, Il Duce, Benito Mussolini.³⁴

By leadership men grow. Under dictatorship they stagnate and sleep.³⁵

Fascist education is a challenge to the educational program of the liberal and democratic states. The choice lies between a form of society based on fear, hatred, intolerance, coercion, and regimentation, and one which pins its faith on the development of independence, tolerance, and freedom of thought and of expression.³⁶ Which shall it be? The essence of the whole educational system is to capture the fancy of the masses as well as of the children. No wonder children are joining Fascist legions by the tens of thousands, even against their parents' wishes. Mussolini has said that the

³⁴Cox, op. cit., XIV, 326.

³⁵Paul Pigors, Leadership or Domination, p. 12.

³⁶Stecher, op. cit., XXIX, 177.

whole future of Fascismo depends upon the education of this army of children. He is quite right.³⁷

In nearly every way modern Italy is a busier, more industrious country than before Mussolini took power, with fewer evidences of poverty on the surface; but there is a wide difference of opinion as to whether the general standard of living has actually risen. Wages remained low and prices and taxes relatively high, and are still disproportionate. After all, nature has imposed severe limitations on Italy which no government can wholly overcome.³⁸

It is the belief of the writer that the Fascist Revolution, in the end, will have to pay for many of its shortcomings. But there are two sides to this question. The Fascists have done many things that pre-war Italy would never have accomplished. The Fascists have fired the present united Italians with the idea that Italy can be proud of her present nation, as well as that which she has been in the past. The Fascist mottoes from the first carried the Italians a long way. Possible for Italy there was no other way out other than Fascismo education, but in a democratic country like the United States, Fascism would never work for the betterment of the nation.

Only two paths are, in fact, open before present society at the existing stage:

³⁷Johannes P. Freden, "Children of Fascism," Living Age, CCCXLIV, 134.

³⁸Slosson, op. cit., p. 656.

One is to endeavor to maintain at all cost the existing class domination at the expense of the requirements of productive development as well as at the expense of all human cultural values. This means in practice to strangle the powers of production, to retard technical development, to destroy material and human forces, to crush the development of ideas and thought, and to concentrate the entire society on organization for war, leading in turn to still greater destruction and decay. This is the path of Fascism, the path to which the bourgeoisie in all modern countries, where its rules are increasingly turning, the path of human decay.

The other alternative is to organize the new productive forces as social forces, as the common wealth of the entire existing society for the rapid and enormous rising of the material basis of society, the destruction of poverty, ignorance, and disease, and of class and national separations, the unlimited carrying forward of science and culture, and the organization of the world communist society in which all human beings will for the first time be able to reach full stature and play their part in the collective development of the future humanity. This is the path of communism.³⁹

The big question today is which one of these alternatives will conquer and rule the world -- Fascism or Communism? Mussolini and his lieutenants say that the former will prevail. But the world must make its choice.⁴⁰

³⁹R. Palme Dutt, Fascism and Social Revolution, pp. 14-15.

⁴⁰Tiltman, op. cit., p. 11.

CHAPTER IV

ITALIAN EDUCATION TODAY

One of the greatest achievements of the Fascist rule in Italy has been the overhauling of the nation's educational system by a series of reforms. The reforms of the last decade have aimed to raise the tone, to increase activity and achievement, and to extend more widely elementary education to the masses of average Italians. How important these reforms are can be appreciated if it is recalled that until 1923 the schools of Italy were administered under the Casati Law of 1859, which established a system of public instruction for Piedmont and Lombardy. As the rest of Italy became united with the kingdoms of Piedmont and Sardinia, the Casati Law was extended throughout the nation. Although the law was revised by succeeding ministers of education, no serious effort at improvement was made until May, 1915, when the economic and social upheaval caused by Italy's entrance into the World War led to a sharp change in the traditional system of education, and to proposals to remodel it to serve more fully the actual needs of the nation.¹ But again the results amounted to little.

Italy had so centralized her school system that she made

¹Cole and Cole, op. cit., p. 65.

it little more than a state monopoly. It was the state that granted diplomas and school certificates of various kinds; it was the state also that licensed teachers, formulated their syllabus, and dictated as to what and how they should teach. In some places there were private schools, but these were established for the wealthy. Should a student leave a private school and enter a state school, he had to meet the requirements brought to bear by the state before he was allowed to enter. All examinations were sent out by the state government. It is true that a state-centralized school system has many advantages, and, as a rule, functions in a most efficient manner. Some people believe that a system of this type is inflexible and incapable of being adjusted to satisfy local needs.

In Italy before the war, education provided for three schools, namely, elementary, secondary, and universities. Some communities were provided with a pre-elementary school (kindergarten). The children entered these schools and remained until they were ten years old. School attendance was supposed to have been compulsory, but the law was not enforced. This fact caused the Italian educational system to be weak and unsubstantial. The secondary schools were divided into various types of schools, the most important of these being the Scuole Classice with its eight-year curriculum. All of its courses were preparatory for entrance to the university. The technical schools offered work which

was a background for higher work in some kind of an engineering school. Another division of the secondary school was the Scuola Normale and the Scuola di Magistro,² which trained teachers for the elementary schools. After the secondary school came the university, which the students entered about the time they were eighteen or nineteen years old. The above is a brief outline of the early school system of Italy. A much more thorough study of the subject is found in the first chapter of this thesis.

The writer has pointed out that the state had centralized its school system to the point that it lacked inflexibility, and could not be adjusted to fit the needs in all of the communities. The system was state-dominated, and in most instances all administrative care was purely mechanical, showing little interest in the people in each community. No doubt the greatest weakness was an inefficient compulsory educational system.

In 1922 Dr. Lay, a German philosopher, wrote in his book on German education, condemning the German system for these reasons: the school system was dominated by three evils -- materialism, individualism, and intellectualism. Doctor Lay maintained that a reform in German education could be brought about only by the eradication of these three evils. What he said about Germany could have been said about the schools of

²Cubberley, op. cit., p. 361.

pre-war Italy. The intellectual side of education was all that the Italian school system stressed.³ The secondary school curriculum was unbalanced. Cultural training was the most important objective. This culture had to be obtained, even if by no other means than concentrated cramming. Teachers as well as students lost all initiative. They could do only those things some higher authority told them to do. Knowledge was the main goal. No attention was given to any kind of physical training. Games, music, and fine arts were almost entirely neglected. The student's main objective in the universities was to obtain enough knowledge to hold a government position. It seems that a position with the government was considered one of high honor.

The reform of the Italian school began in October, 1922, when Prime Minister Mussolini appointed Professor Giovanni Gentile, the philosopher, and his helper, Lombardo Radice, to the position of Minister of Public Instruction. Gentile believed that the school should be employed to strengthen the nation and to make good Italians. It was the feeling of Gentile that the success of any school system lay with efficient teachers. Gentile strove to minimize routine in education as much as possible. He thought that the value of what was taught should be left to the teacher to convey his subject matter in a way that would be magnetic and enthusiastic.

³Pigors, op. cit., p. 201.

Teaching and learning are, according to this Italian reformer, dependent upon mutual cooperation between student and teacher. Gentile believed that the true aim of the school should be the formation of a patriotic mind and heart, and the preparation of the student for the manifold responsibilities of life.

Gentile was called upon to reform a school system that was defective from almost every point of view. The administrative organization was loose; discipline among teachers was unsatisfactory; there was an insufficiency of schools everywhere; and attendance was only 65 per cent of the enrollment. Gentile's first task was to establish a strong and efficient system of school administrators. He believed that, if education was to function for the interests of the state, all activities should receive their instruction from the Ministry of National Education, whose incumbents were appointed by the state government. The Minister of Education is given more power over the Italian educational system than he heads than any other person in the school system of Italy, or any one man in the school system of the United States. The Minister of Education has the responsibility for the organization of the entire school system. Under his direction a course of study is prepared for all the schools.

The Fascist government supports Gentile's educational program. The sum contributed by the government has risen from 975,095,000 lire in 1922-23 to 1,434,501,000 lire in 1929-30, an increase of 47 per cent. Since 1930, the amount contributed

to educational expenditures has increased a great deal more.

From the beginning of the Fascist regime illiteracy has been decreasing more rapidly than in any other period of Italian history. This is due to the passage and rigid enforcement of a new compulsory school attendance law. Failure to comply with this law is now a violation of the new penal code. Italy relinquished her former disinterest in educational matters and came to realize that the rigid enforcement of this code was the only way illiteracy among the elementary children could be reduced. To show what progress has been made, a few statistics should be noted. In 1871, 69 per cent of the people were illiterate, but by 1923 the number had dropped to 27 per cent. The same year the census reports gave 10,800,000 individuals over six years of age as being unable to read and write. The 1927 census report gave 21 per cent of the population as illiterate. This means that during the first four years of the Fascist regime a total of 2,400,000 Italians had been taught how to read and write. These results were achieved in spite of many difficulties, especially in southern Italy, where geographical conditions were unfavorable and where there were thinly populated areas. The question was mainly one of dealing adequately with the rural districts with a population of peasants, shepherds, and fishermen who considered reading and writing a luxury.⁴ In many

⁴Prince Hubertus Loewenstein, The Tragedy of a Nation, p. 135.

cases parents tried every possible means to prevent their children from attending any kind of a school, even to the destruction of the school books. In districts of this kind the citizens had to be stimulated with a desire to learn before a school could be built. The government has been most generous in increasing the number of day schools for children and night or evening schools for adults in both the rural areas and cities. The compulsory attendance law for children from six to fourteen years of age is now strictly enforced. Over 91 per cent of the children of school age were in school in 1929-30, while only 65 per cent had been in school in 1922-23. The Fascist regime is not the only reason for the increase in the number of students.⁵ Before the Gentile reforms, the elementary school was an unpleasant place for young boys and girls to work. The main objective of the old schools was to impart a minimum of information in the fundamentals of education. The Fascist elementary school, which provides the only training for most of the Italians, now aims at giving an education that, though simple and limited, is also complete and organic. The present system teaches something besides merely the "three R's". Since the intellect, according to Gentile, can be developed only by developing personality, the school aspires to raise immature and untrained minds to the realization of the all-important problems of the moral

⁵"International Commerce for Political Reasons," The Fascist Dictatorship, p. 21.

world. The hope is to make children, within the limitations of their years, feel and enjoy the values of reality and widen their spiritual horizon so that they may adjust themselves to the world in which they live.

Textbooks have been revised with interests centering about present-day things of Fascist nature. The writer does not agree with all the things they teach, but he does think they are much better constructed books than were the old texts. All textbooks are subject to revision every three years, which is undoubtedly a good practice. Italian citizens can purchase these books from the state bookstore whenever they like. The first experiment of revision was not a happy one. Recently most of the selections of the books have been made by a national committee. It is yet too early to say whether the textbooks selected for the various classes are better adapted than were the former ones to the real needs of children. In Italy at the present time it is difficult to define just what are the needs of the children -- other than Fascist principles!

Italy has spent huge sums of money in the construction of school buildings, and this expenditure was necessary because in many sections of Italy the buildings were in very poor condition or there were no buildings at all. Notable progress has also been made in the education of the blind and of the deaf.

One of the things the Italians are interested in is religion.⁶ Since the beginning of the new regime, religious instruction has been introduced into all the schools. Art and religious instruction and training are the fundamentals of the new elementary school, as conceived by the Fascists. Conceiving art as the immediate expression of individuality, Gentile insisted that the child, by his own nature, is an artist, a creator of his own world, and should be encouraged to satisfy to the utmost the need of translating his growing personality into real-life situations. As a result, the Italian children in the schools do not now have to follow the old mechanical methods of pre-Gentile days. The child is allowed to learn penmanship without the use of models which formerly compelled all pupils to write alike and without any individuality; he no longer has set themes to work out, nor is he obliged to write about something of which he knows nothing and which holds no interest for him. Now he writes when he wants to and when he feels that he has something to say, and these spontaneous compositions may take the form of diaries or of reports of his everyday life in and out of school. In his drawing class the Italian child no longer reproduces lines and shadows from a design; he is told to draw from life, to put down what he actually sees or what he imagines, and if he wishes to do so he may draw pictures to illustrate his own diary. The main objective of present-day

⁶Garlando, op. cit., p. 35.

teaching is to encourage the child to do things by and for himself, to work out his own thoughts and thereby gradually mold a personality of his own. If a child is allowed to do this, he can go out into the world with habits of initiative and independence, equipped not merely with the tools of reading and writing, but endowed with a keen awareness of his attainments and with the confidence of one who knows his powers and limitations, and consequently his own place in the world.

Physical training is now being emphasized in all the schools. Breaking with Italian traditions, Professor Gentile stated that a complete and perfect system of education should aim not only at the development of the spirit but development of the body as well. A teacher of physical education must bear in mind that he is not dealing with bodies to be moved about, lined up, or rushed around a race track; he is training souls as well. In the old days, physical education in the schools lacked purpose and adequate teachers; in many communities it was entirely neglected. To remedy these defects the government in December, 1923, established the Ente Nazionale per l'Educazione Fisica, an organization which had full charge of the physical training in the schools. But because of insufficient resources the results were not satisfactory, and in October, 1927, the Ente was merged with the Opera Nazionale Balilla for Physical Education, which government proclamation had established in April, 1926. The head of the

Balilla was placed under the direct supervision of the Ministry of National Education, which had headquarters in Rome. The Balilla is for boys from eight to fourteen years of age. An organization similar to the Balilla for girls is the Piceole Italiane and Giovani Italiane. The Avanguardisti cares for the physical education of the boys from fourteen to eighteen years of age. The organizations are maintained by membership subscriptions and donations from individuals and the government. Besides controlling physical education in the schools, the Balilla is responsible for the rest of the activities of the boys and girls while they are in school. The Balilla also provides continuation schools, vocational education, and adult education. The Balilla has devoted much time to the opening of reading rooms and circulating libraries. Visits to places of interest are fostered by the Balilla. It conducts cruises in the Mediterranean to the colonies and other places. It promotes physical and athletic activities, and maintains summer camps and athletic fields. The Balilla also provides its members with medical and preventive treatment and accident insurance. In many places the Balilla is constructing clubhouses to be used advantageously as educational and recreational centers. The boys and girls between six and eight years of age are allowed to join the "I Figli della Lupa," sometimes called the "Sons of the Wolf."⁷ If there are some other younger pre-Fascist

⁷Peter M. Reccio, On the Threshold of Fascism, p. 117.

children, they are taken in by the Pre-Balilla. The Opera Nazionale Balilla was organized for but a small group, but today it has grown to such proportions that it may be called an army. Many of the needs and principles for which it was organized have changed to those suited to men and not to young boys. It seems this organization is growing up with its young followers and adherents. In November of 1936 the membership of the following societies was reported: Balilla, 544,325; Piccole Italiane, 491,264; Avanguardisti, 146,219; Giovani Italiane, 78,849. The total of all Fascist organizations was about 3,500,000.

If the child is not inspired by all activities of the school, there is no doubt that the main objective in his education has not been reached. Much of the inspiration lies in the ability of the teacher to instill in the children the thoughts and ideas that she wishes for them to have; therefore, the government in the last decade has been especially interested in the training of elementary teachers. This the writer believes has had much to do with decreasing the number of illiterate children. Children, as well as adults, cannot be brought up on just concepts and abstract theories alone. The truth we wish to inculcate in them must address itself to their minds first of all. The school has too often forgotten this fact about elementary schools. In Italy, together with other nations, the concepts of instruction had become empty and void without arousing any interest

in the soul of the student. It is the purpose of the Opera Balilla to appeal to the imaginations of the boys and interest them directly in the dramatic celebration of solemn occasions in collective groups and in the exaltation of its martyrs, its heroes, its distinguished dead, both near and distant. The Balilla forgets the conflicts of sectional interests which before divided the country into many social and economic groupings. For too long a time Italian schools had been growing more and more estranged from active participation in the deeper life of the country, with the result that the admonitions of the teachers fell into the void and met with no response in the minds of the pupils. If one does not stop to criticize the defects, the prejudices, and faults of men, but examines events in their real historical significance, he cannot deny that the Opera Balilla has introduced a new note into the education of the Italian children, by bringing them nearer to the spirit of Italian national tradition, and has awakened them to the consciousness of sentiments and attachments which are destined to give an entirely new complexion to the Italy of tomorrow. More and more there will prevail in this instruction the highest gifts of the military spirit -- discipline and courage combined with the spirit of chivalry. The educational institutions and the Opera Balilla will forever support each other in inseparable unity. The Opera Balilla has done a great work in caring for the conduct of small rural schools which, before the new regime, had

been left to unofficial organizations. In the Opera Balilla was concentrated the support of the needy children in the rural sections.

In order to improve the personnel of teachers, competitive examinations are given. This is no doubt a good way for the state to select its best teachers. Under the new set-up, all of the schools have to have a daily health inspection controlled by the Ministry of National Education, which appoints the health supervisors, principles, and inspectors when they are needed. All of the health officers deal directly with the state government. This saves time and takes care of problems when they arise. The children each day in the schools are given instruction in the correct health habits, which practice has had a decided effect on improving the living conditions throughout all parts of Italy.

The students who do not want to go to public or private high schools must remain in the elementary school until after their fourteenth birthday. The regular elementary school course is for five years, but on its completion students must continue in the special three-year vocational schools which were established in November, 1930. In these schools a student may take a cultural or a vocational course. The subjects cover a wide field of knowledge. The Italian secondary schools required more radical reforms because, more than any other part of the educational system, their organization was defective and their studies sterile.⁸

⁸G. A. Borgese, The March of Fascism, p. 66.

The technical-vocational training schools have received more radical reforms in the past ten years than any other phase of the secondary school system. Perhaps the classical secondary schools still lean too much to the stilted form of learning, as well as teaching. The vocational schools have not been as much of a success as the other educational courses. Most of these schools lack traditions and organization. This fact makes it difficult for them to become adapted to the varied conditions and needs of various communities. They also lack stability due to constant technical progress, especially in the field of industry and agriculture.

For this reason these schools, in order to insure elasticity and adaptability of organization, were by law given autonomy in administration within certain limits, and likewise in education; for each school there has been appointed an appropriate committee including local representatives of commercial, industrial, and agricultural interests, intrusted with the task of promoting the progress of the schools within their counsel and financial aid.⁹

The writer believes that more than three years should be devoted to training in the technical schools, since in these institutions the boys and girls take up the type of work they wish to study. Most of these schools have an advisory council which makes suggestions as to what each student should take. Only students of exceptional ability are allowed to enter the advanced technical schools. This saves the government money, and at the same time cares for those students who can and want to study. Perhaps secondary technical educa-

⁹ Educational Year Book, 1935, p. 227.

tion has not found its proper place in the Italian educational system. These schools still seem to be in the trial and experimental stages. Until some kind of definite program is worked out, the technical schools will not be a success. This is the great difference between the technical and the classical secondary schools: the secondary classical schools are remarkably stable. The most radical secondary school reform is needed in the field of administration and discipline. The greatest problem of the Italian secondary educational school system is keeping it from reverting back to the old provincial educational system.

Private and secondary institutions are becoming more popular, due to the fact that the state allows only a certain number of students to attend each school each year. The government insists that all but the best of the secondary students be turned over to the private schools. The educational authorities explain that the state is obliged to provide elementary instruction for all children, but that the state should provide secondary and higher education only for those students who are worthy of such training. This is a good way for the state to save money and at the same time provide those with an education who have the ability to learn. It is the chief objective of the secondary school to teach the children how to meet future life. Formerly the schools imparted textbook information and crammed the student's mind with the greatest possible number of simplified and catalogued notions; the new programs aim to educate by direct acquaintance with the

masters of thought and art, thus doing away entirely with the old manual that provided the student with ready-made knowledge to be passively accepted. While giving greater impulse to professional training, the secondary schools emphasize the liberal studies. Latin and the classics are studied in all of the secondary schools. Philosophy is given more importance, while new subjects such as religion, political economy, and the history of art, have been added to the curriculum. There has also been more diversification in the study of modern languages, and English and German have grown at the expense of French.

The higher educational system has had a most radical reform program in the last ten years. Probably other reforms should and will be made. The changes which Gentile introduced in the universities are considered a milestone in the history of higher education in Italy. Before the reform program was instituted, all of the universities were alike in form and content, having the same faculties, the same subjects, the same requirements for degrees, and the same administrative system. Today each university possesses a distinctive and individual personality that renders it independent of all other universities. Each is now empowered to determine the number and the nature of the schools, institutes, libraries and so on that it needs; each is authorized to decide upon its own program of studies; each is empowered to administer its income in the manner best suited to its particular purpose. This is a good

thing, because local conditions make it impossible for all universities to meet the same requirements for a degree.

Gentile, in his reform system, asserted that the state undertakes to support only such faculties, schools, libraries and clinics as it deems necessary. The universities are arranged into the following classifications: ten are wholly supported by the national government; eleven are supported equally by the government and communities; while five so-called "free" universities or institutes are entirely supported by private and local resources. The number of students in institutes and universities has been increasing each year since the Fascist regime took over the Italian government. The writer believes that the state should support all universities equally, provided they have about the same expense and number of students. This is not done. The state has always favored some universities and institutes with larger funds; other schools of the same rank have suffered. The number of institutions of higher learning could be reduced without any harmful effects if the remaining universities would fuse. This would help to reduce the government's expenditures for higher education. The multiplication of institutions of higher learning has resulted in the loss of a vision which should lead to an improvement in educational instruction.

The faculty members of each university are allowed, under the supervision of the government, to make out their own

programs, stating what courses shall be taught; therefore students today enjoy considerable freedom in their studies. In many courses they not have to take a final examination, except in the ones designated by the state. Each year the faculty and school recommend a program of study. Students are permitted to make changes in their courses as long as they take the minimum of subjects that constitute a properly organized program. The degrees and diplomas conferred by universities and institutes do not qualify the student, as formerly, for the practice of any profession, but must be supplemented by licenses granted after passing state examinations.

The educational reforms introduced by the Fascist government during its existence are far-reaching. It is enough to read the history of Italy since 1815 to regard with intense sympathy her struggle for nationhood. After fighting forthrightly for the right to become a united nation for more than fifty years, she began her effort to build a nation from a heterogeneous population that was more than 75 per cent illiterate, with no money, no industry, no railroads and very limited national resources. In spite of the shock of the World War and the series of economic and social disturbances which followed, the Italians have reduced illiteracy to 21 per cent, and they have created a school system which endows the new generation with energy of thought and will, and seeks to develop culture truly Italian. Because Fascism advances and

exalts those qualities which assure the greatness of Italy, and since the problem of its greatness is above all a problem of education and culture, Mussolini has rightly defined Gentile's reforms as "the most Fascist of all the Fascist."¹⁰

Doctor George J. Ryan, president of the New York City Board of Education, returned from France and Italy in November, 1934. While in Italy he made a study of the school conditions, and when he returned, asserted that he had not found any teaching of intense nationalism in the Italian schools, but had been impressed by the discipline, cooperation, and spirit of sacrifice.

"Italy has certainly progressed," he continued. "I talked with Mussolini for half an hour. He is a dynamic man. He told me Italy wants peace, and that the best way to insure peace is to be ready in case of war."¹¹

The main difference between American and Italian universities is: the American universities give a more completely rounded and balanced individual to society, whereas in Italy, as in other European countries, the institutions of higher learning are concerned more with intellectual development, pay little or no attention to the student's social and physical needs. The average Italian university graduate is thus a better scholar than the American college graduate, but is often in poorer physical condition and less at ease in different kinds of society. This, after all, is why we Americans go to school.

¹⁰Warraro, op. cit., XXXIX, 540.

¹¹George J. Ryan, "Comments on Absence of Intense Nationalistic Teaching," New York Times, November 15, 1934, p. 17.

CONCLUSION

At the time Italy fell under Fascist control, her national problem was an organic one which concerned three questions. Italy still lacked unity, and as long as provincial rather than national feeling dominated the country, it could not be expected to enjoy an unruffled existence. The nation was in need of reorganization, rejuvenation, and functional ideas. Her habits of living had to be changed if she expected to move in step with the modern nations of the world. The whole country had to learn the lesson that the twentieth century was teaching the progressive nations of Europe and America. She had to free herself from the grip of Italian Reds.

The creation of the Italian educational system was a bold adventure in school building. This school system developed as a result of social unrest not in Italy alone but also in many parts of the world after the World War. Fascism was Mussolini's solution of the social and economic problems in which Italy found herself engulfed at that particular time. Just as our forefathers began a great experiment in government, so the Italian nation is now evidently trying to work out its own salvation by means of an equally novel and startling Fascist educational adventure.

The writer has sought for material on all phases of education in Italy before and after Fascism became the main thought and objective of the Italian people. This study has been most interesting. In many places he found Fascist principles reverting back to the Roman Catholic civilization of centuries ago. In many parts of Italy dictatorship relies upon public opinion to a much greater degree than is supposed.

Since civilization began, the world has needed capable men to guide and direct its affairs, in building business enterprises, in politics, in the professions, in the church, and in education. But one of the most important distinctions in the world is that between a leader and a dictator. A leader always gets his own lead from some one or something greater than himself. The leader is also a good follower, orienting his course by the facts of the situation and by the needs of his followers and of the times.

Has Mussolini taken into consideration the above thought? The writer doubts whether he has. Mussolini is going to put over his beliefs and principles of education at any cost. With the assistance of Professor Gentile and other ministers of education, he has built a very effective Fascist educational system. The leaders of the Fascist government have found the schools useful in molding the thoughts and ideas of the future Italian subjects. The youth of the country are so well taught that they accept Fascist educational principles without question. Italy has one of the best educational systems in

the world for the training of followers. It is efficient from every point of view, but should a nation devote all of its time, money, and effort to the training of good followers? It is the writer's belief that some attention should be given to the question of who is going to direct the affairs of the Italian nation. Mussolini believes that he is superior to any other living Italian. He accepts all the responsibility of guiding the affairs of the nation, because he believes the average Italian incapable of directing his own affairs. The reason for this is the educational program under which the citizens of Italy are being trained. Mussolini uses Fascist principles to instill in the Italians his thoughts and ideas, thus giving Italy something it can call its own. Under the present regime, all Italian children become a part of the Fascist educational system which now dominates that country. Fascist educational principles are most effective. Whether they instill into the hearts and minds of the individual the correct thoughts and habits, however, the future alone can divulge.

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