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PART II

STUDIES OF NATIONAL IMMIGRATION CURRENTS.

CHAPTER II

IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES[1]

By Walter F. Willcox.

In studying the growth of population there was little need to examine the meaning of that word. But in approaching the subject of migration, it is necessary in the first place to discuss definitions. The word "immigrant" may be defined administratively, because of the wording of a law or of convenience in administering it, or theoretically with regard to the real nature of immigration. In the legislation or regulations of different countries scores of definitions of immigrant and emigrant, immigration and emigration may be found; they have been brought together and reviewed in recent publications of the International Labour Office.[2] No definition has won general acceptance, but there is a tendency to increase the emphasis upon two characteristics of an immigrant: change of place, and accompanying that change an intent to change the residence. This intent is closely connected with a plan to seek a livelihood in the new abode. What is often called temporary immigration, for example, involving a change of place for a period of weeks, months, or years, but with the intent to retain or return to the former abode, is not real immigration. Traveling for business or pleasure, but with no intent to change the residence, is not migration. Many countries have defined emigrants as those who leave or immigrants as those who arrive over the sea. This definition, used for years by the United States, may be convenient administratively, but has no scientific basis. Recently the United States has broadened its definition of an immigrant so as to include those also who enter over its land frontiers from Canada or Mexico. Some countries define an immigrant as one who has made a special contract for the voyage or for employment after arrival but neither of these characteristics is an element the presence or absence of which should be decisive.

A distinction is to be made between migration and emigration or immigration. Migration, the broader term, includes all changes

[1]See *International Migrations*, Vol. I, pages 169 ff., and 374-500.

[2]International Labour Office, *Migration Laws and Treaties*, Vol. I, *Emigration Laws and Regulations*, Chapter II, Definition of an Emigrant; Vol. II, *Immigration Laws and Regulations*, Chapter II, Definition of an Immigrant, Geneva, 1928.

of abode, even the shifting of animals on land, in water or air. But emigration and immigration by their prefixes imply the existence of an organized state in which the migrant has resided or intends to reside. The words are different names for one and the same change of place, regarded from the point of view now of the state which is left and now of the state which is entered. They are narrower in meaning than migration, because they exclude all forms of life except mankind and exclude also the many cases of migration, a large majority of the entire number, in which the change of residence does not take the individual out of one state or into another.[1]

In the United States certainly, and in the majority of other countries probably, there has been a tendency, especially since the World War, for the administrative definition of these words to approach the theoretical definition. Thus, before 1867 the American figures for immigrants included all alien steerage passengers entering the country, whether they did or did not intend to make it their residence; between 1868 and 1891 arriving travelers who did not declare their intent to remain in the United States were not classed as immigrants; between 1892 and 1907 the definition gradually came to include these characteristics: (1) alien; (2) officially admitted; (3) previous residence in foreign country; and (4) declared intention of residing in the United States. After 1907 all these elements were essential. Before 1904 also immigrants were included in the tables only if they traveled in the steerage. Corrections for these omissions would have increased the number of immigrants reported in 1899 and 1903 by about 8 per cent. Perhaps the official figures for other years between 1892 and 1903, inclusive, should be increased by about the same per cent to allow for the omission of cabin passenger immigrants. Before 1904, and perhaps for a year or two after that date, persons arriving by land who had been residents of Canada or Mexico and intended to become residents of the United States were not registered as immigrants. No record could be made, of course, of clandestine immigration and there is little evidence upon which to estimate its amount. It was probably large and increased with the growth of legislative restrictions upon immigration, but the evidence in support of a suggestion recently made by the Bureau of Immigration to the effect that the right of 1,400,000 immigrants now in the United States to continue their

[1]In the United States in 1920 there were less than 14 million foreign born but more than 20 million natives living outside of the state in which they were born. There were uncounted millions more living in the state but not in the town or city in which they were born.

residence might be challenged does not stand examination and that figure, no doubt, is much too high.[1]

An attempt, explained in full in Appendix II, has been made to introduce corrections for the period since 1892 in order to allow for these variations in the definition of an immigrant and departures from the definition now accepted. The result was to increase the yearly totals between 1892 and 1903, inclusive, by an average amount of about 15,000 and to reduce by smaller amounts the yearly totals between 1908 and 1927, inclusive. The average annual difference between the official figures and the new ones is about 3,000; the maximum difference is 56,500 or about 6 per cent.

The reported immigration of aliens into the United States by ten-year periods during the century and more since the record began in 1820 is shown in Table 15.

TABLE 15.

IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES AND ITS INCREASE OR DECREASE BY TEN-YEAR PERIODS, 1820–1930.

(In Thousands)

Period	Number of Alien Arrivals	Decennial Increase (+) or Decrease (—)
1820–30	152	.....
1831–40	599	+447
1841–50	1,713	+1,114
1851–60	2,598	+885
1861–70	2,315	—283
1871–80	2,812	+497
1881–90	5,247	+2,435
1891–1900	3,688	—1,559
1901–10	8,795	+5,107
1911–20	5,736	—3,059
1921–30	4,107	—1,629
Total,	37,762	

Reported immigration thus has amounted to 37,762,000 persons in 111 years or an annual average of about 340,000. That the population of the United States, however, has been increased as is usually supposed, by approximately that number of persons, does not

[1]See Bureau of Immigration *Annual Report for 1925*, page 12, and the discussion of that passage in the present volume.

follow from the figures, for they take no account of the return current of aliens from the United States, a current which has probably increased both absolutely and relatively with the passage of the years. This current was not recorded until 1908 and for the 23 years since that change was introduced the net increase of population from immigration has been computed by subtracting the number of aliens departing from the number admitted. Even this correction leaves the number of permanent immigrants somewhat too large, because the naturalized American citizens leaving the United States to reside abroad have not been deducted.[1] The number of immigrant aliens admitted, the number of all aliens admitted and departed, the difference between the two or net migratory increase, and the ratio of that increase each year to the number of arriving immigrants are shown in Table 16.

TABLE 16.

IMMIGRANTS, TOTAL ALIENS ADMITTED AND DEPARTED, NET MIGRATORY INCREASE AND ITS RATIO TO IMMIGRANTS ADMITTED, 1908–1930.

(In Thousands)

Year	Immigrants Admitted	Total Aliens		Net Migratory Increase	Ratio Net Migratory Increase to Immigrants Admitted (=100)
		Admitted	Departed		
1908	783	925	715	210	27
1909	752	944	400	544	72
1910	1,042	1,198	380	818	79
1911	879	1,030	518	512	58
1912	838	1,017	615	401	48
1913	1,198	1,427	612	815	68
1914	1,218	1,403	634	769	63
1915	327	434	384	50	15
1916	299	367	241	126	42
1917	295	363	146	216	73
1918	111	212	193	19	17
1919	141	237	216	27	15
1920	430	622	428	194	45
1921	805	978	426	552	69
1922	310	433	345	87	28
1923	523	673	201	473	90
1924	707	879	217	663	94
1925	294	458	225	232	79
1926	304	496	228	268	88
1927	335	538	254	284	85
1928	307	501	274	226	74
1929	280	479	252	227	81
1930	242	446	272	174	72
Totals	12,420	16,061	8,178	7,883	63

[1]Bureau of Immigration, *Annual Report for 1908* (1908), page 6.

The increase of population from immigration during these 22 years was between 15 per cent and 94 per cent, and averaged 63 per cent of the immigrants admitted. It might be thought that, because of the war and the subsequent drastic restrictions upon immigration, this average would furnish only a slight clue to the proportion and number of repatriates before 1908. But if the period since that year is divided into three parts: the years before the outbreak of the war, 1907–14, the years of war and subsequent disorder, 1914–22, and the years of drastic restrictions upon immigration, 1923–30, it appears that the net immigration in the first and most indicative period was 61 per cent of the gross. In estimating net immigration during earlier years it is probably safe to assume that between 1900 and 1907 likewise it was about 61 per cent of gross immigration. Before that it must have been greater. If one supposes that it was 65 per cent for the decade 1891–1900, and that for each decade of the nineteenth century it was 5 per cent above what it was in the next later decade, the series of numbers in Table 17 results.

TABLE 17.

REPORTED TOTAL IMMIGRATION AND ESTIMATED NET IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES BY DECADES, 1820–1930.
(In Thousands)

Period	Reported Immigration[a]	Reported or assumed (italics) per cent that net immigration was of gross	Estimated net increase from immigration
1820–30	152	*100*	152
1831–40	599	*95*	569
1841–50	1,713	*90*	1,539
1851–60	2,589	*85*	2,201
1861–70	2,315	*80*	1,856
1871–80	2,812	*75*	2,108
1881–90	5,247	*70*	3,680
1891–1900	3,688	*65*	2,398
1901–07	6,219	*61*	3,794
1908–14	6,709	61	4,070
1915–22	2,717	47	1,265
1923–30	2,992	85	2,548
Total,	37,762	..	26,180

[a]The figures before 1900 are from Immigration Commission, *Statistical Review of Immigration 1820–1910* (1911), page 5.

Crude as the method is, the resulting figure of 26.2 million probably comes nearer to the amount of net immigration since 1820 than the 37.8 million, a total 44 per cent greater, which is commonly accepted as measuring that amount.[1]

A less direct method of estimating net immigration results from comparing the proportion of the sexes among immigrants with that among the foreign born.[2] Table 18 shows the proportion of males and females among the foreign-born whites at successive censuses and among immigrants in successive decades.

TABLE 18

SEX DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGN-BORN WHITES AND OF IMMIGRANTS, 1850–1920.[a]

Year	Per Cent of Foreign Born Whites		Decade	Per Cent of Immigrants	
	Male	Female		Male	Female
1850	55.3	44.7	1841–50	59.4	40.6
1860	53.5	46.5	1851–60	57.9	42.1
1870	53.6	46.4	1861–70	60.5	39.5
1880	53.7	46.3	1871–80	61.3	38.7
1890	54.3	45.7	1881–90	61.1	38.9
1900	54.0	46.0	1891–1900	62.3	37.7
1910	56.4	43.6	1901–10	69.8	30.2
1920	54.9	45.1	1911–20	61.3	38.7

[a]For the census figures see *Abstract of the Fourteenth Census*, page 120; for the immigration figures see *International Migrations*, Vol. I, p. 211.

The preceding figures show that the proportion of males among immigrants has been between 4 and 14 per cent greater than among the foreign born, and has tended slowly to increase with a sudden rise in the first decade of the present century and a fall again in the second. The results contained in Volume I of this work can now be

[1]The Bureau of Immigration attempted in 1908 (*Annual Report for 1908*, p. 228) to estimate net immigration for the years 1899–1907 and in so doing used the ratio 72.9 derived from the four months July–October, 1907, during which, as it says, "conditions were normal." It is probably better now to use 61 per cent, on which the figures in Table 17 are based, the average ratio for the seven years 1908–14. With the essay of the Bureau of Immigration, an earlier attempt by the writer, printed in the *National Civic Federation Review* for November–December, 1906, (page 17) may be compared.

[2]There is, perhaps, no important or promising field of American immigration statistics so little worked as the attempt to relate the immigration statistics to the foreign born statistics. Unhappily, neither the Bureau of Immigration nor the Bureau of the Census has gone far in comparing these two series of figures. Perhaps the official tradition against venturing into the field of another division and the tendency to subordinate disinterested interpretation to administrative needs may explain the neglect. In so large a field a private student cannot go far.

supplemented by the immigration figures for 1925–29, which show a proportion of only 54.9 male, agreeing exactly and for the first time with the proportion among the foreign born. The proportion in 1930 was less than 49 per cent. The divergence in the earlier results was not due primarily to more numerous deaths among male immigrants after arrival, for there was practically no difference in the death rates of the two sexes.[1] It is due, in the main, to the fact that the males are the more mobile and migratory sex and make up a very large proportion of the birds of passage immigrants or repeaters.

The number of foreign-born females in the United States in 1920 was about equal to the number of females who had arrived as immigrants between 1890 and 1920. But the number of male immigrants during those 30 years exceeded the number of foreign-born males enumerated in 1920 by nearly 4.5 million. This excess is a rough measure of the males who had left the United States during that period, temporarily or permanently either as repatriates or as birds of passage. By following this method permanent immigrants are estimated at about three-fourths (76 per cent) of arriving immigrants. But no doubt many foreign-born females also left the United States during the thirty years. For that reason the 76 per cent must be regarded as an upper limit of the ratio between the net increase from immigration and the alien immigrants arriving. The first method of estimation is probably the more accurate, but perhaps it exaggerates the outflow of aliens from the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century.

This correction, by estimating the repatriates or return current of migrants for the years before 1908, is the most important modification to be made in the official immigration returns. But it is by no means the only one. Canadian and Mexican immigrants coming before 1908 by water or land directly from Canada or Mexico to the United States were unrecorded. As a result, the recorded immigration from those two countries is much less than the actual immigration. The latter has been estimated by assuming that the European-born population in the United States at the date of a census was to the Canadian-born or Mexican-born at the same date as the number of immigrants recorded from Europe during the preceding 10 years was to the unknown number of immigrants from Canada or Mexico during the same decade. For example, the 11.8 million natives of

[1]In the 34 registration states including 80 per cent of the population of the country, the death rates of the two sexes among the foreign-born whites in 1919–20 was the same, 17.5 per thousand.

Europe in the United States in 1910 is to the 1.2 million natives of Canada in the United States as the 8.1 million immigrants from Europe, 1900–1910, is to the estimated 814,000 from Canada. Similar estimates have been made for 8 decades, 1840–1920, in six of which the immigration from Canada thus indicated much exceeded the recorded immigration. The two exceptions are for the decades 1871–80 and 1911–20. The earlier was "occasioned largely by Canadians passing back and forth over the border the recording of whom has since been discontinued."[1] The later exception for the decade 1911–20 is due to the fact that overland immigration from Canada began to be recorded shortly before 1910. In the case of Mexico the immigration as thus estimated was greater than that recorded during each decade except 1910–20. The result of these estimates is to increase the figure for the immigration of Canadians into the United States, 1840–1920, from 1,915,000 to 3,040,000, and that for Mexicans from 285,000 to 468,000, an increase of 1,309,000 in all, raising the recorded figure from Canada by about three-fifths and that from Mexico by nearly two-thirds. The result of this correction is to increase the figure for net immigration into the United States, 1820–1929, from 26 million to 27.3 million.

To cover the entire situation, less important changes in the Bureau's administrative definition of an immigrant should be mentioned. Until January 1, 1906, an alien arrival was counted as an immigrant each time he entered the United States, but after that date an alien residing in the United States and returning from a visit abroad was not classed as an immigrant. This change reduced the apparent number of immigrants more than 10 per cent. Before January 1, 1903, an alien traveling in the first or second cabin was not classed as an immigrant; after that date he was. This change of administrative definition increased the number of reported immigrants nearly 12 per cent. Before January 1, 1903, an alien arriving to traverse the United States on his way to some other country was deemed an immigrant, but after that date he was classed as a non-immigrant alien. This change excluded apparently about three per cent of the arriving immigrants. Alien seamen deserting their ship at an American port, even if they were reported by the ship and a head tax paid for them, were not counted as immigrants.[2]

What has been the effect of the arrival of these 27 million immigrants upon the increase of population in the United States? On

[1]Bureau of Immigration, *Annual Report for 1920*, Chart 2.
[2]Walter F. Willcox, "Our Gain in Population Through Immigration," page 7.

this subject two widely different opinions have been expressed. One is that immigrants, since about 1830 when they began to be numerous, with their children and remoter descendants have constituted a net increase of the population, since earlier residents continued to multiply at a rate little affected by the new arrivals. The other is that the immigrants so checked the birth rate of earlier residents that the increase of population has been about what it would have been without the immigration. Under this view the immigrants displaced and supplanted an equivalent amount of native stock. Between these two extreme views there is room for many intermediate positions.

If the opinion that the swarming of the immigrants has been associated with and the cause of a fall in the birth rate of the native stock is to prevail, it must be established by evidence. That is of two sorts, first, statistical evidence that the two changes occurred together, and secondly a theoretical discussion pointing to the conclusion that the coincidence was due to a causal relation between them.

The classic statement of this opinion was made in 1891 by Francis A. Walker. He said: "Foreign immigration into this country has, from the time it first assumed large dimensions, amounted not to a reinforcement of our population, but to a replacement of native by foreign stock." And in another passage: "As the foreigners began to come in larger numbers, the native population more and more withheld their own increase."[1] During the intervening 40 years the theoretical questions involved have been debated, but little has been added to the statistical evidence which Walker marshalled. That evidence invites a re-examination. It includes the following points:

1. The increase in the population of the United States between 1790 and 1830 was more than 8,900,000 or 227 per cent. The immigration during these 40 years Walker estimated at about 385,000 or 4.3 per cent of the total increase. In the succeeding 10 years the population increased by 4,200,000 and immigration rose to 599,000 or 14.3 per cent of the increase. In the decade 1840–50, the population increased by 6,100,000 and immigration rose to 1,713,000 or 28.1 per cent of the increase. In 1850–60 the increase was 8,250,000 and the immigration was 2,598,000 or 31.5 per cent of the increase. If the estimated net increase from immigration in Table 17 page 89, be

[1]Francis A. Walker, "Immigration and Degradation," in *Forum*, Vol. 11 (1891), pages 642 and 638 respectively (also reprinted, see Bibliography).

substituted for the preceding figures of gross increase, the proportion due to immigration was 4.7 per cent in 1820–30; 13.5 in 1830–40; 25.2 in 1840–50, and 26.7 in 1850–60. Yet the decennial rate of growth during the 70 years, 1790–1860, instead of rising after 1830 with the rising tide of immigration, remained approximately uniform through the whole period.

2. The decline in the rate of increase of native Americans began "when foreign immigration first assumed considerable proportions; it showed itself first and in the highest degree in those regions, in those states, and in the very counties into which the foreigners most largely entered. It proceeded for a long time in such a way as absolutely to offset the foreign arrivals...These three facts... constitute a statistical demonstration such as is rarely attained."[1]

The evidence on which Walker relied for this second statement was never published, I believe, in any fuller form. His assertion remains an assertion, although, coming as it did from the leading authority in the field of Federal statistics, it has deservedly carried great weight.

In the forty years since his statements were made, new evidence and improved methods of analysis have been introduced. With these helps, it is timely to ask again: Were the rates of decennial increase in the population of the United States between 1790 and 1860, as Walker claimed, approximately uniform? They are given in Table 19.

TABLE 19.

RATES OF DECENNIAL INCREASE IN THE POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

Decade	Rate of Increase
1790–1800	35.1
1800–1810	36.4
1810–1820	33.1
1820–1830	33.5
1830–1840	32.7
1840–1850	35.9
1850–1860	35.6

[1]F. A. Walker, "Restriction of Immigration", *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 77 (June 1896), p. 824, col. 2 (also reprinted, see Bibliography).

Diagram 4. Census Bureau Rates of Decennial Increase of Population in the United States, 1790–1930.

The foregoing rates are not as uniform as Walker's words might lead one to expect. They were lower in 1810–20, 1820–30 and 1830–40 than in either of the first two or of the last two decades. As immigration, gross or net, in the 20 years 1840-60 was more than one-fourth of the total increase and nearly twice as large relatively as it was in the preceding decade, this fact might naturally be invoked to explain the increased rates of growth towards the end of the 60 years.

The rate of increase in the population at each decade between 1790 and 1920 is illustrated in Diagram 4 (p. 95) which shows also the effect of the Census Bureau's estimate of the errors in the census of 1870 upon the rates of decennial increase 1860–70 and 1870–80.[1] If that estimate of the errors be accepted, the fall in the rate of increase since 1800–1810 has been almost steady and accelerating. The rates of 1840–50 and 1850–60 were higher than any rate in the three decades before 1840 and the rates for 1820–30 and 1900–1910 were slightly higher than those just preceding. These exceptions occurred in periods of heavy immigration, the immediate effect of which was apparently to lift the rate of increase.

Aside from the fact that these rates are not as uniform as Walker's words imply, two other objections to his argument suggest themselves. The first is a minor one. It is not quite accurate to compare the rate of increase 1820–30 with the rates 1810–20 or 1830–40, regardless of the fact that the former interval was 9 years and 10 months and both of the latter were 10 years. The second objection is weightier. At each census between 1800 and 1860 inclusive, except that of 1820, the population was enumerated in certain districts which had not been included 10 years before, and part of the increase was due to an extension of the area of enumeration. In 1830, for example, the population of Florida and in 1850 that of Texas was enumerated for the first time. The figures in Table 20, page 97 show the amount and per cent of the increase due to the extension of the area.

To meet these objections the *annual* rate of increase per 10,000 initial population has been computed, assuming that the rate was constant through each decade. Since Walker wrote the Bureau of the Census has determined the population of each area of enumeration at 10-year intervals between 1790 and 1900. These figures (Table 21) divide the country into 9 areas, viz., that enumerated in 1790, that first included in 1800 and so on, give the population of each of

[1] *Abstract of the Census of 1920*, Table 4, page 16.

TABLE 20.
AMOUNT AND PER CENT OF INCREASE IN THE POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES DUE TO EXTENSION OF AREA OF ENUMERATION, 1790–1900.

Decade	Total Increase	Increase due to new area	Per Cent of total
1790–1800	1,379,269	61,128	4.4
1800–1810	1,931,398	97,401	5.1
1810–1820	2,398,572	.....	....
1820–1830	3,227,567	40,048	1.2
1830–1840	4,203,433	49,563	1.2
1840–1850	6,122,423	391,410	6.4
1850–1860	8,251,445	182,528	2.2
1860–1870	7,115,050	.....	....
1870–1880	11,597,412	.....	....
1880–1890	12,791,931	258,657	2.0
1890–1900	13,046,861	.....	....

these areas at each census, and furnish a better basis for determining true rates of increase than that on which Walker relied.[1]

The results are shown in Table 21 in which the figures given by the Census publication have been brought down to date. In so doing the population of the Philippine Islands at the date of each American census in the present century has been estimated from the counts of March 2, 1903, and December 31, 1918.

TABLE 21.
POPULATION ENUMERATED ON IDENTICAL AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES AT SUCCESSIVE CENSUSES, 1790–1930.
(In Thousands)

Date of Census	Population	Date of Census	Population	Increase
1790, Aug. 1	3,930	1800, Aug. 1	5,247	1,317
1800, Aug. 1	5,308	1810, Aug. 1	7,142	1,834
1810, Aug. 1	7,240	1820, Aug. 1	9,638	2,398
1820, Aug. 1	9,638	1830, Aug. 1	12,826	3,188
1830, Aug. 1	12,866	1840, June 1	17,020	4,154
1840, June 1	17,069	1850, June 1	22,800	5,731
1850, June 1	23,192	1860, June 1	31,261	8,069
1860, June 1	31,443	1870, June 1	38,558	7,115
1870, June 1	38,558	1880, June 1	50,156	11,598
1880, June 1	50,189	1890, June 1	62,721	12,532
1890, June 1	62,980	1900, June 1	76,038	13,058
1900, June 1	84,503	1910, Apr. 15	102,144	17,641
1910, Apr. 15	102,253	1920, Jan. 1	118,021	15,768
1920, Jan. 1	118,021	1930, Apr. 1	137,804	19,783

[1]Bureau of the Census, *A Century of Population Growth* (1909), page 55, Table 9.

At one point the preceding results can be improved. The increase between 1860 and 1870 is understated and that between 1870 and 1880 overstated because no corrections have been introduced for the admitted errors in the census of 1870. Walker studied those errors much more carefully and competently than any other man before or since and I agree with his conclusion that the Census Bureau later in estimating the omissions at about 1.5 million put them much too high. Walker thought them between three-quarters of a million and a million. Probably they were nearer 875,000 than 1,500,000. The figures in Table 21 with this correction furnish the basis for Table 22 and Diagram 5.

TABLE 22.

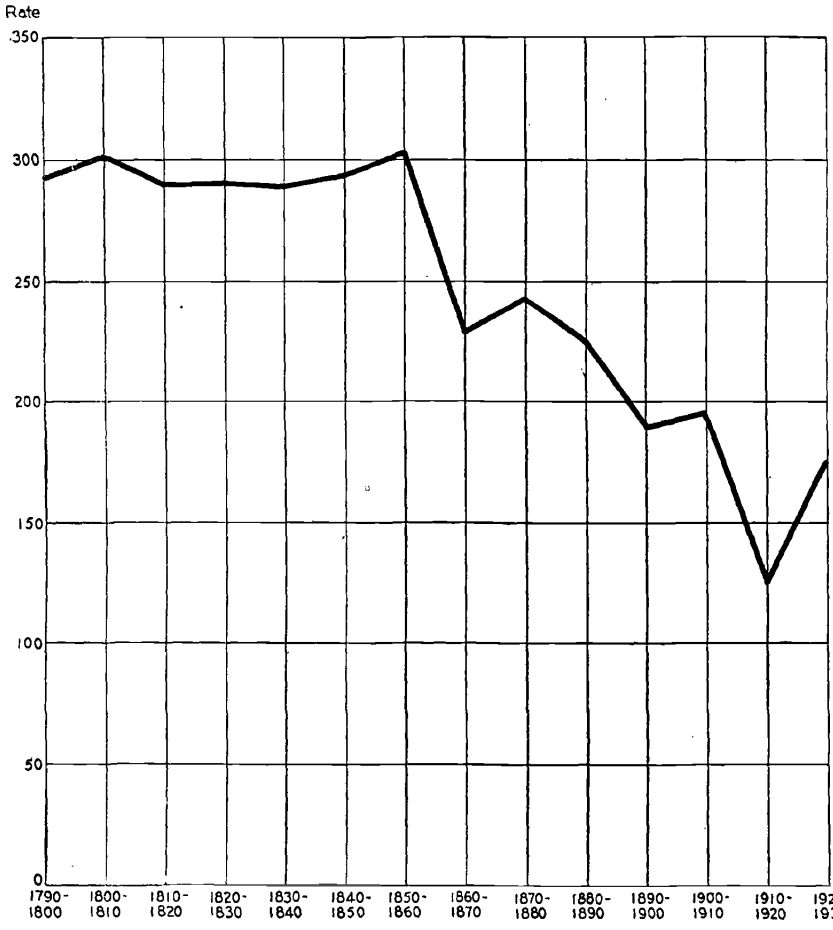
RATE OF ANNUAL INCREASE PER 10,000 PEOPLE ON IDENTICAL AREAS, 1790–1930.

Decade	Rate of Annual Increase
1790–1800	293
1800–1810	301
1810–1820	290
1820–1830	290
1830–1840	289
1840–1850	294
1850–1860	303
1860–1870	229
1870–1880	243
1880–1890	225
1890–1900	190
1900–1910	196
1910–1920	125
1920–1930	175

The results, thus far, strengthen Walker's argument by showing that little of the increase in the rate of growth, 1840–50 and 1850–60, was due to the heavy immigration in those years. The rate in 1840–50 was 10 per cent above that in 1830–40, but about two-thirds of that rise was due to the fact that in 1850 the population on the area which now includes Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, California, Oregon and Washington was counted for the first time.

Walker's statement that "the decline of this rate of increase among Americans began at the very time when foreign immigration

Diagram 5. Rate of Annual Increase per 10,000 People, on Identical Enumeration Areas in the United States, 1790–1930.



first assumed considerable proportions'' is not established by this evidence, because neither then nor now is the ''rate of increase among Americans'' in the first half of the nineteenth century as distinguished from the general rate known. The decline in the rate among Americans is inferred from the fact that when the ratio of arriving immigrants to population or to increase rose, the general rate did not rise. The validity of the inference may perhaps be tested by examining separately the rates of increase, decade by decade, in the Northern and the Southern States. It is probably better in this comparison to

assume that all foreign born were white,[1] and to compute the rates of increase for the white population North and South. The inflow of immigrants to either section would hardly have influenced the natural increase of the native colored. The results of the computation which has been made for identical areas of enumeration in each decade are shown in Table 23.

TABLE 23.

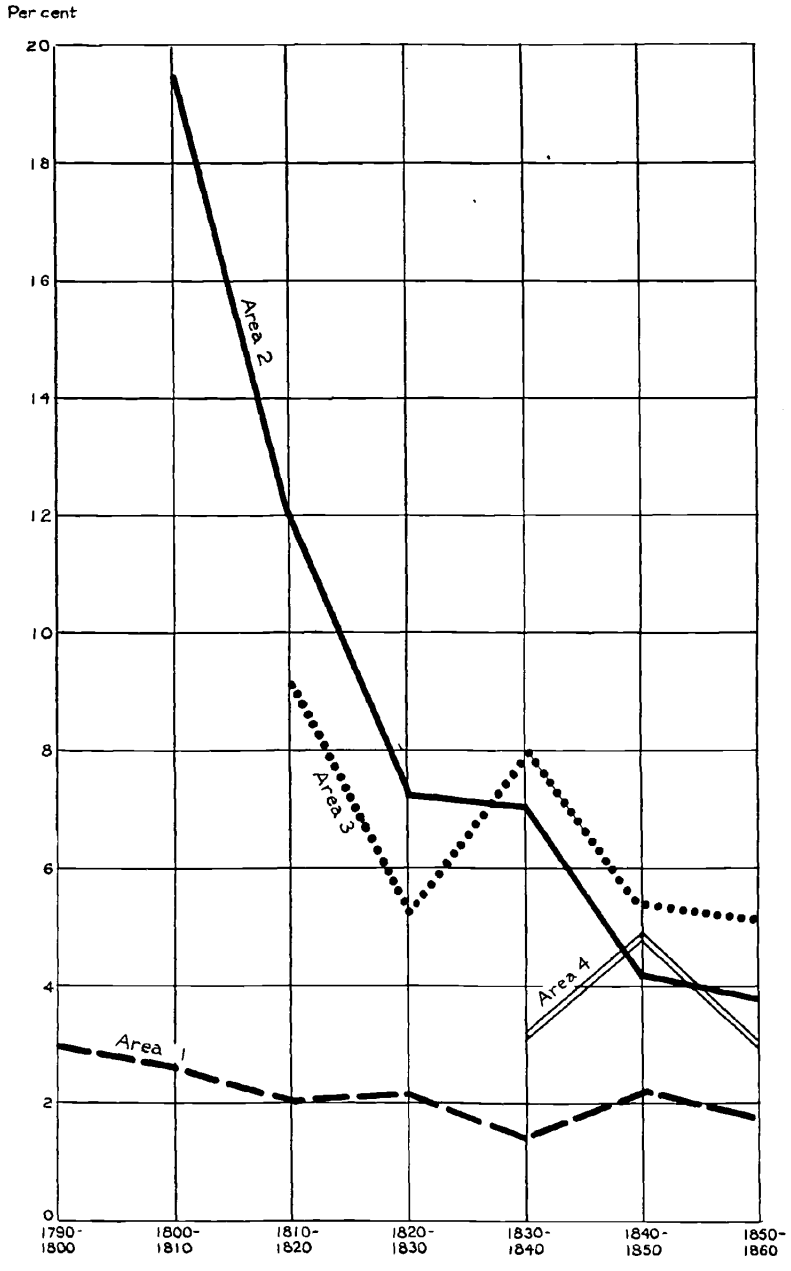
ANNUAL RATE OF INCREASE PER 10,000 AMONG WHITES IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH, 1790–1920.

Decade	North	South
1790–1800	299	293
1800–1810	349	238
1810–1820	332	239
1820–1830	354	246
1830–1840	352	196
1840–1850	335	261
1850–1860	339	225
1860–1870	252	112
1870–1880	232	298
1880–1890	225	212
1890–1900	174	227
1900–1910	164	220
1910–1920	129	162

The foregoing rates of increase in the South for 1860–70 and 1870–80 are inaccurate because of serious omissions in the census of 1870. When that inaccuracy is allowed for, the rates of growth in each decade before 1890 are shown to be less among southern whites than among northern whites. In 1790 the southern whites were two-thirds, in 1890 they were one-third as numerous as northern whites. Whether the persistent difference in the rates of increase was due in part to the swarming of the immigrants into the North, where in 1850 the foreign born relatively to the white population were more than three times as numerous as in the South, the figures do not show. They do indicate, however, that before the immigrants began to come in numbers there was no uniformity in the rates of increase in the two

[1] In 1920 the proportion of whites among the foreign born was, in the North, 99.3 per cent and in the South 97.6 per cent.

Diagram 6. Rates of Annual Increase of Population in Four Areas of the United States with Unchanged Boundaries, 1790–1860.



sections. Why did that rate increase in the North by 17 per cent and decrease in the South by 19 per cent in the second decade compared with the first? The uniformity of the increase in the two main sections of the country and in successive decades is not as great and the influences affecting it are not as few and as simple as Walker's theory would imply.

His theory may be tested also by computing rates of annual increase for each of the unchanging areas, that included in the census of 1790, that added in 1800, etc. In Table 24 and Diagram 6 (p. 101) these rates of annual increase are shown. Allowance has been made for the shortness of the interval between the censuses of 1820 and 1830.

TABLE 24.

RATE OF ANNUAL INCREASE OF POPULATION IN DISTRICTS WITH UNCHANGED BOUNDARIES PER 10,000 INITIAL POPULATION, 1790–1860.

Decade	Area first enumerated in			
	1790	1800[a]	1810[b]	1830[c]
1790–1800	293	....	....	....
1800–10	259	1951	....	....
1810–20	203	1182	917	....
1820–30	216	720	522	....
1830–40	142	706	799	311
1840–50	214	415	539	485
1850–60	174	374	513	295

[a]The area which later became Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Alabama and Mississippi together with western Georgia.
[b]The area which later became Louisiana, Arkansas and Missouri.
[c]The area which later became Florida.

The table and figure show that long before immigrants began to swarm in, indeed from the very opening of the century, the increase in the 1790 area of ennumeration, which even as late as 1850 included five-eighths of the population of the country, had begun to fall; but that it rose very slightly between 1820 and 1830 and more sharply between 1840 and 1850. The former may be connected with the better times on both sides of the Atlantic after the close of the Napoleonic Wars, the latter more confidently with the inflow of

immigrants between 1840 and 1850. The fall in the earlier decades may be ascribed to the attractiveness of the western lands, north and south, which drained off no small fraction of the increase in the states to the east of them.

The main inferences, however, are that the population of each part of the United States grew in response to its own conditions at the time, and that the apparent uniformity in the rates of growth before 1845, upon which Walker rested his theory, disappears as soon as the different parts of the country are studied separately. That theory had its value as a challenge of the current belief that immigration regularly increased the population by an amount equal to its number. But it is almost equally incorrect to maintain that it did not increase the population at all. In view of the meager evidence obtainable about the growth of population in the United States in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, it may be doubted whether it will ever be possible to determine where between these two extreme views, both of them apparently incorrect, the truth actually lies. It may be noted, however, that the birth rate in the United States as roughly measured by the proportion of children under five years of age to 1000 women of child-bearing age at each census began to fall as early as 1810 and has fallen ever since with one exception, that of the decade 1850–60, an exception probably due to the large immigration just before 1850 and to the high birth rate among the immigrants which more than balanced whatever fall in the birth rate may have occurred among the native population.[1] In the light of the present evidence, it may be surmised that the approximate uniformity in the rate of increase during the early decades of the last century was due largely to the cheapness and accessibility of good agricultural land on the frontier. This conjecture perhaps some future student will be able to confirm or refute.

If one is to survey the whole field, the emigration of American citizens, native or naturalized, from the United States as well as the immigration of aliens must be examined. The former has been registered since 1918. Emigration and immigration therefore may now be compared but only for the 13-year period, 1918–30. In such a comparison it seems best to use the net immigration of aliens or the excess of alien arrivals over alien departures. The results are given in Table 25 on page 104.

[1]Walter F. Willcox, "Change in the Proportion of Children" (March 1911).

TABLE 25.

NET IMMIGRATION OF ALIENS AND EMIGRATION OF CITIZENS COMPARED, 1918–30.

Year	Net Immigration of Aliens	Emigration of Citizens	Emigrants per 100 Immigrants
1918	18,585	56,998	306
1919	20,790	39,543	190
1920	193,514	64,564	33
1921	552,132	71,391	13
1922	87,121	79,198	91
1923	472,820	36,260	8
1924	662,557	29,661	4
1925	232,945	25,429	11
1926	268,351	29,182	11
1927	284,493	22,786	8
1928	226,275	21,432	9
1929	226,829	23,443	10
1930	191,039	20,739	11
Total,	3,437,451	519,626	15

For these 13 years emigration was 15 per cent of net immigration. Since the conditions during the first three years of the period were abnormal, attention may be centered upon the figures of the last 10 years, in which the emigration was 11 per cent or one-ninth of the immigration. These citizen emigrants are classified as native and naturalized. Those who were born outside of the United States have, as a class, more ties abroad than native Americans and their emigration rate is probably higher. The following figures show that this anticipation accords with the facts:

Citizen Population	Resident Jan. 1, 1920	Annual Emigrants 1918–30	Emigrants per 100,000
Native	91,789,928	35,075	38
Naturalized	6,493,088	4,896	75

Thus the emigration rate of naturalized citizens is twice that of native citizens. Of the half million citizen emigrants between 1918 and 1929 inclusive, 167,340 or one-third went to some European country and 203,266, or two-fifths, to Canada. It might be supposed

that most of the naturalized citizens who emigrate would go back to Europe as repatriates and that most of the natives would go to Canada as pioneers, but in fact the difference between these two classes is not marked. Of the naturalized Americans 35 per cent and of the native Americans 42 per cent went to Canada. A more important difference between the two classes, that in the age distribution, is illustrated by the figures for the citizen emigrants of 1929 given in Table 26.

TABLE 26.

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF EMIGRANTS, NATIVE AND NATURALIZED, BY AGE, 1929.

Age Period	Emigrants	
	Native	Naturalized
Under 16	27.6	2.3
16–21	9.5	3.9
22–29	22.1	13.1
30–37	16.6	22.0
38–44	10.7	20.6
45 and over	13.5	38.1
Total,	100.0	100.0

Three-fifths of the native but only one-fifth of the naturalized emigrants were less than 30 years of age. The median age of the native emigrants was 25.7 years, that of the naturalized was 40.0 years. The median age of immigrants in the same year was about 22.8 years, so that native emigrants although 14 years younger than naturalized emigrants were three years older, on the average, than immigrants.

Because the short period covered by the statistics of emigration from the United States and the unusual character of the migratory currents in both directions during that period diminish the value of the evidence just summarized, it is unfortunate that no official inquiry has yet been made into the number of persons born in the United States and living in other parts of the world. The nearest approach to it is one by the Department of State in 1929 into the number of American citizens living abroad "whose residence

abroad has a permanent or semi-permanent character.'' Answers to the Department's letter came from some 330 American consulates, but in many cases, of course, the consuls could not obtain exact figures. More important for present purposes is the fact that an inquiry so framed leaves out of account Americans by birth who have surrendered their American citizenship. Of the foreign born in the United States in 1920, less than two-fifths were aliens and of the American born who were living in Canada in 1921, less than two-fifths retained their American citizenship.

The American citizens residing in the several continents abroad as reported to the Department of State in 1929 were:

Continent of Residence	*Number of American Citizens*
North America	273,340
Europe	77,063
Asia	24,119
South America	12,136
Africa	3,673
Australasia	2,337
Total	392,668

That the preceding figures, however accurate for citizens, seriously underestimate the number of natives of the United States residing in foreign countries is indicated by a compilation of the number of native Americans living abroad, made for this work in the Bureau of the Census. It includes only a small proportion of the countries from which reports were made to the Department of State, and yet the sum is 509,910, or three-tenths larger than the Department of State total. To estimate the approximate number of natives of the United States residing abroad, a comparison has been made between the returns for 24 countries occurring in both lists.

Table 27 shows that the returns compiled at the Bureau of the Census for Americans by birth living in these 24 states gave a total 61.3 per cent larger than the returns for citizens received by the Department of State. On applying this percentage to the other states for which the Census Bureau found no figures, the estimated number of 633,410 natives of the United States residing abroad is reached. It is probably safe to suppose that the number lies between 625,000 and 650,000 and that more than one-half of the native Americans abroad

TABLE 27.

NATIVES AND CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES RESIDING IN SPECIFIED FOREIGN COUNTRIES, 1917–29.

Country of Residence	Natives	Citizens of United States
Canada	374,024	234,039
Great Britain	50,738	11,717
France	30,948	25,860
Cuba	9,555	9,234
China	9,356	12,233
Sweden	8,694	658
Australia	6,604	2,143
Switzerland	3,880	1,438
Brazil	3,439	2,153
New Zealand	1,872	55
Denmark	1,742	406
Japan	1,700	3,136
South Africa	1,549	1,125
India	750	3,723
Barbados	734	24
Jamaica	688	214
Nicaragua	571	482
Belgium	517	857
Hong Kong	470	418
Egypt	202	664
Argentina	170	3,619
Kenya	161	240
Peru	160	946
Bahamas	503	186
Total	509,027	315,560

are in Canada. If this number be compared with the foreign born in the United States in 1920, it appears that there were 46 Americans by birth living abroad per 1000 foreign born living in the United States.

Regarding the regions within the United States in which the immigrants have settled, it should be observed that most of them have remained in the North and West, as, and perhaps in some measure because, most of the Negroes have remained in the South. This geographical separateness of immigrants and Negroes is shown

when the states are noted in which either class constituted a considerable fraction of the population. There is not one state, and has not been for 50 years, in which 10 per cent of the population were of foreign birth and 10 per cent also were of African stock. Between 1850 and 1870 there were a few, Missouri and Louisiana in 1850, those two states with Maryland and the District of Columbia in 1860; in 1870 Missouri no longer had 10 per cent of Negroes and Louisiana no longer 10 per cent of foreign born. There are two belts of states, one from Maine to California, in which at least 10 per cent of the population is of foreign birth, the other from Delaware to Texas, in which at least 10 per cent is Negro. The two belts overlap nowhere, but between them is a band from West Virginia to New Mexico, in which neither immigrants nor Negroes constitute 10 per cent of the population. This belt included, in 1920, West Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Oklahoma and New Mexico, and to the north of that line also Indiana, Iowa, Kansas and Idaho. (See Diagram 7, page 109.)

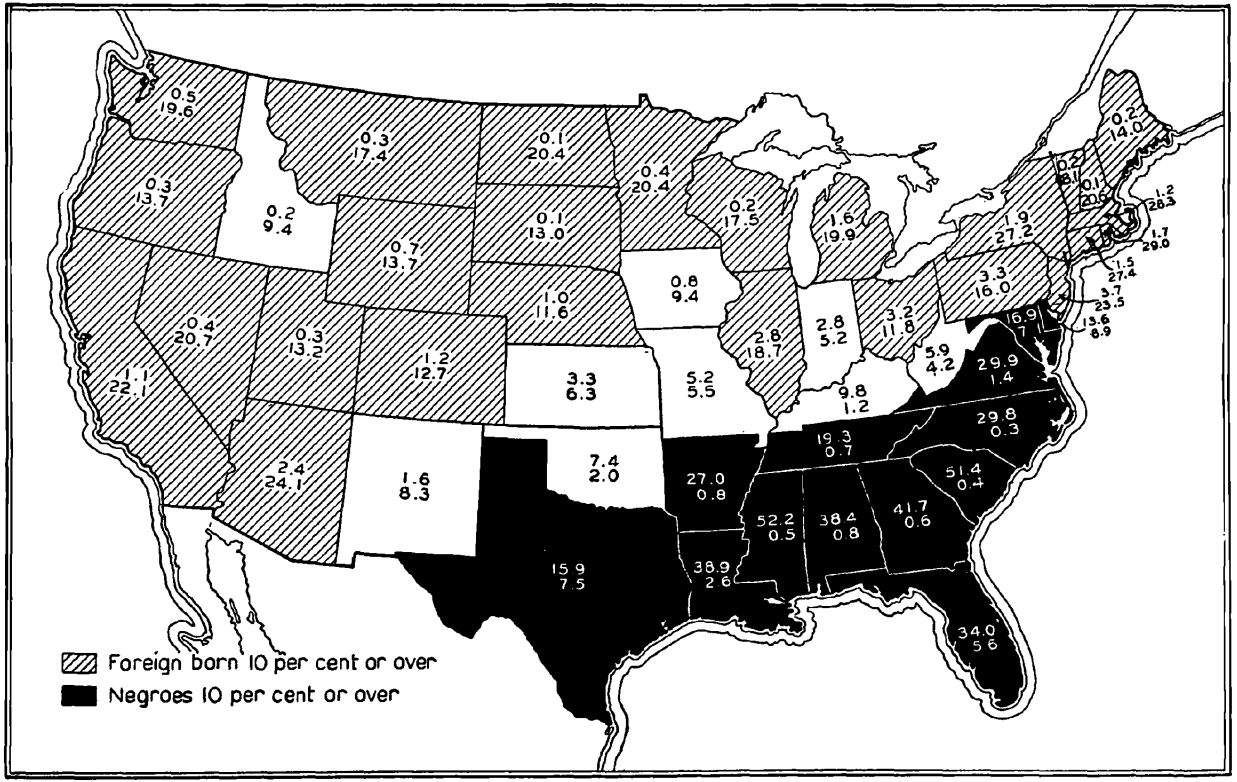
Within the last few generations two main currents of migration may be distinguished in the western world; in one the migrants, most of them accustomed to agriculture, have gone to regions in which that occupation could be followed under conditions more favorable than at home; in the other the migrants, for the most part similarly trained, have transferred to industrial districts and industrial occupations. Both sets of motives have drawn immigrants to the United States, but during the last half century the relative importance of the second set has increased. That is reflected in the proportion of the foreign-born population of the United States living in its cities or incorporated places having at least 2,500 inhabitants. The proportion of foreign-born whites in the total population of these cities and of the rest of the country or the rural districts at the last three censuses has been as follows:

TABLE 28.

PROPORTION OF FOREIGN-BORN WHITES IN URBAN AND IN RURAL POPULATION, 1900, 1910 AND 1920.

Census Year	Per Cent of Foreign-Born Whites		
	Cities	Rural Districts	Ratio of City Per Cent to that of Country
1900	22.2	7.6	2.9
1910	22.6	7.7	2.9
1920	19.1	6.5	2.9

Diagram 7. Map of the United States showing States having at least 10 per cent of their population foreign born or negro, in 1920. (Upper figure, per cent of Negroes; lower figure, per cent of Foreign Born)



The proportion of foreign born in both city and country rose slightly between 1900 and 1910 mainly because of the heavy influx of immigrants, and fell more rapidly in the following 10 years when immigration diminished, but the ratio between the city proportion and that of the country remained about three to one.

Table 29 shows that the proportion of foreign born in the population is greater in the larger cities.

TABLE 29.
PROPORTION OF FOREIGN-BORN WHITES IN URBAN AND IN RURAL POPULATION, 1920.

Size of Place	Per Cent of Foreign-Born Whites	Ratio of City Per Cent to that of Country
Rural Districts.....	6.5	1.0
Cities with a population of:		
2,500–10,000.....	11.3	1.7
10,000–25,000.....	14.2	2.2
25,000–100,000.....	17.0	2.6
100,000–500,000....	17.1	2.6
Over 500,000.....	28.2	4.3

Similar figures for 1910 and 1900 show a similar progression in the proportion of foreign born to population.

As the immigrants are massed mainly in the northern and western divisions of the United States, it may be more significant to limit the comparison between city and country to those parts of the United States, as in Table 30.

TABLE 30.
PER CENT OF FOREIGN-BORN WHITES IN THE URBAN AND THE RURAL POPULATION OF NORTH AND WEST, 1920.

Size of Place	Per Cent of Foreign-Born Whites	Ratio of City Per Cent to that of Country
Rural Districts.....	10.9	1.0
Cities with a population of:		
2,500–10,000.....	14.1	1.3
10,000–25,000.....	16.8	1.5
25,000–100,000.....	19.8	1.8
100,000–500,000.....	20.6	1.9
Over 500,000.....	29.2	2.7

When the figures are thus limited, the differences between city and country become less, mainly because in the rural districts of the North and West the foreign born constitute about one-ninth and in the South less than one-seventieth of the population.

Figures like those of Tables 29 and 30 are often adduced as evidence that the immigrant population of the United States lingers or stagnates in the great cities, especially the cities of the Atlantic seaboard. It must be remembered, however, that the overwhelming majority of immigrants enter the United States through the gateway of a large city. To determine that proportion from the immigration reports is impossible, because a very large number are returned as entering the United States at "land border stations" unspecified. The evidence probably warrants the opinion, however, that not less than 98 per cent enter the United States by way of a city of more than 10,000 people.[1] Yet in 1920 4.4 million foreign born, or one-third of the whole number in the country, were living in the rural districts or in cities of less than 10,000 population. If 98 per cent of the immigrants started their American life in a city, there must have been strong counter currents of population during the last generation by which many native whites migrated from country to city and many foreign-born whites from city to country.

Under ordinary conditions the large majority of pioneers are males, and the nearer one approaches a frontier the larger the proportion of males in the population. For that reason a current of migration, especially in its early years, contains a large excess of males. If it is a long-distance migration, the excess is higher, and if it starts from eastern Europe or from Asia it is greater still, perhaps because females in those regions are less ready than their western sisters to face such a transforming change. To this general rule the Hebrew immigration to the United States constitutes a noteworthy exception, which is examined at length in the chapter devoted to that subject.[2]

The proportion of males among immigrants into the United States has ranged between 51 and 73 per cent, and is lower now than it was at any earlier date,[3] the change being due apparently to the laws restricting immigration passed since the war. Table 31 shows the sex proportion of immigrants by people in 1907, when the proportion of males was greatest (72.4 per cent) and in 1930 when it was least (48.4 per cent), for all those peoples which contributed in either

[1]Walter F. Willcox, "The Distribution of Immigrants in the United States" (1906).
[2]See page 110.
[3]See page 112.

year more than 10,000 immigrants. The peoples are arranged in the order of decreasing proportion of males in 1907.

TABLE 31.

PER CENT OF MALES AMONG IMMIGRANTS, CLASSIFIED BY RACE OR PEOPLE, AND ITS DECREASE: 1907 TO 1930.

Race or People	Number of Immigrants		Per cent of Males		
	1907	1930	1907	1930	Decrease
Bulgarian	27,174	744	97.3	31.7	65.6
Greek	46,283	3,793	96.5	41.3	55.2
Rumanian	19,200	432	92.6	28.7	63.9
Japanese	30,824	796	90.3	68.3	22.0
Russian	16,807	1,634	89.8	41.6	48.2
Croatian	47,826	1,314	84.7	36.4	48.3
Mexican	91	11,915	81.3	53.0	28.3
North Italian	51,564	2,822	79.4	34.5	44.9
South Italian	242,497	20,494	78.7	38.0	40.7
Ruthenian	24,081	473	76.6	49.8	26.8
Magyar	60,071	1,542	74.6	43.3	31.3
Polish	138,033	4,924	73.0	46.7	26.3
Lithuanian	25,884	426	72.3	29.8	42.5
Finnish	14,860	556	69.5	37.7	31.8
Slovak	42,041	3,214	68.9	42.5	26.4
Dutch and Flemish	12,467	4,713	67.1	59.5	7.6
Scotch	20,516	28,117	66.6	47.4	19.2
English	51,126	34,960	64.8	49.6	15.2
Scandinavian	53,425	8,478	64.0	57.0	7.0
German	92,936	34,415	60.5	50.5	10.0
Bohemian	13,554	653	60.1	46.0	14.1
French	9,392	13,771	57.8	53.3	4.5
Irish	38,706	34,947	56.5	48.8	7.7
Hebrew	149,182	11,526	54.0	41.3	12.7

Table 31 shows that in 1907 each of these peoples contributed more males than females to the population of the United States. The statement is true also of each of the 17 other peoples sending less than 10,000 immigrants, and for the total immigration in every year since the record began in 1820. But in 1930 the proportion of males was much lower than ever before and then, as the table shows, three-fourths of the peoples contributed more females than males, the exceptions being the Japanese, the Dutch, Scandinavians and French, and the Germans. The probable explanation is that in face of the present drastic restrictions upon immigration from Europe divided families are being slowly reunited by the arrival of female members who had remained behind. To test this inference

Table 32 compares the ratio of married women to married men in 1910, the earliest year for which the information is obtainable, and in 1929, for the 24 peoples included in Table 31.

TABLE 32.

NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF MARRIED MEN AND MARRIED WOMEN AMONG IMMIGRANTS, 1910 AND 1930.

Race or People	1910			1930		
	Number of Married		Married Women to 100 Married Men	Number of Married		Married Women to 100 Married Men
	Men	Women		Men	Women	
Bohemian etc	1,590	1,005	63	132	191	145
Bulgarian etc	9,341	511	5	35	372	1,063
Croatian etc	18,267	2,545	14	175	504	288
Dutch and Flemish	2,623	1,812	69	1,040	1,020	98
English	11,282	8,668	77	6,010	6,257	104
Finnish	3,213	1,183	37	73	148	203
French	3,716	3,187	86	2,144	2,298	107
German	14,588	9,550	65	3,889	5,691	146
Greek	11,559	958	8	276	1,810	656
Hebrew	12,464	11,568	93	1,408	2,814	200
Irish	3,326	2,341	70	2,689	2,607	97
Italian (North)	9,264	3,103	34	180	1,230	683
Italian (South)	76,982	17,685	23	1,667	7,872	472
Japanese	295	1,758	596	259	151	58
Lithuanian	4,764	1,818	38	30	193	643
Magyar	12,107	3,972	33	246	500	203
Mexican	4,210	2,609	62	1,891	2,293	121
Polish	41,696	9,557	23	821	1,404	171
Rumanian	9,436	977	10	35	214	611
Russian	7,903	1,096	14	240	517	215
Ruthenian	12,384	1,552	13	42	87	207
Scandinavian	6,238	3,262	52	769	1,389	181
Scotch	4,631	3,097	67	3,876	3,627	94
Slovak	14,953	3,004	20	561	1,001	178

In 1910 more married men than married women immigrated from every people except the Japanese and the excess of husbands over wives among the immigrants from these 24 peoples was over 201,000; in 1930 more married women than married men arrived from every people except the Dutch, Irish, Scotch and Japanese. The proportion of married women to married men increased with every people except the Japanese. This evidence strengthens the inference drawn from Table 31 that many broken families are being reunited.

For nearly 80 years, 1820–98, immigrants to the United States were classified by age, but into only three age groups: "under 15,"

"15–40", and "over 40." Between 1899 and 1917 the classification was changed to "under 14," "14–44," and "over 44." In 1918 the limit between children and adults was raised to 16 years. The reasons for these changes, which impair the comparability of the returns for recent years, are not stated. In Table 33 the figures for 1828 and 1851 have been used instead of those for 1830 and 1850, because in 1830 for 58 per cent and in 1850 for 14 per cent of the immigrants the age was not reported, while in 1828 for only 2 per cent and in 1851 for only 0.3 per cent was that true. The figures for 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930 have been adjusted to the earlier age classification so as to get light upon the changes between 1820 and 1920.

TABLE 33.

CLASSIFICATION OF IMMIGRANTS BY AGE, AT TEN-YEAR INTERVALS, 1820–1930.

Year of Immigration	Number of immigrants				Per Cent		
	Total of known age	Under 15	15–40	Over 40	Under15	15–40	Over 40
1820	8,895	1,313	6,064	1,518	14.8	68.1	17.1
1828	29,550	8,117	18,397	3,036	27.5	62.2	10.3
1840	91,744	21,727	62,461	7,556	23.7	68.0	8.3
1851	407,672	89,241	274,359	44,072	21.9	67.3	10.8
1860	179,334	28,620	133,919	16,795	16.0	74.6	9.4
1870	387,203	89,129	250,965	47,109	23.0	64.8	12.2
1880	457,257	87,154	327,622	42,441	19.1	71.6	9.3
1890	455,302	86,404	315,054	53,844	19.0	69.2	11.8
1900	448,572	69,427	331,356	47,789	15.5	73.8	10.7
1910	1,041,570	154,881	777,693	108,996	14.9	74.7	10.4
1920	430,001	79,106	287,153	63,742	18.4	66.8	14.8
1930	241,700	39,390	164,724	37,586	16.3	68.2	15.5

The small number of children reported in the first years, 17 in 1823, for example, and 51 in 1822, and the large number with age not stated suggest that the age of adults was deemed more important than that of children. Perhaps for that reason, perhaps because the reporting in the first years was careless and inaccurate in the matter of age—as it certainly was in other respects—the figures for 1820 are quite out of line with those for later years. Beginning with 1828 the proportion of children among immigrants fell irregularly until in 1910 it was only about one-half of what it was at the start, but since then it has been higher.

At each census within the present century the foreign born were asked to report the year of their arrival in the United States,

and answers were obtained from fully nine-tenths of them. The Census Bureau believes that among the tenth who did not answer the length of residence varied much as it did among the other nine-tenths. If it were not for this expression of expert opinion one might have conjectured that failure to reply would be more common among those who had been long in the country and had become thoroughly Americanized. As a rule the more remote an event about which inquiry is made, the less likely it is to be recalled or recalled accurately. But the opinion thus expressed outweighs these general considerations. Even if the error is a biassed one, as seems likely, it would affect the tabulations for the different censuses in much the same way, making the actual length of residence in the United States on the part of the foreign born somewhat greater than the computations in Table 34 indicate.

In estimating the distribution, the assumption has been made that the foreign born who had been in the United States say between 3 years 3.5 months and 4 years 3.5 months were evenly distributed over that period, although there is, of course, an annual immigration cycle. In this manner Table 34 has been prepared.

TABLE 34.

FOREIGN BORN DISTRIBUTED BY NUMBER OF YEARS IN UNITED STATES.

Years in United States	Number in Thousands			Per Cent		
	1900	1910	1920	1900	1910	1920
Less than 1	201	644	214	2.2	5.3	1.7
1	235	461	86	2.5	3.8	0.7
2	195	622	116	2.1	5.1	0.9
3	172	657	177	1.8	5.4	1.4
4	200	562	203	2.1	4.6	1.6
5–9	1,360	1,811	1,701	14.6	14.9	19.8
10–14	1,597	1,077	2,147	17.1	8.8	17.0
15–19	1,566	1,158	1,814	16.8	9.6	14.3
20 or more	3,802	5,184	5,398	40.8	42.5	42.6
Total known	9,328	12,175	12,656	100.0	100.0	100.0
Median length of residence, in years				16.3	15.4	16.4

The figures show clearly the result of recent shifts in immigration. In 1910 after several years of very heavy inflow, nearly one-fourth of all the foreign born had arrived within the previous 5 years; in 1900 after a more normal period, only one-tenth, and in 1920 after almost complete cessation of immigration for several

years, only about one-sixteenth had so arrived. The small amount of immigration just before 1920 was offset by the large amount in the years just before 1915, and in consequence the median length of residence was almost the same in 1900 and in 1920. The heavy immigration just before 1910, on the contrary, had no such counterweight and the median length of residence at that date was a year less than in 1900 or 1920.

Perhaps the most important stage in the assimilation of immigrants is their acquisition of a knowledge of English adequate for communication with other residents who do not use the immigrants' mother tongue. The figures of Table 35 throw some light upon the length of time required for this process.

TABLE 35.

FOREIGN-BORN WHITES CLASSIFIED BY MOTHER TONGUE, 1910 AND 1920. (In Thousands)

Mother Tongue	Number		Per Cent	
	1910	1920	1910	1920
English	3,364	3,008	25.2	21.9
Some other language	9,982	10,705	74.8	78.1
Total	13,346	13,713	100.0	100.0

Thus in the 10 years the proportion having English as their mother tongue dropped by 3.3 per cent. To estimate what proportion of the 10.7 million had learned English after their arrival, the figures should be compared with those of foreign-born persons unable to speak English and to make them comparable the children under 10 years of age must be subtracted. This has been done by assuming that the proportion of children under 10 years of age among the foreign born whose mother tongue was not English was the same as it was among the whole number of foreign born at the same date. In this way the 9,982,000 are reduced to 9,683,000 and the 10,705,000 to 10,537,000. By combining these percentages of mother tongue with those of the foreign born unable to speak English, the figures in Table 36 p. 117 are reached.

Another method of analysis, in which the number of those unable to speak English on landing was estimated from the country

of birth and which has the advantage of being applicable also to the figures of 1900, gives 78.1 per cent for that date and confirms the above percentages for the later dates. The figures indicate that between seven-tenths and nine-tenths of the non-English-speaking immigrants had learned or claimed to have learned English between the time of arrival and a subsequent census.

TABLE 36.

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF FOREIGN-BORN WHITES 10 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER CLASSIFIED BY ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH, 1910 AND 1920.

(In Thousands)

	Foreign-Born Whites 10 years of age and over	
	1910	1920
Mother tongue not English	9,683	10,537
Unable to speak English at date of census	2,953	1,489
Learned to speak English	6,730	9,048
Per cent learned English	69.5	86.1

But the wide divergence in the results for the three censuses arouses suspicion and should be explained if the conclusion is to be accepted. A possible explanation may lie in the different average length of time that these foreign born, whose mother tongue was not English, had been in the United States at different censuses. To test the hypothesis it is necessary to assume that the distribution of this majority group by years in the United States agreed with that of the total. In that way and applying the per cents previously reached in a study of years in the United States, the results in Table 37 (page 118) are reached.

The figures of Table 37 show that the number unable to speak English among those foreign born at least 10 years of age whose mother tongue was not English, was much below the number who had been in the United States less than 10 years. A distribution of those who had been in the country between 5 and 10 years results in indicating that the number unable to speak English was about equal to the number who had been in the United States:

in 1900 less than 8.9 years,
" 1910 " " 7.1 "
" 1920 " " 7.0 "

TABLE 37.

ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH COMPARED WITH LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES, 1900, 1910 AND 1920.

(In Thousands)

Date	Mother Tongue not English	Number having learned to speak English after arrival	Number unable to speak English	Number with non-English mother tongue who have been in United States		
				less than 5 years	5 to 9 years	Less than 10 years
1900	6,584	5,138	1,446	704	961	1,665
1910	9,683	6,730	2,953	2,343	1,443	3,786
1920	10,537	9,048	1,489	664	2,086	2,750

The conclusion apparently is warranted that the number unable to speak English is about equal to the number who have been in the United States less than 7 years. In other words, taking one case with another, it has required about 7 years for the average immigrant ignorant of English on arrival to acquire or at least to claim a speaking knowledge of it. Perhaps one may interpret these figures also as indicating that the interval required to learn English is growing shorter.

By illiteracy is meant inability to write any language, that being the definition used both by the Bureau of the Census and by the Bureau of Immigration. The census enumerators asked the question of all residents over 10 years of age. The Bureau of Immigration asked it of all adult immigrants, the word adult meaning now persons 16 years of age or more, but earlier persons 14 years of age or more. This divergence from the practice of the Census Bureau and change in its own practice on the part of the Bureau of Immigration are probably not of material influence upon the figures. Neither office attempted to verify its answers. That the results do not agree is shown by comparing the per cents in Table 38 (p. 119).

The divergence in the '90's, if it stood alone, might be explained by supposing that there had been much less illiteracy among immigrants before 1893 than after that date. But that assumption would not account for the relatively low and unchanging proportion of illiterates among the foreign born in 1910 and 1920, a period in which illiteracy among arriving immigrants was twice as great. The number and proportion of illiterate immigrants rose irregularly from 17 per cent in 1893 to 30 per cent in 1907, due probably to a

change in the countries from which the bulk of the immigrants came. In 1893 but 43 per cent and in 1907 fully 73 per cent of the immigrants were from Russia, Austria-Hungary or Italy. After 1907 illiteracy dropped to 13 per cent in 1915 with the enactment of a literacy test, and to less than 5 per cent after the war when that test came to be firmly applied.

TABLE 38.

PER CENT ILLITERATE AMONG FOREIGN-BORN WHITES 10 YEARS OF AGE OR OVER, AND ADULT IMMIGRANTS.

Date of Census	Per Cent Illiterate Among Foreign-born whites	Immigration Period	Per Cent Illiterate Among Adult Immigrants
1890	13.1	.....	....
1900	12.9	1893–99	23.1
1910	12.7	1901–10	27.5
1920	13.1	1911–20	21.1
....	....	1921–29	4.2

Before the literacy test was imposed the proportion of illiterates among the resident foreign born was little more than one-half of the proportion among immigrants,a difference probably due in part to the adult education of illiterate immigrants after their arrival. But it was due in part also to the facts that "birds of passage" immigrants came from countries in which illiteracy was more prevalent than it was in other European countries which sent emigrants to the United States, and that many such birds of passage were counted two or more times in the tables of the Bureau of Immigration but not more than once in those of a census.

A rough measure of the number of illiterate immigrants who learned to read between the time of their arrival and the date of a census may perhaps be found by comparing the illiteracy figures of the two Bureaus. In doing so it is advantageous to examine the returns for the two sexes separately.

The male foreign-born white illiterates reported in the census of 1910 were 866,000. If that group was depleted only by deaths during the following decade and not also by emigration, and if its death rate through the decade was 17.3 per 1000 (that of all foreign-born whites at least 10 years of age in the United States registration

area for 1910), then the survivors in 1920 would number about 728,000. Other illiterate male immigrants to the number of 860,000 entered the United States between 1910 and 1920 and the median interval between their arrival and the census of 1920 was about 7 years. As a result, this group in 1920 would be reduced by deaths to about 756,000. The two groups together would constitute the 1,484,000 foreign-born white male illiterates expected in 1920. Only 867,000 were reported, the difference, 617,000, being apparently made up of those who had learned to write or claimed to have done so during the decade and of those who as birds of passage had been counted more than once or had left the United States. This difference is about two-fifths of the expected number. A similar method indicates that 143,000, or 14 per cent, of the expected number of illiterate females learned to write between the time of their arrival and the following census. If the latter percentage was near the truth, the difference between the two sexes perhaps represents roughly the sum of the birds-of-passage immigration and the return current of males during the war years.

Illiteracy among immigrants who came to the United States before the literacy test was imposed was due in large measure to the restricted opportunities for elementary education in many of the countries from which immigrants came. It is important, therefore, to inquire how far illiteracy continues to prevail in the second generation among the American-born children of immigrants. Perhaps the best clue to an answer is in the prevalence of illiteracy among such children who are young enough still to be in school or to have left it recently, say 10 to 14 years of age. Three classes of white

TABLE 39.

ILLITERATES PER THOUSAND WHITE CHILDREN 10 TO 14 YEARS OF AGE BY NATIVITY CLASSES.[a]

Date of Census	Native White of Native Parents	Native White of Foreign-born or Mixed Parents	Foreign-born White
1890	67	16	59
1900	44	9	56
1910	22	6	35
1920	11	5	45

[a]For figures on which these per cents are based, see *Census of 1900*, Volume II, pages cxv ff., and *Census of 1920*, Volume II, page 1152.

children—native white of native parents, native white of foreign-born parents, and foreign-born white—are distinguished by the census. The number of illiterates in a thousand of each class at successive censuses is shown in Table 39 (page 120).

In these three classes the largest proportion of illiterates is, as one would expect, among the foreign-born whites, but it is surprising to find that illiteracy is only about half as widespread among children of immigrants as among children of native Americans. At dates before 1920 the differences between these two classes were even greater. Why do more children of immigrants than children of native Americans acquire an elementary education? The ratios for different parts of the United States suggest an answer.

Table 40 shows the number of illiterates in 1920 in each thousand white children 10–14 years of age classified as children of immigrants and children of native Americans.

TABLE 40.

ILLITERATES PER 1000 CHILDREN 10–14 YEARS OF AGE, 1920.[a]

Geographic Division	Native White of Native Parents	Native White of Foreign-Born Parents
New England	3	2
Middle Atlantic	2	2
East North Central	2	2
West North Central	3	3
South Atlantic	21	5
East South Central	27	12
West South Central	23	134
Mountain	7	11
Pacific	2	3

[a]For figures on which these per cents are based, see *Census of 1920*, Volume II, pages 1161 ff.

In the first four and the last divisions, the proportions of illiterate children of both classes are near the vanishing point. But in the three southern divisions the differences are important. Figures for the several states show that in none of the northern states from Maine to California is there a significant difference in illiteracy (*i. e.* more than 4 per thousand) between the children of immigrants and the children of native Americans. The southern

states from Virginia to Arizona fall into two sections, an eastern from Virginia to Alabama and Arkansas with the greatest difference in Tennessee, in which the illiteracy of the children of native Americans is much more than that of the children of immigrants, and a western from Mississippi to Arizona with the greatest difference in Texas, in which the reverse is true. This second section includes the three states, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, in which from two-thirds to three-fourths of the immigrants are Mexicans. In the first section the larger proportion of illiterates among the children of native Americans is probably to be connected with the different distribution of the two classes between city and country. In Tennessee, for example, among those at least 10 years of age, less than one-fourth of the native whites of native parents but more than three-fourths of the native whites of foreign-born parents live in cities, and in that state the illiteracy of the native white population as a whole is more than three times as great in the rural districts as in the urban.

An analysis of the figures more extended than there is room for here, would probably establish what the above statements suggest, that under similar conditions and opportunities the proportion of illiterates among children of immigrants and children of native Americans is much the same, and that the difference between the illiteracy of the two population groups substantially disappears in the second generation.