

ventions have supplied machinery of marvellous ingenuity which has multiplied the productiveness of labour a hundredfold; transport to every part of the world has been made cheap and convenient; purchasers are sought at distances of thousands of miles, and the manufacturer has to meet world-wide competition. Further, the conditions under which any trade is carried on are daily changing. New inventions, new methods, are coming into use. The calm and peaceable life resting upon custom and tradition has passed away and given place to a struggle intense and full of novelty. To succeed under the new order of things requires, above all, self-reliance, courage, cool judgment, prompt decision, openness of mind and quickness to see and appreciate the value of improvements. Hence the defects of the collectivist social formation are vastly more injurious now than ever before. It enfeebles the man at the very moment when he is called to strenuous action; it robs him of his energy when he has to measure himself against hardy competitors.

M. Demolins finds an illustration of his theme in the statistics of births and marriages. In France, between 1770 and 1780, the births were 380 per annum for each ten thousand of the inhabitants; 1821 to 1830, 309; 1880 to 1896, 220. In a century and a quarter the proportion has fallen more than one-third. In 1881 the number of births in France was 937,057. In 1890 it was 838,057, almost 100,000 less. The whole social system tends in this direction. The father of a family, desiring to secure what he considers a good position for his son, has him educated for the public service. He believes it his duty also to make provision as far as possible for his future maintenance by means of a settlement. It is difficult enough for a man to raise and educate a family,—how much more so to save enough to give his children portions? Small families are therefore the rule in France.

Again, as the population of the country is not increasing, its colonies do

not flourish. There is as marked a difference now as there was two centuries ago, between the extraordinary growth of English-speaking settlements in new lands and the blight that rests upon countries under French rule. As in the time of Richelieu, the former attract to their shores farmers, mechanics, shopkeepers, men seeking a permanent establishment for themselves, their wives and children; they grow with spontaneous vigour and develop an independent life; their inhabitants multiply in wealth and numbers; they become new nations. As in the time of Richelieu, the population of the latter, other than the natives, is composed principally of soldiers, officials and priests, with a sprinkling of traders and adventurers. Such is the present condition of Algeria, Senegal, Annam, Tonquin and Madagascar. These dependencies are ruled from Paris; their commerce is monopolized by the central power; they have no inner vitality.

M. Demolins' theory throws a flood of light upon the progress of socialism in different European countries. His general criticism of French life, social organization and political ideas, applies equally to Germany, but here the lesson is accentuated. Although the conception of personal independence made its earliest appearance in the forests of Germany among the Teutonic tribes, nevertheless their descendants in our day have lost the tradition, and the individual is crushed and overwhelmed by the power of the State. Germany suffers from paternalism and militarism. Her present ruler takes every occasion to declare that he is the father of his people, that their welfare is in his hands, that he is by divine right absolute master of the State. In Germany and France, more especially, however, in the former, socialism has found a soil fit to receive it. In Germany the prophets and founders of socialism have lived and worked and the socialism of other countries is merely a derivative stream from the German fountain. But among the Anglo-Saxon peoples the doctrine has made little or no progress. In England it has failed