

*Once born*, the New England child has a better chance of living than has the child of any other country or state; but Storer and other American writers have pointed out the ante-natal dangers to which the fœtus is exposed. And we are left no room to conjecture one at least of the causes.

Dr. Gould, of Boston, speaking of the births registered in Massachusetts 1859 to 1863, says: We have to record a continued deficiency in the number of births to be expected from the known population. 1865 was a year of war, and the diminished birth rate may be satisfactorily explained—the birth rate was only 4,097 in excess of death rate. But even then it was noticed by Dr. Geo. Derby that the births had diminished in all but three counties, while the deaths had diminished in every county except two. The population at that time being 1,267,059, there was one living birth to every 41.89 persons, and even then it was observed "that the births are most numerous in the counties containing crowded towns and a large foreign population." Dr. Derby, as if in anticipation, adds: It should not be inferred that the ratio of excess of births among the foreigners . . . is likely to lead finally to an extinction of the American element. But the most striking statement is that of Oliver Warner, Secretary of the Commonwealth: The native population of Massachusetts in 1860 was 970,752, the foreign population in the same year was 260,114. In that year the natives produced 16,672, the foreign 16,138. Dr. Derby in commenting says: The superior fecundity of the Celtic race . . . over the Anglo-American race is, we think, abundantly proved.

In 1865 the native population was 1,000,761, the foreign 266,270. They produced in the following year, the former 16,555 children, the latter 17,530—thus showing a productiveness of the latter over the former *four times* as great.

In 1867 the birth rate was 27.6 per thousand. Compared with the preceding year, the American births had diminished by 318, the foreign had increased by 922.

In 1868 the birth rate was 28.6 per thousand, an increase over former years, and it was then observed that the strictly American births had diminished 2.21 per cent.; the strictly foreign had increased .84 of one per cent.

In 1869 the birth rate was 25.5 per thousand. It had decreased by 52, while the marriages had increased by 970. It has now arrived that the excess of birth rate over death rate is but two-thirds of one per cent!

It is again observed that the American births had diminished during the preceding year, while the foreign had increased. The foreign births now exceed the native by 2,129, notwithstanding the relative smallness of the population.

In 1870, Dr. George Derby, Secretary of the State Board of Health, and Professor of Hygiene in Harvard University, reports the birth rate for Massachusetts as 26.2 per thousand, and adds: "The proportion of foreign births has remained quite constant since 1864; the purely American births have steadily diminished their ratio, and the births from mixed parentage have as steadily advanced." He continues: "Surely, and not very slowly, a mixed stock of Irish, Germans and Canadians is taking the place of the purely English stock which has possessed Massachusetts for more than two centuries. Here are facts for the statesman, the educator, and the moralist." In 1871, the same high authority states: "The superior fecundity of the foreign element among us is a fact fully recognized, and one which is confirmed in a most suggestive way from year to year by the registration returns. This year there was an increase of American births by 234; of foreign by 781.

In 1872, the births had increased by 3,444, but the deaths by 7,076, and the excess of birth rate over death rate was but .563 of one per cent. Again is noticed a progressive diminution in the purely native births, and a corresponding increase in those from a mixed parentage. The excess of birth is now entirely with the foreign element. In one year the native births have increased by 1,126, the foreign by 1,992.

The report for 1873-74 I have not at hand, but that for 1875, just published, (1877), is more than confirmatory, and with it I close.

Dr. Derby has passed away, and Dr. Draper prepares, under direction of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, that portion of the thirty-fourth Annual Registration Report from which I glean that the birth rate is 26.63 for every thousand of the population. Still a falling off—28.3 having been the average for the pre-