

The remarkable length of line operated by the railway companies in Great Britain, compared with the distances between their extreme points, arises from the elaborate net-work of side lines which cover the old country with short railroads that bring every town and village into close connection with the main highways of the country. Electric lines are now depreciating the value of these branches.

Although the receipts have shown a considerable increase for some time past, the working expenses have been growing with greater rapidity, so that, while the increasing freight receipts prove the general business of the United Kingdom to be prosperous, the outlook for railway shareholders is not bright. The quotations below, for the lines above referred to, are for the end of April compared with same week last year, and the highest in 1899, 1898 and 1897. We give the quotations in sterling as in English stock lists.

Railway.	Apl. 1900.	Apl. 1899.	Highest. 1899.	Highest. 1898.	Highest. 1897.
London & N. W.	188½	202¼	205¼	205½	209½
Gt. Western.....	159¼	174¼	275	179	179¼
Midland.....	76½	83¼	84¼	88¼	89¼
S. Eastern.....	90¼	112¼	114¼	117½	119¼
London & S. West....	197½	219½	226	236	231½
Great Eastern.....	120¼	127½	138	124½	128½
North ".....	172¼	184	185	182¼	182¼
Gt. Northern.....	55	65	71¼	61½	68½
Lancashire & York...	139	150	152	150	156
London & Brighton...	165½	182	185	186	186

These quotations, in view of the general advance in value of securities paying regular dividends, or interest, indicate there being a feeling that English railway dividends will be reduced all along the line at the close of current year.

ARE WE DEGENERATING? IF SO, WHY?

By E. STUVER, M.D., Fort Collins, Colo.

This is a question which is being seriously discussed by sages, philosophers, statesmen, physicians, and all persons interested in the welfare of the race; but to the physician, who is brought into such intimate contact with its causes and manifestations, and who by his training and opportunities is well prepared to throw a flood of light on it, to illumine its dark recesses and banish misconceptions, it should be a subject of absorbing interest.

Before we can formulate a definite opinion one way or another in this matter, we must have some standard or ideal by which to be governed in arriving at conclusions. This standard should be a broad and comprehensive one, and should embrace not merely certain parts or phases of human progress, but should include all those elements which are necessary for the symmetrical development and uplifting of the human race. Men and women should not only be attaining to greater physical, intellectual and moral perfection at the same time, but this should be true of the great majority of the individuals constituting a nation or a race. It is not enough, to constitute national or racial progress, that the stream of evolution carries forward on its bosom, to greater physical perfection, higher intellectual achievement and grander moral excellences, a few favored ones; if at the same time the great mass of individuals are not likewise moving

forward along the same lines. If the majority of the people do not possess healthier bodies, more acute and better balanced minds and higher moral natures, it becomes a serious question, despite our achievements, to decide whether we are progressing or retrograding.

There can be no doubt of the truth that the massing of enormous populations in large cities, with the impure air and bad sanitary surroundings, and insufficient or excessive quantity or improper kinds of food, late hours and excesses of various kinds, together with the high pressure methods of living and the mad struggle for wealth, have done much to lower the health and vital resistance of a large part of our population. The crowded tenement-houses and the sweat-shops, with all their physical evils and moral degradation, form a dark and corrupting current in the stream of our national life. And while it is true that some choice spirits in the great stream which is constantly pouring into the cities from the rural districts escape these contaminating influences, rise to high positions of honor and trust, and, by mingling with infuse strength and vitality into the decaying city populations; still, the greater number are either engulfed or ruined by the putrid stream or are soiled by its foul contact. That this great change from rural to urban life has been followed by physical degeneracy in the population of to-day as compared with our ancestors of fifty or one hundred years ago, no one will deny; and unless existing evils are speedily corrected, these physical defects and moral obliquities will become more pronounced with each succeeding generation as the population becomes more aggregated in the cities.

Whether from an intellectual standpoint we are in advance of a few generations ago is a very difficult matter to decide. There can be no question that the greater attention given to the study of the objects and phenomena of Nature, which has led to so many discoveries and inventions, has greatly enlarged our mental horizon and given us a vastly more comprehensive view of the universe than was possessed by our ancestors.

The facilities for travel and the ease of communication between the most distant parts of the civilized world have placed the mental products of the whole world within easy reach of every worker. This has unquestionably led to breadth and comprehensiveness of view; but, at the same time, by presenting so many distractions to the mind, has caused a plethora, a satiety, in short a mental dyspepsia, which has led to the formation of many toxins, to defective assimilation, and a very imperfect nutrition of the intellectual centres.

While brightness, quickness and the superficial, showy qualities of mind have been highly developed, power of concentration and profound thought have not been correspondingly increased; indeed, so intense is the competition and so strong the desire to attain an early fame, or, more properly speaking, notoriety, that in order to secure this object almost any means are adopted in preference to long-continued investigation, hard work and profound thinking. Nor is it difficult to point out at least some of the causes that have led to this state of affairs. Under the conditions which prevailed fifty years ago most of the boys and girls of our country lived in the rural districts; they were brought into close contact with nature; they breathe its atmosphere and were bathed in its influences. This communion with grand and