

men of science and scientific societies have been constantly pointing out the ruin to which the nation was advancing, whilst in the National Assembly and the Senate debate after debate has taken place with a view to the provision of some remedy through the action of the State. Every intelligent Frenchman has been aware that the national security has depended upon population, and every married man has refused to make the sacrifice called for in rearing more than one or two children. Through the disparity of numbers alone, France, without allies, would lie at the mercy of Germany, and in so far as force gives predominance, she has lost for ever her position as the leading Continental power. The question of interest from the scientific point of view is, whether, by the gigantic system of artificial selection which they have been carrying on, the French have brought about deterioration of their race. We admit we have no data upon which to form a solid opinion, but certainly the small families and the matrimonial customs would, in theory, seem to favor survival of an inferior stock. For every girl, unfit as she may be for motherhood, if she has a fortune proper to her rank—and to provide this is the first care of the parents—a husband is found; and if her fortune be large, hardly any physical inferiority or mental deficiency will form a bar to matrimony. On the other hand, the rule, with very rare exceptions, is that the moneyless girl, however richly endowed in body and mind, cannot marry. No man will have her; she would be ashamed to take a husband without bringing him the usual *dot*. Similar remarks apply to the men. For the one or two boys of the family, however inferior, if they have enough money, wives can be always found. On the other hand, if families were large, it is, of course, evident that, as a rule, those best fitted for the battle of life would succeed in matrimony as in everything else, and the process of natural selection would not be seriously interfered with. The falling birth-rate in these islands brings this question home. We have, probably, a much bigger proportional residuum of wastrels of every class, and of the feeble-minded, than the French, and these are now multiplying without restraint, whilst our really well-bred stocks are more and more checking their increase by artificial means. Science has given to mankind now, for the first time, the knowledge and power to mold as it pleases its physical future. The quality, if not the quantity, of our populace can be vastly improved by the action of the State; it is to be hoped that enlightenment, of our legislators may in due course give them the power to lead the nation in the right direction before it has become altogether too late.—*Medical Press and Circular*.