

being, although this to a certain extent is modified by circumstances, the same general law holds good. Owing to his conformation, the man is capable of performing and of enduring more physical labour and fatigue, and hence on him from time immemorial has fallen the share of manual toil, and of supporting and protecting the other and weaker sex. It is true we sometimes meet with—

Daughters of the plough, stronger than men,
Huge women blowzed with health, and wind and rain
And labour.

Such, all will admit, are exceptions, and by no means represent the standard woman.

The generative organs form a most important distinction between the sexes, and must, to a great extent modify the habits and career of the female. In the natural course of events, many years of the most vigorous and active period of a woman's life are spent in germinating and suckling her offspring, during which time she is physically capable of little else. If she has not children, frequently recurring periodic processes take place, which under the best circumstances render her specially liable to derangement of her general health, and under adverse conditions she is almost certain to fall a victim. This was demonstrated in the days of slavery, when the owners, either not knowing or caring about these physiological laws, forced their women to labour continuously in the fields, in consequence of which thousands of them died of those numerous ills to which female flesh is heir. We cannot here enter at length into this very important subject, but merely indicate that the whole sexual system of women has a profound influence on her physical nature, which does not exist to the same extent in man, and although for conventional reasons such questions are usually suppressed in public controversies on the advancement of her sex, there can be no doubt that they should not be forgotten, bearing as they do a most important and practical influence on the subject.

From these considerations the conclusion may be drawn that woman is structurally less powerful and vigorous than man, that she is less capable of performing acts of physical exertion, of enduring fatigue and exposure, and of combating against adverse circumstances. That moreover the natural functions of her sex, when they do not actually incapacitate her from action, render her specially liable under disturbing conditions, to deterioration of general health.

The Nervous Conformation of Woman.—The whole nervous system, in common with the other structures of the body, is smaller and less voluminous in the female than in the male. Its function is characterised by comparative weakness, as evidenced by great susceptibility and instability, and also by promptness in responding to all kinds of stimuli. In women there is less nervous capacity and vigour, diminished power of control, and a greater readiness to break down under physical and mental strain. It is notorious that the conditions termed nervous and hysterical are almost entirely confined to the female sex, in which they are extremely common.