

on returning, a considerable contrast in the appearance of the American from his British kindred, both in features and complexion. This consists more especially in the loss of fat in the cheeks and about the eyes, with a change in the shape of the mouth owing to early alteration of the teeth, and a seeming flatness of the chest causing an appearance of stooping, from anterior prominence of the shoulders. Indeed the American features are now as readily recognised abroad as those of the German or Frenchman, and he can by these alone be very generally distinguished from his English namesake.

That the American climate, therefore, has, in the lapse of two centuries or less, considerably modified the European type, is a fact which we think few can deny. What that change indicates—whether it is simply a stage in the process of acclimatization, or a positive loss of vitality in the race, is a question the importance of which cannot be exaggerated. In the whole kingdom of life no transplanting into a new soil occurs, without an apparent decline at first; but if a new and increased vigor is to be manifested, we must find the perennial root healthy and strong, though the early leaves may wither. The question is to be decided by the condition of the stock itself, and we think that it is precisely here that the observations which have given rise to such melancholy anticipations fail most strikingly. The impressions of a tourist on the complexion and appearance of a people are accepted as scientific data, and straightway conclusions are propounded, at whose vastness even an archangel might stand aghast.

But a great opportunity has arisen to substitute facts and observations for theories on this whole question. A test, than which nothing more complete could be devised, has been suddenly brought to bear, not only on the working of our institutions, the extent of our resources and the character of our people, but of their development in bone and muscle as well. The issue at stake in a tremendous contest has taken hold of the feelings of the entire nation, and sent thousands from every class of the population and every condition in life to undergo the hardships of the field.

And I would now beg leave to direct your attention to one particular aspect of this great event of the age, which I have myself been more especially called upon to note. Having had the honor of an appointment by his Excellency Governor Morgan, as medical examiner for the State of all recruits for regiments in the field mustered at the depot of New York city during the past summer, it occurred to me to take advantage of the opportunity for instituting observations on a number of points of medical interest and importance. In no other connection, as we have indicated, could there be afforded better facilities for such observations, since both city and country, every calling and pursuit, every degree of culture from the professor of Hebrew to the street cleaner, and every nationality which composes our present population, were most fully represented, while all presented themselves as healthy adults at the age of their fullest physical vigor. War certainly presents some singular aspects, for what else can be conceived that would bring about a procession of some 9,000 human beings in the original costume of Eden, in the hope of their being pronounced fit to go forth to shoot and be shot. But in no other way could all those artificial circumstances, which difference men from one another to such a degree, be so completely laid aside, and every race and condition appear in the equality of nature itself.