

the exhaustion of nervous force, now so common, is a resultant from our high civilization in the first place, though it is supplemented by peculiarities of climate.

From this hasty review it might naturally be supposed that the future of the race is a particularly black look-out. And so it would be were the brain-working class not constantly recruited physically from the muscle-workers. To the absence of caste on this continent is to be attributed the never-failing energy of the people, as a whole. There is a constant mixing and mingling of the people by marriage, with the result that this continent presents more men of marked and varied ability in proportion to population than any country in the world.

Nor is the prospect for individuals altogether a desolate look-out. There is this about neurasthenia—it is not killing, though it be prostrating. It is only in men of extreme will-power and physical debility that neurasthenia works death. In men of lesser will-power it terminates in inebriety, epilepsy or insanity. But in those who temper will-power with reason, nervous exhaustion is never allowed to go to extremes. When such men realize their danger they take the only remedy, rest with relaxation, and thus it is that though they may say that they never knew what a day's robust health is, yet the freedom from fevers and inflammations which the nervous diathesis ensures, gives them rich promise of long life. It is a fact ascertained beyond the slightest grounds for dispute that brain-workers, that is to say, the class most affected by our higher civilization, are longer-lived than muscle-workers. The average life of five hundred of the greatest men the world ever saw is 64.20 years.

The average of death all over is 51, after men have reached 20 years of age. Thus great men, great brain-workers, exceed in longevity farmers and clergymen by two or three years; physicians and lawyers by six years, and day-labourers and mechanics by a no less startling difference than nineteen or twenty years. The condition of a neurasthenic is, therefore, not without comfort in the knowledge that his chances of long-life are greater than that of a burly ditcher and delver.

There is no necessity to fear that the fate of the leaders in life will always be the same, for their condition at present is like that of a man aroused from sleep. He does not know very well what he is doing. As soon as he becomes accustomed to the light, he will flounder about less, and by the expenditure of less labour accomplish more. The work of reorganizing the social system to bring it into conformity with the new condition of life has begun. Enlightened methods are being introduced into education, the gospel of rest is being preached, attention is being paid to physical culture as well as to mental acquisitions; the schoolmaster of science is abroad, and human nature is striving to suit itself to the newer civilization.

In conclusion, I would say to those who may have a desire to pursue this subject further, that they will find an admirable treatise on the subject of 'American Nervousness,' written by Dr. Beard, a pioneer in this line of thought. Upon this work I have largely drawn, while at the same time availing myself of other sources of information, none of which I have found more instructive than intelligent reflection upon my own past and present life.