

not merely amongst those who are consciously unwell, but very largely too amongst those who are in regular daily work, and to themselves in apparently good health. To me it is almost saddening to note the colourless faces of so many of the young women who pass me in the streets, of the servants in our homes, of the nurses in our hospitals, of those in workshops and houses of business, and of others, too, who throughout their lives seem to have had around them nothing but healthy influences. . . .

The importance of this question cannot be overrated; it is unnecessary for me to touch upon the systems of this anemia—the vascular disturbances, the caprices of digestive, blood-forming and reproductive organs, and the more serious revolt of the sensory and emotional, and even of the volitional and intellectual centres—but it is needful to point out that this condition, once set up and long continued, tends to become the normal state; and that when thus established, it may undoubtedly be transmitted. If this be so, and if it be true also that the offspring largely and chiefly take their physical characteristics from the mother, then indeed a very serious responsibility is thrown upon our profession. . . .

What has produced this mobility and unstableness? Of heredity as a cause there can be no doubt; constantly we find the girls in a family exhibiting that anæmic condition which has been a life-long characteristic of the mother.

. . . Before passing to that which, in my opinion, is the great predisposing cause of this constitutional instability, let me mention some of the exciting causes which might be brought under control. There are unhealthy occupations in ill-ventilated and crowded workrooms, and young women working

for pay and for length of hours that no man could stand; there are wretched homes, with insufficient light and air and food; there are little children, themselves weak and still growing, taking charge of younger children, and carrying them about until the altered pelvis, and the yielding spine, and the flattening foot only too clearly tell of the injury that is being done; these and similar evils might certainly be remedied or lessened by wise legislation.

But some of the causes named would affect both sexes equally, and hence we must look further for the cause of this instability of constitution in women. There is no difficulty in seeing it, for most evidently it is to be found in the one-sidedness of girls' education. There is the cultivation of the intellectual and emotional sides of their nature; but there is little, or at best no adequate, training and development of the physical. . . .

From the Education Department I received a letter, from which I quote all that is important: "My Lords are not aware of any evidence as to the physical training of girls having been taken by any authoritative committee. . . . No compulsory rules are laid down by the Department as to the nature or amount of the physical exercises in girls' schools, nor has any special report of this kind of training been issued by the Education Department."

We find, then, that throughout this country, in the girls' elementary schools, whilst the Government carefully tests the mental progress, not one word is said and no official oversight of any kind is considered necessary, in the matter of the physical development of the children. The little that is done is due entirely to the wise action of a few School Boards; the children take