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The Determination of Sex by Leopold Schenk

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are repeated again and again; a recitative is gradually developed, and the germ-phrase is repeated in the pauses. From such lowly beginnings the highest verse, lyrical, dramatic and epic, is derived. The ballad with its refrain discloses itself as one of the stages of the development—the recitative accompanied by the continued iteration of the germ-phrase, in which the emotion centres. Undeniably this takes us down into a comparatively early period of barbarism; and in it M. Pineau finds one of his most powerful arguments against the writers for whom the middle ages gave birth to the ballads, and especially against the theory which attributes them to the educated and courtly classes. When he himself approaches their precise origin, he claims to discover it in the contact of the Scandinavian and Celtic races, not at the time of the Viking raids, but at least a thousand years before, when the Teutonic invaders of the North found the land already occupied by the peoples who had raised the megalithic monuments. There is much that is plausible, much that is seductive, in this hypothesis. The Count De Nigra had already pointed to the striking absence of the narrative ballad from Southern Italy, as an evidence that its production in Upper Italy, and throughout the north and west of Europe, was due to the Celtic substratum of the population. At present, however, the state of our knowledge is far from permitting us definitely to affirm it. As regards the peninsula itself of Norway and Sweden, it is doubtful whether the Celts ever reached it. They may have done so; and the round huts common to Sweden and France, the fashion of reckoning by the score common to the Danes and the French peasants, the peculiar head-gear and other details of costume, may be evidence of a common Celtic ancestry. But this is a long way from proving that the efflorescence of ballad poetry is due to the Celts.

Here again, as in previous instances, if I take exception, it is to M. Pineau's incidental and subordinate claims and arguments. His main positions will hardly be challenged by any student, for if there be nothing very new in them, it was at least desirable that the ballad literature of the north should be analysed in a painstaking and methodical manner with a view to exhibiting their fundamentally savage character. M. Pineau has fulfilled this function admirably, and has for ever rendered it impossible to maintain that the source of the ballads is no farther off than the twelfth century A.D., or anywhere in the middle ages. Succeeding volumes will deal with other divisions of the subject, of which the present volume is only a first instalment.

We are informed, since the foregoing was written, that the Académie Française has "crowned" the book. In doing so, the Académie has exhibited nothing more than a just sense of the importance of the theme and the skill and learning with which the distinguished author has treated it.

E. SIDNEY HARTLAND.

THE DETERMINATION OF SEX. By Dr. Leopold Schenk, Professor at the Imperial and Royal University, and Director of the Embryological Institute of Vienna. Authorised Translation. London: The Werner Company, 1898. Price 5s.

In this work of 173 pages, Prof. Schenk has set forth his theory as to the causes which determine sex. The book opens with a preface of two pages in which nothing is stated to give a clue to its contents. The latter are not even tabulated, there are no headings to the chapters, and there is no index of any kind. This is most unusual in works printed in the English language, whether translations or not, and will certainly not render the work as acceptable to the English readers, who are likely to read it, as it might have been had the usual custom been followed. After the short preface the author at once begins his subject, which he divides into three chapters. The first of these is devoted to a consideration of the various theories

which have been propounded from the time of Hippocrates downwards, on the factors determining sex in the first instance, and is therefore historical in its character. The various views are tersely put and in some instances criticised. The author favours the view of the cross-heredity of sex. This chapter ends with the 95th page, and occupies 88 pages.

The second chapter deals, in the first instance, with the products of excretion, especially those eliminated from the body by the kidneys. Attention is specially directed to the elimination of the carbo-hydrates. Their presence in the urine may be interpreted as an indication that the process of combustion is not being thoroughly carried out, in other words, that metabolism is incomplete. The detection in the urine is therefore a matter of great importance. For this purpose the author relies upon the phenylhydrazin test for sugar as the most delicate in detecting small quantities, but also employs Trommer's, the fermentation and Nylander's tests. Metabolism, he shows, is less complete in the female, and sugar is more often found and in larger quantities normally in her than in the male. Ovulation is not independent of diet and metabolism, and when the latter is incomplete, the ovum is not so highly developed as when it is complete. In a highly developed ovum, he maintains the proto-plasmic elements are favourable to the development of the male sex, while in a less ripe and less well nourished ovum the characteristics and powers inherent in its protoplasm, have not been fully attained, and have in fact only reached the stage at which its cell products can arrange themselves for the development of a female. He argues that when the diet is such as to enable complete metabolism to occur, the maturity of the ovum reaches the highest perfection, and hence most favourable to the evolution of a male individual. What the nature of the diet is to be, to produce this object, must be a matter of careful regulation by the physician and of experiment, as it varies in different individuals, but it must be such as not only to cause a disappearance of the normal sugar urine, but also an increase in the reducing substances. Certain impulses are likewise necessary for the stimulation of the functional development of new cells and new organs. These are brought into effect by the kind of feeding which produces the above-mentioned results, and are accompanied by a high exchange of nitrogenous substances. Such dieting usually produces salutary effects in the health of the mother herself, even though it may not always be possible to carry it out so thoroughly as to obtain complete metabolism.

The third chapter may be said to be occupied with clinical evidence in favour of the author's views, the results of experimental researches and treatment undertaken with the view to the production of male progeny, and lastly it contains valuable directions for observing the influence of diet on the nutrition of the mother, which has, as he has shown, so powerful an influence on the sex of her offspring. The directions for treatment are clear, and will readily be understood by any physician well skilled in the physiology of digestion, who can undertake the necessary analysis of the urine which is absolutely essential, but, as we know from practical experience (having personally repeated the author's tests) not a very difficult matter, though it takes a little time to do. While the author claims to have formulated the influences which determine the production of male progeny and the treatment to be adopted for that end, he states that he has not been able to formulate directions for treatment which will tend to the production of female progeny.

The work has been well thought out and appears to be based on careful observations, so that it is worthy in every way of the attention of the scientific anthropologist as well as of the physician.

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