

**MALFORMATIONS OF  
THE GENITAL  
ORGANS OF WOMAN**

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Malformations of the Genital Organs of Woman by Ch. Debierre

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OF THE  
GENITAL ORGANS OF WOMAN

BY

CH. DEBIERRE

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With Eighty-five Illustrations

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PHILADELPHIA POLYCLINIC



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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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This translation has been made with the consent of the author, and in order to fill a void in English medical literature; also, with the author, we add in the hope of instructing and interesting the reader.

J. HENRY C. SIMES.

PHILADELPHIA.





## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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"All physical science depends essentially upon two facts: the particular facts, which are revealed by observation; the general facts, which are discovered by reasoning. Together they increase and mutually animate all studies. Considered separately, the first is only sterile material, the second only useless hypotheses. Science cannot exist with one or the other—it must have both—any more than reasoning can exist without premises or without consequences."

Thus begins Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire in the preface to his *Histoire des Anomalies de l'organisation*, stating, at once, that to the study of anomalies, considered in their special conditions, he will add the laws and general relations to which are brought all the particular facts. For as these laws and these relations are themselves only corollary of more general laws of the organization, it follows that the anatomical and physiological laws apply to *Teratology*, or history of anomalies of the animal organism, as well as to the normal morphology.

Again: "As teratology in the thousand and thousand facts which belong to it includes all conditions of the organization in all beings, it will be seen that there is not any general fact, any anatomical or physiological law, that it is not able to illuminate with a bright light, and to which it does not give positive and vivid confutation or confirmation. Therefore, such will be the ultimate consequence of an exact and deep knowledge of anomalies; the study of normal and teratological facts, both intimately associated, so that they are a mutual and powerful aid one to the other."

If these words of Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire are applicable to malformations, I will not say that they are especially suitable to malformations which affect the genital system of woman, but I do not hesitate to say that, in these cases, they are, perhaps, confirmed with more vividness. Teratology is a new science, which began in the eighteenth century, previous to which existed the fabulous period, during which monsters were considered as objects of terror, as prodigies destined to display the glory or the anger of God, or as prophetic beings begotten by the devil.

The anatomists of the first half of the eighteenth century were given to investigations upon monsters, not from a true scientific spirit, but from a curiosity and a desire for novelty, which is so natural to man.

It was not until the end of the eighteenth century, but more especially in the nineteenth century, that the ridiculous superstitions disappeared from the domain of teratology. To accomplish this it was necessary that the anatomy of Bichat and of Schwann should have its origin, that the embryology of G. Fr. Wolff should see the light, before teratology could become a true science—the science of anomalies of the organization. Without general and comparative anatomy and without embryology, philosophical anatomy could not have been created, and without the last, there never could exist the *theory of the arrest and perversion of development*, which explains the majority of malformations.

To-day we know that monstrosities are always the result of the action of accidental causes, causes which do not modify the whole organization, according to Dareste, but which modify it during the development of the organization, in giving a different direction to the phenomena of evolution. Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, contrary to the views of Meckel, has demonstrated the possibility of modifying, by the action of external physical causes, the evolution of a fecundated germ, and, again, he has

proved that all malformations, from the slightest to the most serious, are essentially phenomena of the same order, that is, deviations of the normal specific type, caused by a change in the embryonic or foetal evolution.

These general ideas of anomalies, we purpose to apply to the study of *Malformations of the Genital Organs of Woman*.

If we have undertaken to write a new history on this subject, it is that besides the great attraction, the great curiosity which belongs to it, there is also a scientific and practical interest of the first order, which we have endeavored to place in evidence upon every page.

It will be for the reader to say, if we have accomplished the twofold end we sought to reach: to interest, to instruct.

CH. DEBIERRE.

LILLE.