

perversion long familiar to readers of the later classical writers, and which do not seem to have had a Hellenic origin, but to have been carried thither from the adjacent Asiatic races, and afterwards borrowed by the Romans at a considerable period before the decadence.

The case of Sardanapalus, according to present standards, affords a striking example of effemination, and yet by his contemporaries his peculiarities were viewed in an altogether different light. Even Plato speaks with smiling equanimity of the most preposterous relationships and associations as matters of every-day occurrence, and Virgil mentions without comment several cases revolting in the last degree to a modern mind. In the blithe Horace, also, many conditions of sexual perversion are archly referred to, as one might to-day jocularly refer to a friend's occasional addiction to his potations not wisely but too well. Yet these men of genius represent Rome at her best. Subsequent writers become intolerable, but one expects as much in an age which produced a Vitellius. These facts, however, serve to remind one that each civilization has its own usages, and these, when so common as to occasion no comment whatever by the purest and the noblest men of the time, would naturally not have been regarded by their contemporaries as a perversion of natural law. Reflections upon the matter are not pleasant, on the whole, but it seems only just to call attention to these facts, not so much in extenuation of practices for which the world of to-day feels the utmost repugnance, as by way of showing how widely racial instincts alter in the course of time and under the influence of changed ideals of morality. Yet even in Corinth a thoughtful man would have surely been forced to admit that these usages constituted a wilful and a mischievous trifling with the laws of nature. It would seem to follow that this tendency appears to belong peculiarly to periods of racial degeneration. But I will spare the reader the "modern instances."

The acquired form of perversion is found among the most degenerate. It is not necessarily associated with the criminal class *par excellence*, but is common to all forms of degeneration. In origin it is usually rather psychic than physical, and properly speaking comes under the study of the alienist rather than the surgeon or the physician.

Lombroso in his work upon "The man of Genius," referring to "the law of dynamism which rules the nervous system" says: "To an excessive expenditure and development of nervous force succeeds reaction and enfeeblement. It is permitted to no one to expend more than a certain quantity of force without being severely punished on the other side. Melancholy, depression, timidity, egoism are the prices of the sublime gifts of intellect, just as uterine catarrhs, impotence and tabes dorsalis are the prices of sexual abuse, and gastritis of abuse of appetite."

Hence, unusual use of an organ or a function tends within cer-