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*Portrait by Allan Chappelow, B.A.*

SIR CHARLES SHERRINGTON

# Man on his Nature

by

SIR CHARLES SHERRINGTON

THE GIFFORD LECTURES  
EDINBURGH  
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## Preface to the Second Edition

**T**HIS edition has given opportunity for a certain amount of revision as regards detail. The book stresses the view that man is a product, like so much else, of the play of natural forces acting on the material and under the conditions past and present obtaining on the surface of our planet. If the book succeeds in drawing sympathetic attention to this theme in those who read it, its pages will have handsomely rewarded one of the best hopes of its author.

C. S. S.

*April 1951*

## Preface to the First Edition

I FIND a word of preface is expected for this volume, and it comes welcomely to me here to thank the University of Edinburgh for the invitation to give these lectures. The invitation indeed overcame some hesitation on my part which readers of these pages, I can think, may find intelligible.

As to acknowledgements, Sir S. R. Christophers, F.R.S., a friend of many years, has been so kind as to read through for me in proof an excursion into the parasitology of malaria made in my final chapter. To my friend Mr J. Reid Moir, F.R.S., I am indebted for a like good office in regard to the text's occasional references to ways and works of prehistoric man, and other kindred themes.

At numerous places, especially in its opening chapters, my text turns to the writings of a sixteenth-century physician, Jean Fernel, a figure probably now little known except to the historian of Medicine. It is hoped, however, to issue about him in the near future a more documented account,\* biographical and bibliographical.

Lastly I would acknowledge with gratitude the care and skill given to the issue of this volume by the University Press, and I would convey my thanks to Dr Robert Chambers for his readiness to allow me the reproduction of two noteworthy microphotographs from his laboratory.

C. S. S.

August 1940

\* Sir Charles Sherrington's *The Endeavour of Jean Fernel* was published by the Cambridge University Press in 1946.

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## I

## NATURE AND TRADITION

*Quemcunque aegrum ingenio praestantem curandum invisibat, siquidem morbi vehementia pateretur, . . . familiarem cum eo sermonem aliquandiu conferebat, cum philosophis Philosophica, cum Mathematicis Mathematica, cum ducibus ac militibus, de urbium situ, et fluviis eas alluentibus, deque instrumentis bellicis et eorum inventoribus; cum nautis de navigandi ratione et regionibus nuper repertis; cum Theologis de Deo.*

*Life of Jean Fernel*, by GUILLAUME PLANCY,  
 published (1607) in the Univ. Medicina

When consulted by some patient who was a man of parts he (Fernel), if the state of the case allowed, liked to get some talk with him; if it were a philosopher on philosophy, if a mathematician on mathematics, if a commander or a soldier on the site of towns, the rivers on which they were, and on engines of war and their inventors, if a seaman on navigation and newly discovered lands, if a theologian on God.