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The Two-headed Boy, and Other Medical Marvels

Jan Bondeson

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A successor to his popular book A Cabinet of Medical Curiosities, this new collection of essays by Jan Bondeson illustrates various anomalies of human development, the lives of the remarkable individuals concerned, and social reactions to their extraordinary bodies.

Bondeson examines historical cases of dwarfism, extreme corpulence, giantism, conjoined twins, dicephaly, and extreme hairiness; his broader theme, however, is the infinite range of human experience. The dicephalous Tocci brothers and Lazarus Colloredo (from whose belly grew his malformed conjoined twin), the Swedish giant, and the king of Poland's dwarf?Bondeson considers these individuals not as "freaks" but as human beings born with sometimes appalling congenital deformities.

He makes full use of original French, German, Dutch, Polish, and Scandinavian sources and explores elements of ethnology, literature, and cultural history in his diagnoses. Heavily illustrated with woodcuts, engravings, oil paintings, and photographs, The Two-Headed Boy and Other Medical Marvels combines a scientist's scrutiny with a humanist's wonder at the endurance of the human spirit.

Contents:

The Two Inseparable Brothers, and a Preface

The Hairy Maid at the Harpsichord

The Stone-child

The Woman Who Laid an Egg

The Strangest Miracle in the World

Some Words about Hog-faced Gentlewomen

Horned Humans

The Biddenden Maids

The Tocci Brothers, and Other Dicephali

The King of Poland's Court

Dwarf Daniel Cajanus, the Swedish Giant

Daniel Lambert, the Human Colossus

Cat-eating Englishmen and French Frog-swallowers

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