

The first consideration that influences our choice and feelings is

age....

The second consideration is that of _health_: a severe illness may alarm us for the time being, but an illness of a chronic nature or even cachexy frightens us away, because it would be transmitted.

The third consideration is the _skeleton_, since it is the foundation of the type of the _species_. Next to old age and disease, nothing disgusts us so much as a deformed shape; even the most beautiful face cannot make amends for it--in fact, the ugliest face combined with a well-grown shape is infinitely preferable. Moreover, we are most keenly sensible of every malformation of the _skeleton_; as, for instance, a stunted, short-legged form, and the like, or a limping gait when it is not the result of some extraneous accident: while a conspicuously beautiful figure compensates for every defect. It delights us. Further, the great importance which is attached to small feet! This is because the size of the foot is an essential characteristic of the species, for no animal has the tarsus and metatarsus combined so small as man; hence the uprightness of his gait: he is a plantigrade. And Jesus Sirach has said^[17] (according to the improved translation by Kraus), "A woman that is well grown and has beautiful feet is like pillars of gold in sockets of silver." The teeth, too, are important, because they are essential for nourishment, and quite peculiarly hereditary.