

CONFIGURATIONS OF BIVALENTS OF HYACINTHUS WITH REGARD TO SEGMENTAL INTERCHANGE.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the majority of the flowering plants examined by the writer, and apparently also in most of those investigated in this respect by others, the homologous chromosomes, which form bivalents at the reduction metaphase, are joined only at the extreme ends. As examples, *Canna* and *Datura* may serve, in which this rule holds in the triploids as well as in the diploids. In the largest bivalent of *Uvularia*, however (Belling, 1926), there are additional points of junction (nodes) not at the ends. The short and medium chromosomes of *Uvularia* seem usually to be connected at or near the constriction, and the same is the case with the short and medium chromosomes of *Hyacinthus* (Belling, 1925). These will not be further considered here.

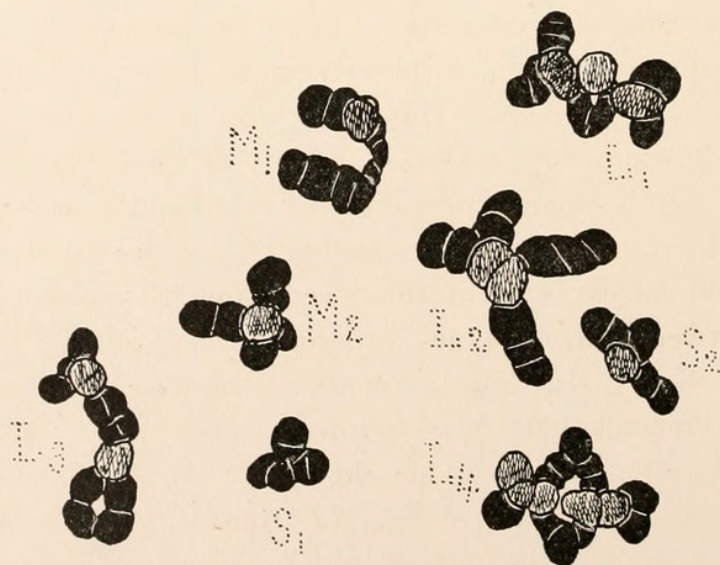


FIG. 1. Camera drawing of the eight bivalents of the diploid hyacinth, squeezed from a pollen-mother-cell. The four large bivalents are alone considered here. They are described in the text.

But the four large bivalents of *Hyacinthus* show, like the large bivalent of *Uvularia*, many connections not at the ends (Fig. 1). It has been pointed out in regard to *Uvularia* (Belling, 1926) that the simplest hypothesis is that these connections (nodes) not at the ends represent places where two of the four chromatids have undergone segmental interchange by fracture and recombination. In *Hyacinthus* it can apparently sometimes be seen with the microscope that two of the four chromatids are bent back at a node, so as to continue along the same sides of the bivalent (Fig. 3). It has also been shown that the homologous chromosomes of the rings and V's formed by the large bivalent of *Uvularia*, acted when separating as if they were not merely twisted across one another, but had undergone a process which produced some interlacing of chromatids at the nodes. This would prevent the simple untwisting of the homologues at the anaphase, and such untwisting has been shown not to occur in *Uvularia* (Belling, 1926). This would also lead (as has been abundantly shown by Janssens, 1924, and others, in animals) to the separation of whole upper and lower halves of vertical rings and V's, and to one chromatid passing up and one down from both sides of horizontal rings or V's, which may get smaller as the process advances, without opening up. This is what takes place in *Uvularia*, and apparently also in *Hyacinthus*.

In *Hyacinthus*, as already stated, the homologues are not always connected at one or both of the extreme ends, but are connected at other places (nodes). This is especially the case with the four long chromosomes. Hence a study of these may show, by the nature of their configurations and their mode of separation at the reduction metaphase, whether the nodes correspond to what would be expected if they were due to segmental interchange between chromosomes (crossing-over of genes).

If the nodes in the long bivalents of the hyacinth are due to segmental interchange, the following phenomena should be observable: (1) the nodes should occur at *different points* in the bivalents in different cases; (2) these nodes should be at equal distances from the ends of both homologues; (3) the nodes should be visible at the late prophase (diakinesis stage or earlier) as well as at the metaphase; (4) the horizontal rings or V's

should split into separate chromatids, while the vertical rings or V's should divide into upper and lower halves, without separating into chromatids; (5) the numbers of bivalents with one or two nodes should permit of a calculation of the numbers of chromatids with segmental interchange at no, one, or two points, which should possibly more or less resemble the occurrence of no, single, or double crossing-over in *Drosophila*. In such a calculation, the numbers of chromatids with no segmental interchange would be equal to twice the cases of single nodes plus the number of cases of double nodes. The total number of chromatids with one point of interchange would be got by adding twice the number of bivalents with single nodes to twice the number with two nodes. While the chromatids with two points of interchange are equal to the number of bivalents with two nodes. It should be possible to test these five points.

(It seems obvious that a junction of homologous chromosomes at the ends has no relation with segmental interchange. It is probably otherwise with junctions at the point of constriction of the chromosome, where segmental interchange may well take place.)

It was for the purpose of testing this hypothesis that the present study was made.

LARGE BIVALENTS OF *Hyacinthus*.

The variety of *Hyacinthus orientalis* investigated was one of those formerly studied (Belling, 1925), and was chosen because it could be readily identified by the flowers, and had marked characters even in the bulbs. This was the diploid clone called "Yellow Hammer." The bulbs were obtained in October, and put into water during that month and the next. Division of the pollen-mother-cells usually accompanied the development of the first roots. The pollen-mother-cells were instantaneously fixed by being squeezed out from the anthers into iron-acetocarmine. The chromosomes were observed with Zeiss' water-immersion objective 70, yellow-green light, and a water-immersion condenser.

At the first metaphase in the pollen-mother-cells (Fig. 1) the four long chromosome pairs commonly assume one of six different

configurations (Diagram I.). Three of these are shown in Fig. 1, where the cross (L_2) is near the center, two single rings with

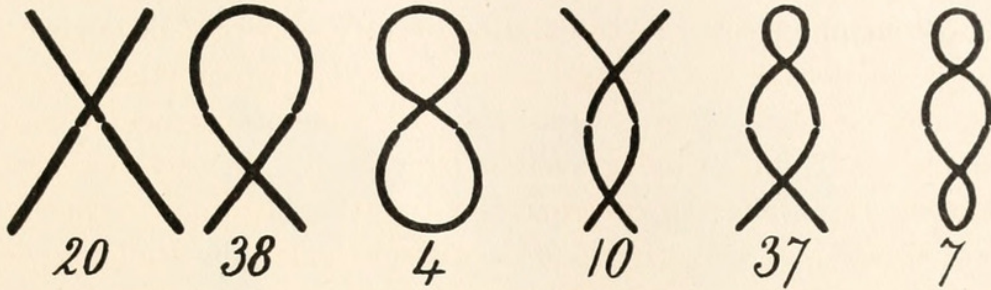


DIAGRAM I. Numbers of different configurations of large bivalents. The cross, single ring and V, and figure of 8, have one node; while the ring and two V's, the double ring and V, and the triple ring have 2 nodes.

double V's are on the right (L_1 and L_4), and a double ring and V on the left (L_3). Four forms in the late prophase are shown in Fig. 2. They are: (a) the ring and V; (b) the double ring

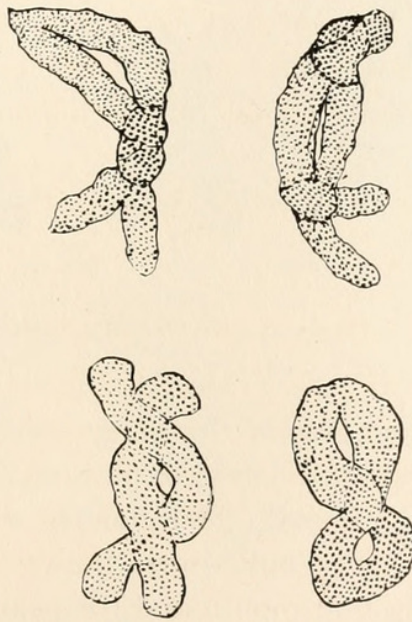


FIG. 2. Four camera drawings of large bivalents at the late prophase. (This stage is difficult to obtain.)

and V; (c) the ring and two V's; and (d) the figure of 8. The cross and the triple ring were not found free, the bivalents being usually clustered at this stage. Several configurations are drawn in Fig. 3. It may be specially noticed that the four examples of the cross shown in Fig. 3 have the junction in different positions with regard to the chromosome ends. The cross in the middle

has arms which taper to the center, the two homologues having apparently joined at the constrictions. The last two drawings in the lowest line of Fig. 3 are the same bivalent at two different focusses, apparently showing one transverse and one reflexed



FIG. 3. Camera drawings of eight bivalents. The four crosses have the nodes at different points, but always at equal distances from the ends of the homologues. The lowest arm of the second cross in the second line is much foreshortened. The last two figures show the effects of change of focus on the node.

chromatid of one homologue, the same thing being often observable at a different focus in the other homologue also. These are pulled out by the spindle fibers which are attached at the apex of the bend at the median constriction.

One hundred and sixteen of the long bivalents were classified in six groups (Diagram 1), mostly after squeezing chromosomes and cytoplasm from the cell. The results were (Diagram 1): 38 cases of the ring and V; 20 X's; and 4 figures of 8 (totalling 62 with one node); 37 cases of the double ring and V; 10 cases of the ring and two V's; and 7 cases of a triple ring; totalling 54 cases with two nodes. No bivalents with triple nodes were certainly demonstrated. If only two chromatids underwent segmental interchange at any one node, as seems to be indicated

by the microscopical phenomena, we have for the resulting pollen grains and any particular long chromosome, on the hypothesis of segmental interchange: no segmental interchange ($124 + 54$), 178; single point of interchange ($124 + 108$), 232; and double interchange, 54; out of a total of 464 chromosomes or pollen grains.

This gives in percentages: chromosomes with no interchange 38 per cent.; chromosomes with single interchange, 50 per cent.; and chromosomes with double interchange, 12 per cent. The ratio of single to double interchange on the hypothesis is thus 4.3 to 1.

This is not far from the numbers of no, single and double points of crossing-over given for the first chromosome of *Drosophila melanogaster* by Morgan (1925). The second and third chromosomes of *Drosophila*, however, seem to differ in this respect.

In Figs. 4 and 5, there are examples of the separation of chromatids and homologues which tend somewhat to prove the hypothesis of segmental interchange. In Fig. 4, L_1 is especially instructive. Here on one side of the constriction (and spindle fiber attachment) there was apparently a horizontal ring, and

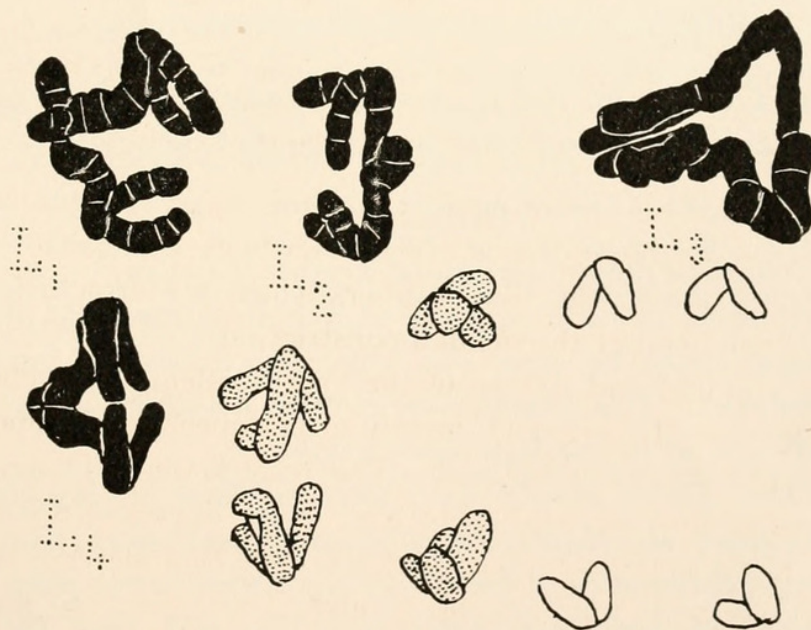


FIG. 4. Camera drawing of the bivalents in a cell in which the four large ones had not completely separated, the drawing paper being shifted after each was drawn. Some are foreshortened, especially L_2 and L_4 .

on the other side perhaps a vertical ring and a small V; or only a large vertical V. The horizontal ring evidently split into two ring chromatids, while the vertical ring remains. In L_3 the constriction is in the vertical ring. (L_2 and L_4 show nothing more.) In Fig. 5, L_1 shows apparently the separation of the

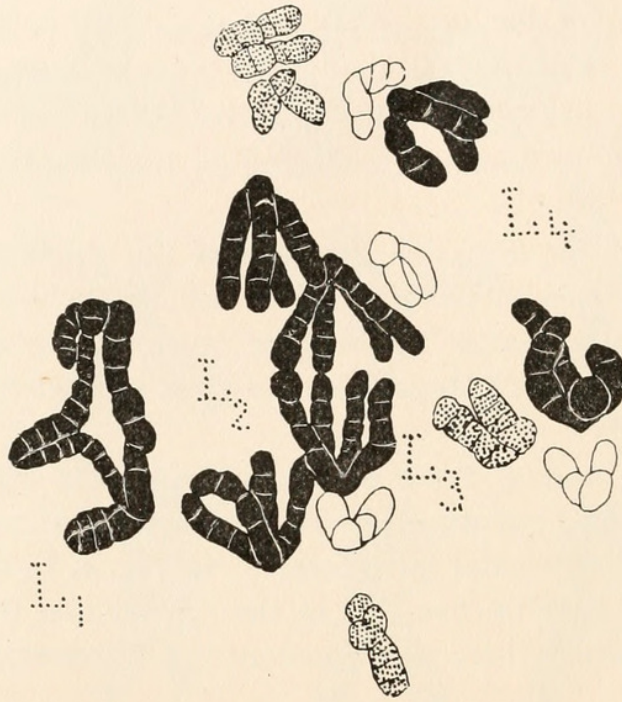


FIG. 5. Slightly more advanced stage than Fig. 4.

parts of a cross, the two horizontal members of which can be seen splitting into chromatids, one passing to each pole.

DISCUSSION.

The following points seem most worthy of notice.

(1) At some nodes it appears as if both chromatids of each homologue could be seen, one obliquely transverse, and the other reflexed. The spindle fiber is often attached (at or) near the node also at the median constriction.

(2) Some rather scanty data seem to show in *Hyacinthus*, what is more abundantly demonstrated in *Uvularia*, namely, that single chromatids of each homologue pass to the poles from both sides of horizontal rings and V's, and that the two chromatids of each homologue remain connected in the separate halves of vertical rings and V's. So the horizontal rings and

V's diminish in size as their chromatids are pulled out by the spindle fibers towards the poles.

(3) The numbers of cases of possible segmental interchange in the chromatids of the large bivalents, calculated from the numbers of nodes, agrees roughly with the numbers of cases of crossing-over found in the first chromosome of *Drosophila*, which is especially favorable for this study.

Some process of segmental interchange seems demanded by the genetic evidence in *Drosophila*, *Zea*, *Lathyrus*, and the other plants and animals which have shown cases of crossing-over. Hence it is apparently the natural scientific procedure to accept segmental interchange as a working hypothesis to account for the nodes and internodes of the chromosome pairs in the *Orthoptera* and other animals, and also in *Uvularia* and *Hyacinthus*. This is the more imperative in that there seems no other available working hypothesis.

SUMMARY.

(1) The four large bivalents of *Hyacinthus* show in 62 cases one node, and in 54 cases two nodes where the homologues cross.

(2) At these nodes it can apparently be seen with the microscope that one chromatid of each homologue passes obliquely across, while the other seems bent back along the other homologue.

(3) The hypothesis of previous segmental interchange at such a point is assumed until a better hypothesis is found.

(4) The numbers of chromatids showing such points of segmental interchange, according to the hypothesis, calculated from the 116 bivalents examined, were 38 per cent. with no interchange, 50 per cent. with one point of interchange, and 12 per cent. with two points of interchange.

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