

PRINCIPLES
OF
PHYSIOGNOMY

AND

Natural Language,

BY SAMSON DAVIS.

“Where is the Villain?—let me see his face,—
“That when I meet another such as he
“I may avoid him.”

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TO
MRS. F. C. DODSWORTH,
TURNHAM GREEN,
THIS SLIGHT ATTEMPT TO FAMILIARIZE
THE CHIEF
PHYSIOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES
OF
PHYSIOGNOMY AND NATURAL
LANGUAGE,
IS
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.



Vignaud
4-21-30

PRINCIPLES
OF
PHYSIOGNOMY,
&c.

CHAPTER I.

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*Introduction.—Corporeal Physiognomy.*  
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“ Her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
That one could almost say her body thought.”

WHAT numerous beauties in human nature lie unregarded merely for want of being observed, and how many more are hidden to us for want of an interpreter! We instinctively gain a familiar acquaintance with the superficial qualities of our nature while we are yet too young to reason upon them, and but too commonly we view them ever after in a vague manner as *things*

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of course. But, let us a moment reflect that nothing in creation is "a thing of course," that all has been devised by the same Omniscient Mind, and executed by the same Omnipotent Arm, and that beauty must be its model, and perfection its stamp. Physiognomy, and the language of gesture, are known and felt by all; and yet how few have taken thought of their causes, or stayed to consider the wisdom and goodness displayed in their institution and arrangement. Our ideas respecting them will surely well repay the revision of a leisure hour, for they are subjects which must be universally acknowledged by competent judges to rank among the fairest of the works of this all-fair creation. Indeed, the scarce-unliving marble, from the creative hands of a Phidias or Canova; the breathing canvas, instinct with the promethean fire of a Fuseli or Reynolds; nay even Poesy herself, or, which are but other words for the same thing, a Shakespeare or a Byron; can but very inadequately express their physical beauty and moral loveliness; and are all too often obliged, in despair or awe, to imitate the painter of

Agamemnon's grief, and cover them with a veil! But let us, with no unhallowed hand, and no incurious eye, attempt to draw aside the veil the little way we are permitted, and to catch a distant glimpse, though it can be but partial, of the beautiful mechanism beyond; that animated faëry land, that breathing incarnation of the beautiful, which hath made such sad havoc among human hearts from patriarch Adam downwards! If Perfection charm thee; if Beauty delight thee; if to trace the wisdom and goodness of the great Creator, can excite in thy bosom the delightful feelings of adoration and hope, come with me, and we will read together this exquisite page in the book of nature, we will wander together in a new-found garden of our own, and though others may see in it nought but a dry and sandy soil, the sun shall shine upon it as we walk along, and flowers spring up under our feet.

We are all Physiognomists by nature; for we are instinctively impressed with an idea of the mental and moral character by the cast of the countenance, and rarely do these impressions beguile us. We cannot

attribute this wholly to experience, for even "the lovely miniatures of life" *ere* falsified hopes have taught them that men deceive, or the pleasures of friendly communion have proved to them that there *are* hearts which may be fearlessly trusted,—welcome with outstretched arms, or avert with nestling fear, the stranger to whom they are presented: We will not stop to theorize upon this "freemasonry of nature." Neither is it my present purpose to unfold the *science* of a pouting lip, (I would not, ladies, for the universe term it an *art!*)—or to translate the language of a speaking eye—or to record the poetry of a sentimental nose, which the great Slaukenbergius, in Sterne, has so pathetically achieved before me. It is not my object to afford a systematic exposition of all the facts in physiognomy, but simply to give a correct distribution of its principles, and to trace their physical and moral foundations in the laws of our earthly fabric.

"Physiognomy" is a compound greek word signifying "the law of," or "an index to, nature;" so that in its strict literal sense it means an indication of nature generally.

But in its limited acceptation with us, it is applied to the indication of *human* nature. We may broadly define it, as the science which professes to tell the mental character from the external appearances of the body.

It is a branch of knowledge which must have been recognised almost as early as human passions embellished and disfigured this beautiful world of ours. We find some shrewd and truthful allusions to it in the earliest writings of the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman, poets and philosophers; but it is only within the last century or so, that it can be said to have been so fixed on a philosophical basis as to be entitled to the rank of a science. The very celebrated Swiss clergyman, Lavater, devoted a lifetime of no ordinary talent to its pursuit; and he has been the chief means of gaining it the attention of the moderns. He was a good man, an ornament to humanity, possessed of subtle observing and discriminating faculties, and of a wonderful eloquence; which have afforded great notoriety to his voluminous writings, and more authority than they philosophically merit. For, being but slightly acquainted with the principles

of physiology, he was unable, in many instances, to impute the facts which his acute penetration observed, to their natural causes; he was consequently led into some whimsical vagaries, and his unbounded enthusiasm for the subject occasionally beclouded his reasonings. The science since his time has been advantageously cultivated by several eminent persons, particularly in this country. But the grandest and most important discovery in physiognomy that ever *can* be made was that of Gall in presenting us with what is now called phrenology,—a gift more valuable to the species than would be the fabled philosopher's stone.

Although the constituent elements of physiognomy have been separately known and treated of for many years, it seems to me that they have never yet been collected into a sufficiently comprehensive whole, or referred to their true physiological causes; that much unphilosophical and ridiculous doctrine has been introduced into it; and that the rightful province of the science has been hitherto too circumscribed—for it has been, and still very commonly is,

limited to the indications of the countenance. And, again, by those who have considered it more extensively, its parts have been confusedly jumbled; there has not been an accurate distinction established and maintained between its natural divisions. I have briefly endeavoured to remedy these, and the task is as easy as the division is simple and natural.

I have defined Physiognomy as "the science which professes to tell the character of the mind by the appearances of the body." And I divide it into three classes: Corporeal, Emotive, and Cerebral, Physiognomy. Corporeal Physiognomy is based on the influence which the body has over the mind, on account of the mind acting through a corporeal organ—the Brain—which is largely influenced by the rest of the body, and subject to the same Physiological laws of action. Emotive Physiognomy, on the contrary, is founded on the influence which the mind has indirectly over the body, in expressing its feelings or emotions by gestures &c. And Cerebral Physiognomy, or Phrenology, directly measures the natural extent of the organs of the Mind.

You perceive that Phrenology, as indicating the mental character by the configuration of the skull, which is itself modelled by the developement of the brain, must be esteemed a part of Physiognomy, according to our definition of it. Indeed, though latest discovered it is obviously the mother-branch of our science; but as, from its metaphysical relations, it is a science to be separately discussed, I shall pass over this division of our subject with one important observation, and hereafter state no more of its particulars than are necessary for elucidation. Phrenology *absolutely measures* the mental dispositions and capacities, whereas they are merely *contingently indicated* by the other two divisions. In fact, with the exception of the phrenological portion, physiognomy is quite a secondary science, a series of phenomena necessarily resulting from the physiological and mental laws to which we are subject. We will, firstly, consider the elements of Corporeal Physiognomy; the least attractive part of our subject,—but we must bear with it.

Knowledge is well represented by a circle; for its different branches are so inti-

mately connected and dependant on each other, that it is impossible to understand even what is known of any one, without some knowledge of the whole. To comprehend aright all the principles of Physiognomy, we must be well acquainted with the human mind, and with the structure and offices of the several members of the human frame. But barely to state the science, with the least likelihood of benefiting the uninitiated, requires a preliminary outline of the latter two subjects; for the very essence of Corporeal Physiognomy depends upon the relative developement of the component parts of the body as existing in different individuals.

The most comprehensive and lucid division of the organs and functions of the human fabric with which I am acquainted, is into the three classes of locomotive, vital, and mental. The first, or locomotive class, includes the bones, which are the mechanical instruments of motion; the muscles, which are the agents of motion; and the tendons and ligaments which unite the two. The second class, or vital, consists of tubes or vessels of different kinds, such as the

absorbing, the secreting, and the circulating blood-vessels,—in short of those organs which immediately nutrify and support the body. The third class, or mental, comprises the organs of the external senses, the cluster of mental organs which compose the brain,—and the nerves, which connect these, and perform all the functions of sensibility.

Now, the fundamental principle of Corporeal Physiognomy, founded on physiology, is, that as one or the other of the above three classes of organs predominates in the system, so will a tendency to its peculiar functions be manifested. And as far as this influences the action of the mental organs, from these organs being part of the same frame, so far can we judge, from this predominance, respecting the character or *quality* of the mental manifestations;—but not as some suppose of the *quantity*, or the peculiar faculties, of the mind.

The prevalence of either of these classes of organs is generally known by the term *temperament*, which is the key to Corporeal Physiognomy. There are of course various species of temperaments, and these were observed and admirably described,

though erroneously explained, by some of the most ancient physicians and philosophers. They are now so universally understood that I need but mention them; and in doing so I shall follow my arrangement of the organs.

A person in whom the locomotive organs predominate, is of what is called the Muscular temperament; and if this class of organs prevails largely over the others, the individual will have long, powerful, and brawny, limbs, and be correspondingly more disposed to exercises of the body than of the mind. This temperament forms what is called "a fine man" by the ladies, and constitutes beauty of the locomotive system. The statues of Hercules and of the gladiators, and our grenadier guards, belong to this class.

The vital organs comprise two species of temperament, according as the blood-vessels or lymphatic vessels are in excess, the first constitutes the Sanguine, the other the Phlegmatic, temperament, and in these, but most strikingly in the latter, the limbs are shorter, and the trunk fuller, than in the preceding temperament, with a less or

greater tendency to corpulency. The Sanguine temperament, as the conventional use of the term implies, gives the disposition to quickness and versatility, to passionate but mutable vehemence of mind. While in the Phlegmatic temperament there is just an opposite disposition, with a sturdy propensity to the indulgence of the "good old," functions of eating, and drinking, and sleeping.

In the last of the three classes the mental organs and nerves predominate;—this is the natural Nervous temperament, denoted by the expanded brain, the well-developed organs of the senses, and usually the rigid diminutive body. This is the temperament of genius; in this the Soul has been finely said

"To oer-inform its tenement of clay." *

All those truly great men who have moved the world by dint of pure intellect alone, (for they are commonly puny in bodily powers) will be found to have belonged to this species of temperament.

There are acquired conditions of the body called the Bilious, and Melancholic, which

have been improperly considered by some as primary temperaments; they are but mixtures of the other temperaments. Indeed one temperament is rarely found so notably predominant as to merit the epithet "unmixed;" and when this is the case it is obviously unnatural, and may be almost considered in the light of a disease. And occasionally the three classes of organs are so equally compounded as to render the temperament indeterminate; but most commonly one system sufficiently predominates to stamp it.

In strongly marked cases the temperament is no doubt an inevitable condition, and "grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength;" but, in the majority, it is in some measure acquired or modified from external circumstances, and the mode of life. Hence its general uniformity in nations and those pursuing similar avocations. Hence the nervous Italian, the phlegmatic Dutchman, the spare muscular soldier, the lymphatic gibbosity of "mine host," and the rubicund country squire,

"With wine and good fat capon lined."

We have next to consider the mode in which temperament influences mental action; and here a knowledge of physiology greatly avails us. No doubt exists as to the brain being the organ of mind. Whether the collection of phenomena we call "mind" is merely the proper function of the brain, or whether there is a spiritual essence inhabiting our earthly structure, which acts through the brain, are speculations equally useless and impossible of demonstration with those concerning the nature of light or the being of electricity. But, whichever hypothesis be the correct one, it is quite certain that the kind and degree of mental manifestations depend on the size and quality, and the consequent activity of the brain.

There does not appear to be any further connection between temperament and the *size* of the brain than the general rule that it is comparatively small in the muscular and large in the nervous temperament. But the *quality* and *activity* of the brain are very much modified by the temperament. For the brain is an organ, possessing a similar texture, and subject to the same

general laws, as the rest of the body; hence, like the muscles and other parts, its fibres are denser and more rigid, and consequently possess most intensity of action, in the Nervous temperament;—they are less so, and it is supplied with more abundant and larger blood-vessels, in the Sanguine temperament; whence, as we shall presently explain, its excitability:—while in the Phlegmatic temperament, there is a greater quantity of watery lymph in its interstices, it partakes of the general flaccidity of the system, and is thereby rendered dull, inert, and difficultly roused to feeble action.

Numerous phenomena prove that the blood is the chief stimulus to the brain; and that in proportion to the rapidity with which it circulates through that organ, is mental action accelerated. Thus, when the brain ceases to receive its due supply of blood, fainting, with a partial or entire abolition of mental power, supervenes; and the total insensibility and stupor of apoplexy results from a stagnation of the blood in the brain. Whereas the intense mental action in fever, frequently amounting to delirium, is chiefly due to the increased rapidity with which the blood circulates through the

brain;—and the excitement of mind produced by wine owns a similar cause.

Now, in the Sanguine temperament, the heart and blood-vessels are particularly developed, and easily excited to powerful action, and we therein perceive the cause of the superficial brilliancy of intellect, and the unstable vehemence of feeling, which characterize this temperament. In persons of the Phlegmatic temperament, the glands and lymphatics, which are the chief organs for nourishing the system, preponderate; and their life is almost entirely vegetative; all their feeble energies are expended in increasing their bulky frame; and the little mental action they exhibit is feeble, meagre, and heavy. Peter Pindar humorously expresses the effect of this temperament; he says

“*FAT—holds ideas by the legs and wings.*”

And Shakespeare, whom nothing pertaining to human nature has escaped, recognises this, and also the opposite tendency of the Nervous temperament, in Cæsar’s lines,

“*Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o’ nights;
Yon Cassius has a lean and hungry look
He thinks too much,—such men are dangerous.
——“Would he were fatter.”*”

Such is a brief sketch of our Corporeal division. We perceive that it only enables us to judge of the general quality, as the energy or inertness of the mind; without acquainting us with its predominant faculties, or specific character, which the Emotive branch indicates. Those who are merely nature-taught physiognomists, are accustomed to confound Corporeal and Emotive Physiognomy; for the face is the chief tablet of both; and though it be sufficiently easy to discern between temperament and emotive expression in extreme examples, as in the vacant dumpling face of "mine host," and the passion-worn features of a Locke or Brougham; yet in intermediate examples which constitute the generality, it requires some discrimination to do so correctly. But it is an error of no great practical importance; for, no doubt, the natural character of the mind, by directing the mode of life, largely influences the acquisition of temperament, so far as it is acquired. And this occasions a similarity between the Corporeal and Emotive indications in individuals. But however this may assimilate, it does not identify, the two branches, and

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they must be separately taken into the account in rightly judging of the mental character by physiognomy. We shall hereafter consider the question of the Expression of the organs of the Senses.

CHAPTER II.

On Natural Language.

“When I sit and tell
“The warlike feats I’ve done—he puts himself
“In posture that acts my words.”

What I have called **Corporeal Physiognomy** we perceive is based on the influence which the temperament of the body necessarily has over the mind, on account of the mind, in this world, acting through the medium of corporeal organs. **Emotive Physiognomy**, on the contrary, is founded on the influence which the mind exerts over the body, in portraying its feelings;—the traces of which becoming gradually permanent, we are enabled, from them, to judge of the characteristic feelings of the mind which has produced them.

Gesture is the involuntary muscular movement occasioned in the body by the

passions of the mind. And as this is the foundation of our second division we will consider the nature of this influence before discussing *Emotive Physiognomy*. It is interesting, as it explains *Natural Language*. Man walks the earth—a mystery; and mostly so to those who study him. To the ignorant and the superficial there is little mysterious about him;—but to the philosophic, the most minute circumstance pertaining to him is an exhaustless fountain of wonder! He beholds around him literally the dust of the earth,—the mineral elements,—compounded and fashioned, by certain definite laws, into myriads of most elaborate and wonderful machines, corporeally independent of each other, and calling themselves *men*. Unlike the elements which compose them, they possess certain innate powers of motion and preservation, constituting *life*, which they have acquired from, or during, their composition. And they attain what is still more wonderful,—the faculty of sensibility and feeling,—a capacity for receiving pleasure or pain, for entertaining happiness or misery.

But these machines though corporeally

distinct and independent of each other, are found to possess what are called *mental* inclinations, passions, sentiments, and intellects;—which prompt and enable them to associate, to feel the kindest affections for, or the direst passions against, one another;—to assist each other;—and to operate together to a common end.

Thus, being *corporeally* distinct but *mentally* social, it was absolutely necessary to accomplish the purposes of their existence, that they should have the means of communicating with each other,—of expressing to one another, by corporeal actions, their various mental designs and affections!—some medium of communication, by which what passes within one might be made known to another. And very beautifully, and most perfectly, has nature exerted her providence in this necessity. She has given us, for this end, the organs of voice and speech, and has instinctively taught us to frame and employ Verbal Language. But, what more relates to us at present, *she has also annexed particular gesticulations of the body to each particular affection of the mind.* So that whatever mental feeling we may

entertain, it is involuntarily written by us, in characters intelligible to all, in the gestures of the body, and more particularly, for a beautiful design, in the features of the face.

These two methods of corporeally indicating the particular conditions of the mind constitute language. The first is called Verbal Language or Speech, the latter Natural Language

Natural Language being, as I have before said, the basis of Emotive Physiognomy, we will consider it somewhat in detail. It is a very interesting subject, and deserves to be more studied even for its own sake. We will first state a few general principles which will render the subject more clear.

The soul or mind comprehends two distinct, and partially independent, classes of faculties; possessing far different qualities. These two classes have obtained a multitude of appellations, according to the philological caprice of the different philosophers who have treated of them. The one is usually termed rational, or intellectual;—the other feeling, affective, or moral. The first has been justly attributed to the head,

the other, certainly poetically, but nevertheless very erroneously, to the heart. The former is the engine of reason, and the tabernacle of ideas;—the latter is the well-spring of the passions, and the soil of the affections. And each of these classes admits of several sub-divisions, into the different intellectual faculties, and the several sentiments and propensities.

Though, in conformity to general usage, I mention the Reason or Intellect first, it must obviously give place in importance to the other division of the mind. It is the moral or sentimental portion of our nature that is our greatest glory, and the principal source of our mental enjoyment. The functions of reason are merely subsidiary to it,—discovering for, and directing it to, its true sources of gratification.

The corporeal frame is the instrument of this gratification,—and its movements the immediate means. For every action of the body is but the expression of some mental condition; *and seems essentially to be the means, or an auxiliary to the means of obtaining the satisfaction, or furthering the ends, of that mental condition.*—Thus,

speaking generally, we may say, that the series of voluntary corporeal actions constituting our conduct and pursuits, result from, and serve to accomplish our desires and propensities:—that the involuntary corporeal actions constituting Gesture, result from, and assist in gratifying, our moral sentiments:—and that the corporeal motions constituting Speech, are more peculiarly appropriated to the grand auxiliary of both the above,—our Intellect or Reason.

To comprehend this matter fully, it is necessary we should bear in remembrance that all those corporeal motions we term voluntary, are only so in one sense of the word. They have been all pre-arranged and pre-ordained by Nature in a certain way, by the direction of the muscles, and of their fibres, which perform them; and also by twigs of the same nerve that moves them, being distributed in a special and beautiful method to the several muscles required to perform the complex motion. Hence it follows, that our voluntary motions though innumerable, are limited in extent and kind, and are not directed by ourselves in the manner our consciousness alone would at

first lead us to imagine: and that reason has nothing more to do with ordinary motions than occasionally, in some, to point out their necessity;—it cannot, through the will, move muscles out of their normal direction, nor effect novel associations among them. For Nature has planned and laid the delicate wires and springs which perform and modify all the motions,—and the only office of the mind is to excite them, when required, into action. Our kind Parent is ever watchful of the best interests of all her wards,—and ever ready, with perfect expedients to consummate them. And for this she has also established a gradation in our controul over the muscles; some, as the heart, which in kindness, she feared to trust us with, she has taken entirely under her own guardianship. The action of the majority, she has placed at our own disposal, and some she has divided between herself and us; leaving them on some occasions to ourselves, and on others arbitrarily commanding them: among this latter class are those occasionally employed in Gesticulation, and especially the muscles of the face.

This exposition may have appeared some-

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what irrelevant to our subject, but with it we are much better able to comprehend the Philosophy of Natural Language; which is briefly as follows.

All animated beings, at least all the higher orders, are endowed with various mental faculties, or mental modes of action, differing in their nature, and in their relation to external objects, *which require expression*. And each of these faculties, when active, instinctively makes itself known, in a uniform manner, by bodily actions, or gestures, peculiar to itself; *and this is its Natural Language*. So that there are as many dialects of Natural Language as there are different faculties or affections of the mind.

And so closely related are the Passions with their specific gestures, that, as we cannot be under the influence of any passion without expressing it in the features, so we cannot even imitate the expression of any of them without exciting within ourselves in a minor degree the corresponding mental feeling. Put on the wrinkled brow of Anger—shoot out the curling lip of Scorn—or assume the dimpled cheek of Joy,—and you will experience, though it may be faint-

ly, the appropriate feeling; and endeavour how you may, you cannot entertain another kind of sentiment at the same time, without betraying it in the gestures of some other part of the features.

As my chief object is to develop principles, I must defer attempting to enumerate the individual gestures answering to the several pathetic faculties or conditions of the mind. And, indeed, it requires no less acute or graphic a genius than a Le Brun's to delineate, as it deserves, even an outline of the numerous modes and degrees of Natural Language,—ranging, as it does from the insane and terrific distortions of the agonised Sybil of an ancient oracle, “big with the god;” to the “speaking silence, dumb-confession,” of the auspicious lover's eye; or the slightest smiling curl on the placid infant's cheek, who feels and knows no higher pleasure than the warmth of its tender nestling place!

But Nature is always admirable in the economy of her means; they each commonly serve a multitude of purposes. This is interestingly exhibited in our subject.

The corporeal gestures constituting

Natural Language, are not merely the expressive vocabulary of the passions and sentiments; they also at the same time, as already intimated, serve to accomplish, or to assist in the fulfilment of their aims. Indeed it has been asserted, that this latter purpose is their only legitimate one,—and that their expressing to others the various states of the mind, is merely a contingency necessarily incidental to their ulterior use of *gratifying* the mental affections they portray

They effect this purpose in a two-fold manner, by their physical effects on the body putting it in a suitable condition to fulfil their object, and by their irresistible moral influence over the minds of spectators, through the amazing power of sympathy,

“That electric chain wherewith we’re darkly bound!”

Minute attention to the Natural Language of any passion, will shew us that it physically prepares, in a very apposite manner, its instruments, the bodily organs, for gratifying its desires. This is signally observable in the un-sheathed claws and

bared and separated teeth of several genera of animals, which is part of the Natural Language of anger in them, and obviously fits them for their mode of satisfying it. The principle is not so remarkable in man as in animals, because his passions are not usually so vehement, and he has not to trust so entirely to physical power, being furnished with more influential moral agencies. Still it decidedly exists in him, as may be seen in the involuntary and unconscious clenching of the fists in an angry or vehement person. And we may also broadly exemplify it by the effects of any of those passions which on this account, have been designated the exciting and depressing passions. Grief, fear, or sorrow, examples of the latter class, diminish all the bodily functions, and thereby peremptorily prevent all corporeal exertions. They force us into a musing meditation, which is the requisite condition of mind for leading to the fulfilment of their intention; no expenditure of animal power being immediately demanded.

But, contrary to these, the exciting passions, as anger, joy, and ambition, in just proportion to their intensity, stimulate all

the animal powers, and fit and impel them to that vigorous action so requisite for compassing the gratification of their parent passions. This is well delineated at a stroke by the philosophic Bulwer in describing one of the ambitious mental strugglings of "Ernest Maltravers." He says, "He turned impatiently from the case—ment,—his eyes flashed,—his chest heaved,—he trod the chamber with a monarch's air."

Though we instinctively feel the moral influence of this natural language, we cannot, in many instances, discover its physical cause. What words can speak so explicitly as the tell-tale blush,—"the livery both of guilt and innocence," as Addison calls it;—or what verbal language can express fear and fright equal to the death-like pallor which the face assumes under those feelings? And yet no one can satisfactorily explain their physical causes! We know they are immediately produced by a greater or less quantity of blood in the small vessels of the cheeks, but how these delicate symbols are *primarily* occasioned we do not know.

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Other symptoms we can explain:—For example,—it is from the very intimate nervous connection subsisting between the brain, (which is the seat of all the passions), and the heart, and the influence of both these over the lungs, and their function of respiration, that the breathing is frequently so extensively affected in deep feelings;—and that peculiar sensations, either exhilarating or anxious, (the “swelling heart” of poetry) are felt in the chest. It was these palpable effects of emotions, which led to the belief, only lately beginning to be relinquished, that the moral feelings in some manner proceeded from the heart,—and which has illegally obtained for that hard-working muscle, so unconscious of its honors, such an aristocratic rank in the heraldry of poesy, and so many sacred associations in the thoughts of the sentimental.

Independently of the powerful *sympathetic* influence of laughing, sighing, and other affections incident to the respiratory system, which we shall presently discuss; their effects upon the individual are well known to be very beneficial. This arises princi-

pally from their promoting the circulation of the blood through the lungs, which, in the case of the exciting passions, has been conveyed there in greater quantity than natural, from the increased action of the heart which is over-stimulated by the brain; and which the general torpor in the depressing passions, allows to accumulate there, to the hazard of health. The "luxury of tears" is likewise physically advantageous, by relieving the over-burdened blood-vessels of the brain. Even those wild and involuntary extravagancies, such as lacerations of the body and the like, which persons under the influence of deep feelings unconsciously commit, are dictated by nature, and often of much benefit by torpifying the mental sensibility, through drawing the nervous energy to the wounded part. It was on a similar principle that the "*transcendental*" Emanuel Kant could remove or suspend an excruciating paroxysm of gout by diverting the nervous energy to the brain through intense mental application. On this account the celebrated criticism of Bion on an eastern monarch tearing his hair for the loss of his daughter "Does this man think that bald-

ness is a remedy for grief!"—though certainly epigrammatic, is not philosophical. And many national rites and customs, especially those of barbarous ages, have deduced their origin from these eccentric actions,—as the tearing of garments among the Jews on the death of relations; and others.

I will just mention here what at present appears but a curious coincidence, though it is doubtlessly a necessary effect, and one which when its cause is discovered and elucidated, will, I think, prove the foundation of the Emotive portion of physiognomical science. The phrenologists have observed that the natural language of each mental organ *is in the direction of that organ*. Thus, in Adoration, the head, eyes, lips, arms, and hands, are all elevated in the direction of the crowning organ "Veneration." From Pride, the head is thrown back in the direction of "Self-esteem." The favourite posture of that master of the ludicrous, Lawrence Sterne, as his portraits testify, was with his forefinger placed on the organ of "Wit." And you will see two affectionate girls when their "Adhesiveness" is in action,

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with their heads together at that organ; and so of all the other faculties.

Our next and last consideration respecting the natural language of the passions and affections, is the *moral* means by which it effects their ends. This is accomplished by the *sympathetic* influence of natural language over the passions and affections of others.

In the whole circle of knowledge there are few subjects on every account more deserving our consideration,—particularly for the beauty and efficacy of the adaptation, its being the foundation and soul of all the polite arts, and its universal and momentary influence over us.

Its philosophical explanation is simply this:—each of the pathetic faculties of the mind is naturally affected and called into activity by certain peculiar objects; and whenever these are presented to it, it is as necessarily awakened into action as vision is on the presentation of light to the eye: therefore whenever we witness the expression of any feeling, no matter how expressed, we irresistably experience the corresponding feeling.

This is Sympathy, or fellow-feeling; and a wise and a beautiful ordination it is!—the source of all the finer joys and the charities of life, and a necessary constituent in the character of a fully-sentient being! But I resign it to the moral philosopher to describe it as it deserves,—I leave it to the rhetorician, and the poet, and the sculptor, and the painter, and the musician, to exemplify it, I only bid you take a thought, or a single glance around you, as argument sufficient for the truth of what I state!

I cannot dismiss this beautiful subject without a few more illustrative observations.

The fundamental sciences relating to mental operations, as is well known, are logic and rhetoric; logic pertaining to the rational or intellectual, and rhetoric to the pathetic or feeling, faculties. The former is the offspring of nurtured experience, the latter is the free-born child of nature, luxuriating in its greatest freshness wherever nature reigns. Verbal language, with a literal meaning scrupulously defined, is the instrument of the first; the latter needs it not, as we see in the exclusively pantomimic arts. It makes its way directly to the feel-

ings, robed in gesture and emphasis, and all the achillean panoply of nature's language. Or if it does enlist speech as an auxiliary, it dresses it in its own poetic uniform,—it dazzles in the radiant Trope,—it lightens in the glancing Metaphor,—it thunders in the omnipotent artillery of the Hyperbole,—in the Apostrophe it commands the aid of all the disembodied ghosts of Tartarus,—and conscripts all the ærial legions of the Em-pyreum, under their ethereal misty prince—Personification!

It is perhaps worthy of observation, that cultivation of the rational powers has a necessary tendency to diminish, in most respects, the intensity of natural language, simply by moderating the violence of the passions whence it arises. And the improvement of verbal language, in enlarging and ascertaining our vocabulary, has a similar tendency; by enabling us to express our feelings in words, and thereby obviating the necessity for gesticulation. This is shown by the gestures of one ignorant of a language endeavouring to make himself understood. And both are seen in uninformed people, and particularly in savage nations.

Indeed, to man in his originally savage state, "the same rough son of nature that nature left him," we shall best resort to study the nature, and to perceive the potency, of this natural rhetoric; and it will also open up to us the spring-head of many existing arts and customs. Among savages, possessing, as they commonly do, an animal intensity of passion, and but a scanty stock of words to give it vent, mental communication is almost entirely gesticulative, and this is commonly of a violent description. The diversified natural cry, common to them with the lower animals,—the differently-measured dance, as the war-dance, and that for rejoicing, with the several modes of gesticulative salutation, chiefly constitute the rude but intelligible language by which they express themselves, and regulate their passionate but uncomplex affairs.

The civilized art of Rhetoric is derived from this natural rhetoric, and is correct in proportion to its approximation to it. Independently of gesture, each feeling has naturally a *different kind* of eloquence, of mode of speech, of accent, and emphasis, and of time and tone of utterance.

This is but a refinement on the varied natural cry, applied to speech. Poetry, and its different kinds, also owns a similar origin. For impassioned feelings, beside prompting us to the employment of figurative language, naturally mould our sentences into a differently-measured rhythm; and this being artfully improved, with the addition of rhyme, will explain the existing state of the poetic art.

The necessity of *feeling* to rhetorical expression is rendered evident by the foregoing. And all must have remarked the vast superiority in the delicacy and accuracy of gestures, or the minutest trait of natural language, over the most emphatic words, in expressing and affecting the feelings. Indeed these cannot, in every case, *be* expressed verbally, but they may be, and are, unmistakably so, by Nature's language.

CHAPTER III.

On Emotive Physiognomy.

“There doth beauty dwell,
“There most conspicuous, e’en in outward shape,
“Where dawns the high expressions of a mind.”

Having exhibited the rougher materials of the interesting and beautiful edifice we are scrutinizing,—investigated its physical foundation,—and farther observed the method of raising the superstructure,—we have now arrived at the dome and the ornaments, which when explained will finish our survey of the pile; and we shall then I hope be enabled with more practised and inquisitive eyes to regard the noble building as a whole, with interest, admiration, and advantage.

The remaining branch of our subject is that I have called *Emotive Physiognomy*, which is the expression of the mind’s action

permanently depicted in the appearance. As heretofore stated, it is based on the influence which the mind exerts over the body in expressing its conditions; the traces of which becoming gradually permanent from reiteration, we are able to judge of the leading features of the mind from the characters they have stamped on the countenance. But its indications are not limited to the face, though from the mechanism and situation of that part it is decidedly the chief index. For, as we have before said, the whole body is not unusually employed in an existing emotion; and consequently the whole body must be more or less influenced permanently. The *step* alone of a Siddons could express almost any feeling. And the zigzag walk of Coleridge has been correctly adverted to as indicating his vacillating mind.

But the head, and especially the face, being the most particular criterion, we will devote a short time to its consideration.

The few remarks I here offer on Cerebral Physiognomy or Phrenology are needed to enlighten our immediate subject. Mankind, when unsophisticated with metaphysical

subtleties, have, in every age, referred to the brain as the seat of the mind. Latterly the inductions of science have taught them the obvious fact that the quantity of mental manifestation is directly proportionate to the mass and quality of the brain. But this mighty truth,—mighty as simple,—enwombed in its own simplicity—was tardy in birth; alas, how much too tardy for the best interests of the world!

Struck with the important fact of certain developements of the brain, (indicated by a corresponding ~~shape~~ of its bony case,) bearing relation to certain characters of mind,—several philosophers sought to trace and establish these relations. Camper endeavoured to do so by his “facial angle.” Blumenbach by the “vertical and normal line.” And Walker by a theory founded on the length and breadth of the brain,—differing but slightly from the truth *so far as it goes*,—except in supposing the “Cerebellum” to be exclusively the organ of volition. All these methods are imperfect rather than erroneous, from being too circumscribed:—the former two not including the entire brain in the examination,—and the latter consider-

ing it too much "en masse." But a Gall and Spurzheim arose,—and all nature rejoiced at their birth;—and Physiology, hand in hand with Morality, joined Truth in exulting;—and Metaphysics for very shame threw off her misty time-worn veil and retired to die in her own natal cloister!

These philosophers have demonstrated that the brain is made up of an assemblage of organs, by means of which the several kinds of thoughts, feelings, and passions, which constitute the mind, are manifested. And consequently that the natural disposition of individuals may be ascertained by an examination of the relative developement of the different portions or organs of the brain. combined with a consideration of certain contingencies which are detailed in all the standard works on phrenology.

So far therefore as a knowledge of the mental character may be obtained by the senses through phrenology,—that science is plainly included in physiognomy. And indeed it was under the title of a "physiognomical science" that it was first promulgated,—though it has since acquired the more appropriate appellation of the "science of mind."

It is a fact which is the basis of the present branch of our subject, that the natural language of the habitually predominating faculties of the mind is permanently exhibited in the features, more or less strongly marked according to the energy of the particular organs. I shall endeavour to explain how this is effected.

But let us previously survey the face, and review the delicate instruments which compose it, the agency of which we have to investigate. Were one disposed to indulge in amplification, or to robe one's diction in poetic graces, here is a theme after our own hearts, which abundantly allows and would sanction both; but we care not to be elegantly episodic. The face comprises the brow, the organs of the senses, the cheeks, and the chin. We may at once dismiss the physiognomy of the forehead, by referring it to its proper place in phrenology. The organs of sense are providently double for the purpose of increasing their powers; and other reasons. Their relative situations are admirably adapted to their relative functions. It is worth attentively considering this, and then endeavour to improve upon

them, and you will soon feel convinced you are disputing with Omniscience.

While upon the organs of the senses, I wish to explode what may be considered rather an important error which has been extensively mixed up with, and bears greatly upon, modern Physiognomy. It found its basis in the now exploded dictum of Aristotle, Locke, and others,—“that the mind is entirely formed by, or built out of, the *sensations* we experience.” Hence, among other things, it was argued, that proportionately with the acuteness or intensity of the sensations, and their quantity, would be the acuteness, intensity, and extent of the mind. And as these qualities of sensation depend in great measure on the conformation of the organs of the senses, it was logically enough inferred that we could predicate the character of the mind from their shapes. And moreover, as the effect produced on the mind by the action of each sense was supposed to be distinct in character, the chief remaining problem to be solved was, the relations subsisting between the several senses and the different affections of the mind. Intellectual ideas and the higher

sentiments were respectively assigned to the impressions of touch, vision, and hearing; and the animal passions and propensities, to those of smell and taste. Therefore the mind was supposed to correspond with the perfectness of the organs of either of these senses.

Now, that the organs of the senses are physiognomical indexes is doubtless true, but in quite a different manner to this mode of explanation. Indeed the preceding doctrine has introduced charlatanism, with consequent ridicule and distrust, into the science; and I wish to prevent this by endeavouring to explain every thing on strict physiological principles.

The doctrine stated above considers the organs of the senses not merely as organs of impression, but also of expression. They certainly are expressive of Corporeal, but very triflingly of Emotive, Physiognomy. I cannot see the relation of cause and effect between thick lips or a corpulent nose and intense animal passions,—nor between a large flashing eye and acute sensibility of mind. These are but collateral effects of a common cause. They are explained by the

fact that in proportion to the fineness of the temperament are the organs of the senses finely developed. And as the general character of the mind's activity accords with the temperament, so arises the coincidence between the organs of the senses and the action of the organs of the mind. They indicate temperament, like other parts of the body, and thereby the character of the mind's activity; but not, as was supposed, its characteristic faculties. The organs of the senses, as physiognomical guides, consequently fall under our corporeal division. It is only the moveable parts of the face, which are subject to volition, that *can* become expressive of mental character. And it is only so far as these form any part of the organs of the senses, or by their action may modify the configuration of them, that they can be emotively expressive.

In truth, the mental character results from the natural or acquired magnitude and activity of the cerebral organs. These at birth are tablets void of impression,—“like unwritten sheets of writing paper,” but fitted to receive impressions, or to take on modes of action, from external objects, or

from inherent causes. The organs of sense do not produce ideas, they are merely the instruments which the cerebral organs employ to convey to them impressions from external objects.

Therefore the quantity and nature of ideas depends on the size and activity of the cerebral organs, not on those qualities, in the organs of sense. From all which it seems correct to infer that the mere differences, in the intensity or acuteness of the organs of sense can have but a very trivial and inappreciable influence, as causes, over the character of the mind; and therefore the immoveable parts of their organic structure cannot be expressive, in any notable degree, in Emotive Physiognomy. I repeat that they are but expressive of the temperament, and so belong to our corporeal division.

And, there are two observations respecting them, (which apply, indeed, to all the organs of the body,) that are in strictness principles of Corporeal Physiognomy,—but I omitted them when discussing that branch to introduce them with more advantage here. I believe we are indebted for them to my friend Mr. Alexander Walker, “the

modern Lavater." The one is, that *activity* in the action of any organ is commensurate with its *height*, and *energy* or *profundity*, with its *breadth*. This general rule appertains to the cerebral and sentient organs and to all organic structures,—and is easily accounted for on physical principles. The other, and it is a rich field for admiring contemplation, is the law that beauty of conformation and perfectness of function correspond;—that is, the greater the physical beauty of any organ, the more correctly does it fulfil its office.

We have at length, after much wandering arrived at the true agents of permanent expression in Emotive Physiognomy,—the muscles. There are about two dozen pairs of these in the face and neck which serve to express the mental affections, some of them having scarcely any other assignable duty. And the beauty of their arrangement especially about that chief organ of expression,—the mouth,—surpasses that of any other part of the body. It is worth noting that the "superciliary muscle" above the eye-brow, which expresses pride or superciliousness, is peculiar to man.

It is a physiological law that parts increase or diminish in size according as they are accustomed or unaccustomed to be employed. The exercise of a part occasions an increased flow of blood and nervous energy into it,—and a consequent deposition of nutritive particles, and augmentation in its dimensions; and the contrary occurs on the desuetude of a part,—it becomes in fact partially absorbed. Now this law applied to the muscles of the face, will explain how they come to be expressive of the character.—The habitual activity of any mental organ, and the corresponding contraction of the facial muscles in portraying its natural language, occasions an increase in the size and number of the fibres of those muscles, and in one direction; whilst the others are left to diminish. And thus the countenance, and especially the mouth, is gradually modelled into a permanent expression of the natural or habitual predominant faculties.

I shall now conclude with a few observations and illustrative examples.—Though Emotive Physiognomy is an essential and valuable branch of the science,—yet at

present the application of physiognomy is chiefly limited to the indications afforded by the corporeal and cerebral branches. For there are comparatively few persons, out of the fancies of novel writers and romancists, with such decided and energetic peculiarities of character as to cause very striking peculiarities of expression in their features. In the majority

“ No hair-brained sentimental traces
“ Appear in their unlettered faces ;”

and the only criterion of mental character their countenances afford us, is the very imperfect one of temperament. Nevertheless in all persons, and especially after a certain age, there are traces greater or less of mental expression; and even the entire absence of them affords a negative indication. Thus each trade and profession by exercising a peculiar set of faculties, from their avocations or circumstances, produces a peculiar cast of countenance and demeanour in its pursuers;—and a practised eye is enabled with few exceptions to discriminate them. There is the acute penetration marked in the Lawyer;—the becoming moral gravity in the

Divine;—the physical gravity and compassionate interest in the Physician;—the deferential complaisancy of the trader;—the sturdy sedateness of the sedentary mechanic;—and the unassumed complacency which smiles in the countenance of “the gentleman,” every muscle in whose frame seems to assert his gentility.

The novelist who understands his avocation of copying nature, resorts to physiognomy as the simplest and most emphatic method of elucidating the characters of his personages. The arch-genius Scott does so universally. And there are several talented instances of this in the germanic Bulwer. In “Ernest Maltravers,” he introduces the ferocious “Darvil,” by remarking of his countenance,—“it was a face that spoke of “long-continued and hardened vice—it was “one on which the past had written indelible “characters. The brand of the hangman “could not have stamped it more plainly “nor have more unequivocally warned the “suspicion of honest or timid men.” And again, in “Alice,” he says of the indomitable and intriguing “Lumley Ferrers”—“the “character of his mind had begun to stamp

“itself in the physiognomy, especially on the
“mouth when in repose—it was a face strik-
“ing for acute intelligence, for concentrated
“energy;—but there was something written
“in it which said “Beware!” It would
“have inspired any one who had mixed
“much among men, with a vague suspicion
“and mistrust.”

But to quit fiction, though it be the fiction of such veracious masters,—and to illustrate our subject by an actual example: I shall instance the case of the hapless Casper Hauser, the supposed German prince; with the history of whose confinement from childhood in a state of mental infancy, his subsequent liberation and improvement, with his tragical end, most persons are familiar. In reference to the influence of the mind over the body, it is said,—“His face
“was on his first appearance at Neurem-
“berg very vulgar; when in a state of tran-
“quility, it was almost without expression;
“and its lower features being somewhat
“prominent gave him a brutish appearance.
“*But the formation of his face altered in a*
“*few months almost entirely,—his counten-*
“ance gained expression and animation,—

“the lower part of his face became gradually less prominent, and his earlier physiognomy could scarcely be recognized.”

To conclude:—The capability of beauty of the human countenance, in common with every thing human, has seriously suffered, and still suffers, from the innumerable errors and irregularities of mankind. Buffon correctly says, and demonstrates by examples, “that all those people who live miserably are ugly and ill made.” And this is very eloquently expressed and deplored by that versatile genius Dickens, in one of those Sterne-like passages with which his writings abound. In his “*Oliver Twist*” he says,—“Alas! how few of *Nature’s Faces* there are to gladden us with their beauty.—The cares, and sorrowings, and hungerings, of the world, change them as they change hearts;—and it is only when those passions sleep, or have lost their hold for ever, that the troubled clouds pass off, and leave heaven’s surface clear!”

But “IMPROVEMENT” is the watch-word of Nature;—and she has an invincible tendency, to right herself in every thing!—And it follows, from this tendency, and the law

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of perfectness of function coinciding with beauty of configuration, that the Human Face will progressively increase in beauty of form, and charm of expression, until it really merit, in all who bear it, the now-flattering epithet "DIVINE!"

THE END.

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