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PHRENOLOGY

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AND

THE SCRIPTURES.

BY

REV. JOHN PIERPONT.

NEW YORK:

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CLINTON HALL, 129 AND 131 NASSAU STREET.

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PREFACE.

THE following Lecture was given by special invitation before the "AMERICAN PHRENOLOGICAL SOCIETY," at Clinton Hall, New York. The importance of the subject, and the very able manner of its discussion, induced the publishers to urge the author to consent to its publication. To the phrenologist, the Christian, the skeptic, and all who seek the truth in science and metaphysics, we commend this effort of a pure and vigorous mind. Among the favorable notices of the Lecture by the New York press, we find the following in the New York Evening Mirror :

"The Lecture of Rev. John Pierpont at Clinton Hall, upon the Harmony of Phrenology with the Christian Scriptures, was in all respects a remarkable one, and singularly profitable to the soul hungering for truth in either department of these sciences. He drew with masterly acumen the distinction between the animal mentality and the moral or spiritual powers; to which he applied Phrenology as giving us a better exposition of those distinct elements, having their confluence in the human mind, than any other that has come to light; nay, it was the only solution to those difficult questions concerning our essence—and it is perfect.

"Phrenology, with its two departments of moral and animal faculties, corresponds, he considered, to these two distinct men-

tal essences. The prosperity of the wicked, which has so much puzzled the Christian world, is hence accounted for, and the frequent adversity of godly men, and the death of precocious genius: the first by obedience to the laws of their animal nature, the latter by obedience to the laws of his moral, *to the neglect of the former.*

“The elucidation which Phrenology furnishes of these states of being, is a full explanation of many passages of Scripture; such as the doctrine that the Word of God is foolishness to the natural man, for it is spiritually discerned; and that of the order of things spiritual and natural, in language which we cannot quote; and the subjection of the body to the spirit, ‘keeping it under,’ in the language of Paul.

“The doctrine of Regeneration, and many others, were explained by the metaphysics of Phrenology. In a moral point of view was our venerable and reverend lecturer especially instructive, basing himself on Phrenology; while his close definition of words, as conscience, conscientiousness, consciousness, etc., showed the beautiful simplicity and ready understanding of the meaning of words, when we search for their sense in their roots.

“His motive for giving this Lecture, was to pay a small installment of the sum of his indebtedness to Phrenology as a minister of the Gospel. It was the triumphant performance that a large and intelligent audience might have been led to expect from so distinguished an intellect.”

PUBLISHERS.

LECTURE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

ONE of the most formidable obstacles which the science of Phrenology has to encounter, is the opinion, or rather the fear, affecting more or less extensively the public mind, that its doctrines are antagonistic to those of Jesus Christ; and, so long as this feeling exists, especially in the mind of the serious and religious portion of the community, it must necessarily tend to close the eyes and the ears of all, who partake of it, against the proofs adduced in support of the science, which it is the object of this Society to illustrate and establish.

I have, therefore, thought that I could not employ the hour appropriated to this evening's

Lecture to better advantage, both to Phrenology and Christianity, than in an attempt to show that, in their respective doctrines, as they have been apprehended and approved by our own minds, there is not the incompatibility that has been supposed, between the doctrines of the phrenologists and those of Jesus Christ and his apostles; but that, on the contrary, they not only co-exist, as independent truths, but are mutual supporters and friends, each helping to illustrate, explain, and prove the other; and thus directly contributing to the advancement of the moral, the highest interests of man, and consequently to the glory of that Being, whom Phrenology, not less than all the other sciences, recognizes as the Creator and Governor of the universe, and whom the Gospel recognizes as “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Not attempting, therefore, to go into an examination of the evidences of either Christianity or Phrenology—which would furnish matter, not for one discourse, but for more than one volume—not attempting again to refute the oft-refuted objections to Phrenology,

urged upon the ground that it is hostile to Christianity; but, assuming both to be true, I shall endeavor, by a brief comparison of particular points, to show the beautiful harmony that exists between the two, and the illustration and support which each derives from the other; and this I hope to do, not merely for the sake of showing that harmony, or for the sake of the service done to Phrenology by showing it, but also for the sake of the occasion which, in showing it, will be taken, to correct some popular errors, in relation to the mental faculties and the doctrines of the Christian Scriptures.

And here let me remark, that even if I succeed in doing, in this behalf, all that I can hope to accomplish, I shall, in so doing, pay but a small installment of the debt, which I feel that, as a minister of the Gospel, I owe to the science of Phrenology, and to the teachers of that science, who have so long and so faithfully labored to diffuse and defend it, on both sides of the Atlantic.

We open the Scriptures, and a proposition like this meets our eye: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of

God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* On reading a sentence like this, the question arises, What is the *natural* man, but a man in harmony with, or according to, his nature; i. e., the natural faculties, qualities, sentiments, or powers with which the Author of his nature has endowed him, and all of which, united, make the being that we call *man*? Are we then, to understand, from the proposition before us, that man, according to the nature given him by his Creator, is incapable of receiving, or understanding the spiritual truths which the same Creator has revealed to him?—that the Author of our nature has given us a revelation which the faculties of our nature cannot comprehend? Who can believe that such a proposition is the statement of a truth? On recurring to the original language, however, we see that the apostle does not say this of the *natural* (*φυσικος*) man, but of the *animal* (*ψυχικος*) man; and, instantly, it is seen to be at once

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

plain, and true ; for, as an animal, endued merely with the animal propensities, man can no more apprehend spiritual or moral truths than can any other animal. The revelations of the Gospel were, and are, made or addressed, not to the animal, but to the moral, the *spiritual* nature of man ; which, however, is as natural to man, as essential to his nature, as man, as are his animal propensities or powers. Phrenology furnishes the key that instantly lays open passages like this.

Again, we read, “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterward that which is spiritual.”* Here again, through the ignorance or infidelity of the authors of the common version of the Scriptures, we are told that that which is natural is first, and that which is spiritual afterward ; plainly implying that the spiritual, or moral, in man, is not natural to him—not according to the nature that his Maker has given him. Now Phrenology teaches us that the moral faculties, or spiritual powers, of

* 1 Cor. xv. 46.

man are as natural to him as his intellectual or even his animal—nay, that these are the highest faculties of his nature. And when we look at the original language of the apostle, we see that he says, “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is *animal* (ψυχικός), and afterward that which is spiritual;”—a proposition that harmonizes perfectly with the doctrines of Phrenology, and with our own observation and experience; that the animal, in man, is developed before the moral; and this, whether we regard man as an individual, or as a race. For what, but an animal, is man when first he opens his eyes to the light of heaven? How long after this is it that his eyes are opened to the light of moral truth! How long before he feels the force of moral obligation, before he sees “the excellent glory” of virtue, or even “the beauty of holiness.”

—And if, from contemplating the individual, we turn our regards toward the race, what, in the infancy of the race, was man, in respect to moral culture or development? We know, indeed, that painting has done something, and

poetry still more, to beautify the first of men in the eyes of his children. And if from all these efforts of art and genius, we are to understand nothing more than that our first parents were perfect specimens of the race, merely in respect to animal strength and beauty, we see no good reason to doubt their representations, or that the lower animals that inhabited Eden, might have seen in

“ Adam, the goodliest man of men since formed,
The fairest of her daughters Eve.”

But if we choose rather to rely upon the sure word of Scriptural history, we can see little more, in the progenitors of our race, than a pair, in whom the animal predominated greatly over the moral, the flesh over the spirit, and whose moral power, therefore, was subjected only to such a trial, in resisting the cravings of their appetite for food, as a wise parent now assigns to very young children.

And what *was* man, in the earlier ages of the race, in respect to moral culture and growth? Passing him by, in the childhood of the social state, and in the ruder forms of

society, when the Nimrods—the mighty hunters—were the founders of empires; or when “a man was famous as he lifted up axes upon the thick trees,”* what were the nations the most invincible in arms, and the most inimitable in arts? what were Egypt, Assyria, Greece, Rome? ay, what, in respect to moral culture and growth, were the nations that held by turns the sceptre of all but universal empire, and the story of whose victories and the details of whose riches and splendor have made vocal all the tongues of Fame; and the remains of whose skill in calling out godlike forms from granite and marble, and in rearing temples worthy of a God, are still the admiration of the world? The animal man had been moulded in its perfection, in all those regions which stretch from his cradle in Eden to the pinnacle of his sensual glory, that shot up among the hills of Greece; but the single fact that the refusal of one man to recommend a measure against the enemies of his country because it would be *unjust*, was a

Ps. lxxiv. 5.

thing so remarkable in those days as to be thought worthy to be handed down to these, is sufficient to show that the sentiment of justice, rarely recognized by an individual as of binding force, had but a feeble existence, and acted with little energy upon the public mind. And it seems to me that no one who reads the remark of the apostle Paul, that "Not that is first which is spiritual, but that which is animal, and afterward that which is spiritual," can enter so fully into the depth and beauty of the truth that he states, as can he who reads it in the light thrown upon it by the facts and metaphysics of Phrenology.

According to the doctrines of Phrenology, again, the lower feelings, or animal appetites and propensities, should always be subjected to the higher—the moral sentiments; and in as much as any man does keep his animal under the control of his moral nature, or subjects those feelings which he has in common with the inferior animals to those which are peculiar or proper to man, in so much does he attain to the perfection of his nature as a man; and,

in so doing, he secures the highest felicity of which, as a man, he is capable.

“I call those happy,” says Dr. Spurzheim, “who enjoy good health, having, therefore, no physical sufferings to mar their enjoyment, and who, without difficulty, subject their animal nature to the faculties proper to man.”* How perfectly in harmony with this is the language of the apostle Paul, when he says, “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.” Hear him again: “I delight in the law of God, after the inner man;”† i. e., in all the moral sentiments of his nature; “but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” So also, “The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other. Walk, then, in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh;”‡ in other words, “Follow the dictates of morality, and not those of your animal propensities.” How

* Spurzheim's Phrenology, vol. ii. p. 186.

† Rom. vii. 22, 23.

‡ Gal. v. 16, 17.

perfectly phrenological is this representation of the struggle between the animal propensities and the moral sentiments !

Again, how could the same great apostle convey the idea of increasing moral power, while the animal energy declines, more strictly in accordance with the doctrines of Phrenology, than when he says, "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day?"* And when the same apostle says, "Let us not be desirous of *vain glory*, provoking one another, envying one another,"† how clearly, to a phrenologist, has he in view the evils of excessive Love of Approbation and of offended Self-Esteem. So, too, when he says, "For though we walk *in* the flesh, we do not walk *after* the flesh,"‡ what phrenological reader does not see that he says in effect— "Though in this life we are clothed in an animal nature, yet we do not give ourselves up to its impulses."

But Paul is by no means the only apostle whose language shows that, though he does

* 2 Cor. iv. 16.

† Gal. v. 26.

‡ 2 Cor. x. 3.

not use phrenological terms, he does recognize the metaphysics of Phrenology. "From whence," asks James, "come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence—even from your lusts that war in your members?"* Assuredly—is the answer which Phrenology gives to this interrogatory. War can never spring up between the moral sentiments of our nature. Between these there is perpetual peace. Benevolence can never come into collision with Conscientiousness, nor with Hope, nor yet can Veneration ever interfere with either. Among all these there is always and necessarily the eternal harmony that exists between the different attributes of the Divine Mind. But there may be perpetual discord—and if the moral sentiments do not sternly predominate there will be—between the animal propensities. See how Acquisitiveness resists Alimentiveness! How offended Amativeness goads on Combative-ness and Destructiveness to do its bidding? How sharp the struggle between Philoprogenitiveness and Acquisitiveness! Indeed, what

* James iv. 1.

one of them all is there that may not be easily pricked on, so as to do battle with all the rest? Depend upon it, the apostle will never find the phrenologists against him when he says, as he does say, Wherever there is fighting, among individuals or nations, there the animal is predominant; in the aggressor at least, and probably in both the parties; and when we hear still another apostle exhort—"Dearly beloved, I beseech you abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul,"* we see that he is as clearly in harmony with both the others as the metaphysics of Phrenology are with them all.

I have, thus far, attempted to show that the metaphysics, or moral philosophy, of Phrenology, so far from being opposed to the metaphysics of the Christian Scriptures, are in entire unison with them, and that it is only by adopting the phrenological classification of the mental faculties, that we attain to a perfectly clear understanding of much of the metaphysical language of the sacred writers.

But even this is not saying enough in behalf of the service rendered to revelation by our

* 1 Pet. ii. 11.

philosophy ; for, as I would now remark, it throws light upon some of the phenomena of the divine government, which, before, had been obscure to philosophers, from the foundation of the world ; nay, it solves some mysteries, which were inexplicable to the sacred writers themselves. “ Wherefore,” says the venerable Job, “ do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power ? their seed is established in their sight, and their offspring before their eyes,”* with much more to the same purpose. He then considers and confutes all the explanations of this moral phenomenon which his friends attempt to give ; and having conclusively shown that their explanations have all failed to “ justify the ways of God” in this matter, he closes by saying, “ How, then, comfort ye me in vain, seeing that in your answers there remaineth falsehood ?” The prosperity of the wicked is equally puzzling to Jeremiah, who, somewhat tartly, it must be confessed, thus remonstrates with Jehovah in this behalf : “ Let me talk with thee, O Jehovah, of thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked pros-

* Job xxi. 7.

per? Wherefore are they who are treacherous at ease? Thou hast planted them; yea, they have taken root. They grow; yea, they bring forth fruit. Thou art near to their mouth, but far from their heart.”* The same phenomenon still occurs in the divine government; and to the pious and excellent of the earth it is still a mystery why the wicked—the profane, the perjurer, the blasphemer of all that is holy—should be permitted to live and prosper in his way, while the pure and true—the devoted servant of God and his race, the man who is preparing himself to minister at the altar of religion, in his own or a foreign land, is sent down in his youth to the grave. The world looks mournfully on—doubts not, indeed, that God is just, but wonders at these awful mysteries of his providence. But the phrenologist sees in this no mystery whatever. To him the ways of God are as plain as they are everlasting. For *he* sees, and till his philosophy blessed the world, none but he had seen, that each of the three great classes of the natural laws of the universe—the phys-

* Jer. xii. 1, 2. (Noyes' Tr.)

ical, organic, and moral—is administered independently, and without respect to either of the other two; “that each requires obedience to itself; that each, in its own specific way, rewards obedience and punishes disobedience; and that human beings are happy in proportion to the extent to which they place themselves in accordance with all the Divine institutions.”* When asked, then, Why do the wicked, i. e., the immoral, the irreligious live? he answers, Because, though he violates the moral, he observes the physical and organic laws; and the observance of those laws is rewarded with physical and organic well-being. The cheat, the liar, the slanderer, the perjured witness, the blasphemer of his God, so long as he observes the laws of his organic nature in respect to air, exercise, and diet, will be healthy and rubicund: in the complaining language of Job, “He will send forth his little ones like a flock, and his children will dance; he may take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ; may spend his days in wealth, and have no pains

* Combe's Constitution of Man, p. 21, 22. Authorized ed. 1850.

in his death ;” while the devoted student of God’s oracles, who reverences his *moral* laws, and would gladly speak them out, and live them out, before the world, is cut off in the morning of his day, because he, through ignorance or the non observance of the *organic* laws of God, is weakened in his way, and falls early and deplored into his grave. Yet, as he has observed the moral laws, it is well with him as a moral being ; as such, he does not taste of death ; and it is in kindness to him that he is removed to a state, where he can no longer suffer the penalty that follows the violation of the organic, but where he may enjoy all the happiness that results from his obedience to the moral laws. How beautifully clear is our vision of these things, when they lie in the sunshine of phrenological metaphysics ! If it is said that all this is now pretty generally understood, I answer, Thanks be to the phrenologists that it is so ; for, except through their writings, it has never been explained. How perfectly is all truth in harmony with all truth ! How much does an understanding of the nature of man help us to understand the

revelations of God's word and the mysteries of his providence! The world is beginning to acknowledge, though somewhat tardily and grudgingly, that Phrenology has shed some light upon the government and the oracles of God.

How distinct, too, is the line of demarkation, which Phrenology draws, between the different departments of our own nature, as animal, intellectual, and moral beings: assigning to each department the faculties that respectively belong to it, and to each faculty the functions that are its own! How much of vagueness, as well as positive error, is Phrenology yet destined to banish from the common mind, as well as from the language, which is but the exponent of that mind's doings—in the province of morals, and even of theology! Let one example in each province be cited in illustration of what I mean.

And, first, from the department of morals, let us examine the popular notions of *conscience*.

By one, this is considered as “the *know-*

ledge, or *faculty*, by which we *judge* of the goodness or wickedness of ourselves ;”* by another, † as “ internal or *self-knowledge*, or *judgment* of right and wrong.” And these severally, by their definitions, seem to regard conscience as an *intellectual* faculty, or the *result of the exercise* of an intellectual faculty, in that it is something that *knows* or *judges*, or is *knowledge*, or something which that faculty has acquired by its exercise. Others regard conscience as “ a moral sense,” i. e., a *feeling* or *sentiment* of right ; and therefore assign it to, not the intellectual, but the *moral* part of our nature. ‡ And still another, and that other a metaphysician no less discriminating and acute than Adam Smith, on one and the same page § calls conscience “ reason,” “ principle,” “ conscience,” “ the inhabitant of the breast,” “ the great judge and arbiter of our conduct,” “ the love of what is honorable, and of the grandeur and dignity and superiority of our own characters.” Ask the metaphysicians, then, What is

* Johnson, Dict. in vb.

† Webster, in vb.

‡ Webster's Dict. 4to. in vb.

§ Smith's Moral Sentiments. Bost. ed. vol. i. p. 176.

conscience? and what do you learn? Little, indeed, beyond this—that there is great vagueness in the mind of each of them, and little agreement among them all. Ask the phrenologist, and he will tell you that *conscience* is not recognized by him as one of the fundamental faculties of the mind, either intellectual or moral; but that it is *the knowledge* that a man has of what is passing, or has passed, *within him*, or of what *he is*, or has been, *himself feeling, thinking, or doing*. That as other compounds of *scio*, or *science*, imply knowledge, so does this. That as *omni-science* is the knowledge of all things, and *pre-science* foreknowledge, so *con-science* is the knowledge which one has of what is with or within himself. Thus, I have conscience, or certain knowledge, i. e., I am *conscious*, of my passing thoughts, aversions, or desires. In this sense conscience is used by the evangelist John, who says of the accusers of the woman taken in adultery, who had heard the decision of Jesus, that he who was without sin should cast the first stone, that “they, being convicted by their own *conscience*, went out one by one.” Here the question for conscience to settle was not

whether the act in question was right or wrong, but whether each individual present was without sin, or was conscious that he was as guilty as the party accused. Having the conscience—the internal knowledge, of their guilt, that knowledge condemned them. This is the etymological and true meaning of conscience.

But the phrenological faculty, *Conscientiousness*, is quite another matter ; for between this and *conscience* there is precisely the same difference as between the adjectives *conscious* and *conscientious* ; a difference as wide as between the intellectual and moral faculties of man. Conscientiousness is, with the phrenologist, one of the feelings or sentiments that are proper to man. Not so conscience. A beast may be as conscious of hunger or thirst, of pleasure or pain—i. e., may have as much conscience of it—as a man. But to predicate conscientiousness of a lower animal—to speak of a conscientious dog or horse—were to travel out of the usages of language, as well as out of the common sense of men. The phrenological faculty of Conscientiousness is a

moral feeling, or sentiment, a desire of our moral nature. It simply desires the morally right. It is that, in our moral nature, which Alimentiveness is in our animal; and as this is the desire for food, so that is the natural appetite for the right, as the appropriate nourishment of the inner, the moral, the spiritual man; or it is that faculty, with which *they* are endowed, and with which being endowed—in the expressive language of Jesus Christ—“*they* are blessed, who hunger and thirst after righteousness.” No phrenologist has ever so well expressed the proper function of this high faculty, as the Saviour himself has expressed it in this “beatitude;” a consideration, by the way, which must recommend this department of the phrenological philosophy to all those who revere the authority of this “teacher sent from God.” Conscientiousness is, in man, his “hunger and thirst after righteousness.” He who is largely endowed with it says, with the Saviour, “My meat is to do the will of my Father and to finish His work.”* That is the language of this divine faculty. It does not

* John iv. 34. 0

crave what *other people* will probably approve, but what *God* will approve. It seeks not what is fashionable, or what is famous, but what is right. It thirsts not for greatness, or earthly glory, but for justice; and, just in the degree in which it feels pleasure in this, is it offended by any form of injustice or wrong.

But, like all the other feelings of our nature, higher or lower, conscientiousness is blind. It craves the right, but knows not what it is. Indeed, it *knows* nothing; for the simple reason that it is a sentiment, and not an intellectual power. It is a feeling, not a knowing faculty. It falls into the condition of all the feelings, whether propensities or sentiments, in that it is blind, seeing nothing, knowing nothing, but simply *wanting* something. In human mechanism, it is an impelling, not a directing power. It wants justice, and calls upon the *intellect* to supply the want. Its voice is bold and peremptory, or it is feeble and equivocal, as the endowment, in each individual, is liberal or small, in relation to the lower feelings; and in the same degree will it employ the intellect to minister to its wants. In this respect, the anal-

ogy is complete between this moral appetite and that lower one which belongs to the animal nature of man. A hungry man, transported during his sleep from a frigid to a torrid zone, and placed in a garden filled with fruits, not one of which he had ever seen or known before, part of which were wholesome and part poisonous, would not, on waking, be informed *by his appetite* which he might eat with impunity and profit. If there were no instructor by, to counsel or teach him, experiment must be his teacher. He must appeal, under the admonitions of his Cautiousness, to his taste, and to his feelings after having tasted; and his Comparison and Causality, from the materials thus collected, would, in due time, guide the Alimentiveness of the stranger, as to what might be eaten and what rejected, or what should be chewed and what *eschewed*. Precisely so is it with the moral hunger for the right—the right, that alone can nourish the inner, the spiritual, i. e., the moral, the immortal man. The appetite itself knows not what is the food that the moral man may eat and “grow thereby.” All that it can say is,

“I want the food that is congenial to my nature. I crave the spiritual aliment of righteousness and truth.” But what *is* righteous, or what *is* true, is a question which the intellect, especially the reflective faculties, Comparison and Causality, by referring any contemplated act to an acknowledged standard of right, and comparing it with that, can alone decide.

What is such a standard? and Where may it be found? are questions that different men will, in terms, answer differently. One will say we have that standard in “the will of God.” Another, “in the greatest good of the greatest number;” or, more simply, “in the greatest good.” A man with large Reverence and Marvelousness, with relatively small Comparison and Causality, will find this standard in “the will of God;” and, to ascertain that will, will look to the Bible alone. Another, differently endowed, with smaller Reverence and Marvelousness, but with larger Comparison and Causality, being able to see a greater variety of constructions that may be given to any written word, and to compare more widely the bearings, of a contemplated act, upon the happiness

of the human race, will probably lean less confidently upon the written word, and appeal to "the greatest good" as his standard. But though in terms these standards may appear different, it is consoling to think that, in fact, they are the same, since "the will of God" is "the greatest good."

This phrenological view of the subject of conscience will be seen at once to be in harmony with the actual phenomena of human life, and to explain that which has often appeared inexplicable, viz., that the consciences of men—even of good and honest men—should be so different; that *that* which is usually regarded, in the language of Adam Smith, as "the great judge and arbiter of conduct," should, when holding his court in different breasts, pronounce so different decisions, as we know that he does; nay, that his decisions should so often conflict with each other, when sitting in the same breast at different times. For, in the first place, the *feeling*—conscience being usually regarded and spoken of *as* a feeling—is never a judge in any case, certainly not then "the *great* judge and arbiter of con-

duct ;” and in the second, the intellect of different individuals—nay, of the same individual at different times—is so much more or less enlightened, that it is able, in very different degrees, to compare an act with a standard, either by giving a proper construction to the standard itself, where the written word is referred to as such, or where “the greatest good” is the standard, to compare with *it* the act in question, in all its bearings, in all time, upon all the interests of all men; and from that comparison to form a correct judgment of its character, whether right or wrong.

Allow me to ask at your hands a brief exercise of your reflective faculties, while, both in illustration and proof of the theory of conscience here proposed, we compare it with the great case of the apostle Paul, as he has himself stated it to us. After his conversion from the religion of his fathers to that of Christ, even after having persecuted the disciples of Jesus to the death, he solemnly declares before the council of his nation, “Men and brethren,* I have lived in all good conscience be-

* Acts xxiii. 1.

fore God, until this day." He says, "I was zealous toward God,"* and "I verily thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."† "I verily *thought*,‡ I believed, I judged, I was of opinion," (for this is the force of his word in the original.) It was not a matter of feeling with him, but of judgment—not of sentiment, but of intellect; it was not a moral sense or instinct, but a conclusion or inference, from what he then knew, of the relative claims of Moses and Jesus, that he ought to do many things contrary to the cause of the latter. And with the degree of light which his intellect at that time enjoyed, even Paul's large Conscientiousness—his burning thirst for right, which with his characteristic accuracy in metaphysics he calls "zeal toward God"—was not offended when he witnessed the martyrdom of Stephen, and encouraged it by keeping the garments of them that stoned him. After his journey to Damascus, however, he saw things in a different light. The popular philosophy would say here, "his conscience was enlightened." But

* Acts xxii. 3.

† Acts xxvi. 9.

‡ Εδοξα.

we say, "Nay; he was as conscious, or had as much conscience or knowledge within himself, of what he was doing, before, as after his journey; yea, and for aught that to the contrary appears, he had as much Conscientiousness; but before the sublime scene of the new revelations that occurred on the way, that Conscientiousness had been ministered to by an intellect less enlightened than after those revelations had been made. And for what does the zealous persecutor of the Christians ask, when struck to the earth by "the heavenly vision?" That his zeal for God and his law may be increased? That his feeling of duty may be awakened? That his dead conscience may be quickened? No, but that his intellect may be informed, that knowledge may be given him, as to the great questions—*What is the will of God? what is right?* His question is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And when, by the heavenly response, and by subsequent instructions at Damascus, he had had the way pointed out to him, in which it was the will of God that he should walk, the same Conscientiousness that at first made

him a persecutor, impelled him to become an apostle and a martyr. The feeling was, in each case, the same, except that, by exercise, it had gained additional force and intensity ; but the intellect, being more enlightened, and forming a different judgment as to the right, gave that feeling a different field of exercise and gratification.

How is this theory of conscience confirmed—how is the question “What is right?” referred, not to the feelings, but to the intellect, and made the province, not of sentiment, but of the reflective faculties, by a higher authority than even that of Paul ! “Why,” says his Master, and ours, “why, even of yourselves, *judge* ye not what is right?”* Thus is the phrenological theory of conscience, though opposed to popular language, and popular metaphysics, and popular opinion, shown to be in harmony with the phenomena of human life and conduct, and not less in harmony with the facts and the language of the sacred oracles. It is seen that we have no absolute knowledge, or conscience, of what is right ;

* Luke xii. 57.

that we are *conscious*—in other words, we have a *conscience*, or absolute, internal knowledge—or, to express the same idea in still another form—we have a *consciousness* of our *conscientiousness*; i. e., we have *certain knowledge* of our *love of right*, and of our desire or hunger for it; but what *is* right, in any particular case, is matter, not of absolute knowledge, but of judgment; and on this question different answers will be given by different men, according to this theory, as we know they are in fact, according to the vigor, activity, or intensity of their respective conscientiousness, stimulating their intellect to act upon this question, as well as according to the different measure of intellectual energy or illumination with which the question is considered. When, therefore, the phrenologist is reproached for renouncing a popular theory in morals, or mental philosophy, and when he is told that his doctrines are at war with those of Christ or his apostles, he appeals alike to human nature and divine revelation, and calmly answers—“Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are YE?”

There is one other subject—a theological doctrine—upon which some one addressed a note of inquiry to Mr. Combe, while in this country, asking him how the doctrines of Phrenology are to be viewed in relation to it, and upon which, therefore, I am desirous of treating very briefly, in conclusion of this discourse—I mean the doctrine of Regeneration.

The work of Regeneration, i. e., the transformation or conversion of a man from sin to holiness—from spiritual death to spiritual life—is usually, in what may be regarded as the popular theology of the present day, held to be the work, and I think I am justified in saying, the *immediate* work or operation of the spirit or grace of God, acting arbitrarily and irresistibly upon the human mind, and turning it radically and *instantaneously* from evil to good. I do not mean to represent this as precisely the view taken of the doctrine by all who hold it in its popular form—for doubtless this doctrine, in different minds, exists in different forms—but I believe it is the form, in which the orthodoxy, i. e., the popular theology, of the present day, receives and proposes

it. It certainly is not the doctrine as held by Calvin. And there are two objections to the doctrine thus held, which I will venture to suggest.

1. If this work is held to be the result of an *immediate* influence of the spirit of God upon the spirit of man, it lies under the same burden with all other doctrines that refer a work upon the human, to the immediate agency or energy of the divine mind, viz., it can never be proved. For no man can say, "This thought or that, this purpose, this feeling, this desire or that, is suggested by the spirit of God, and that is suggested by the activity of my own faculties, or by the objects or events around me." And if we take the ground that *all* good purposes, desires, or resolves are the *immediate* work of the spirit of God upon the mind of man, I answer, first, The assumption is nothing better than an assumption; and secondly, You thereby destroy the moral agency of man, deny the activity of his own faculties—if, indeed, any thing is left that you can call his own—and convert him, not into a

child of God, but into a passive subject of His operations. And,

2. If you say, as it often is said, that Regeneration is a work of the *grace*, instead of the spirit, of God, you meet this difficulty : you assign to the grace of God a work which it cannot do. The grace of God is his inherent benevolence, his unpurchased, free, spontaneous goodness. It is one—yea, the leading, the predominant one—of the sentiments or moral attributes or feelings of the Divine Being. It is, as such, the motive that prompts *Him* to action. But it most evidently can immediately prompt to action no other being in His universe. My benevolence is the motive that prompts *me* to whatever good I do ; but it can, in the nature of things, affect no other being, unless it be *mediately*, i. e., through the medium of something that I do—some agency or instrumentality by which the being in question may, according to his nature, be affected, or the work proposed, according to its nature, may be wrought. The work of Regeneration is a moral work. In its very nature it must be effected through the instrumentality, or by means, of

moral causes—that is, by bringing objects addressed to man's moral nature under his cognizance, thus exciting his moral feelings in relation to them, and enlightening his intellect as to the means of attaining them. Now this the Christian phrenologist supposes that God has done for man by means of the mission and ministry and gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us observe the steps and various *media* in this work of Regeneration. First, the benevolence or grace of God, his kindness in regard to man, a creature whom, in creating him, he endowed with a moral nature, and, in so doing, created him in his own image—the grace of God, I say, moved *him* to set a future, immortal, and happy state of existence before man, the heir here of infirmity and death, as his inheritance and final destination, subject to a certain condition, viz., conformity to the laws of his moral nature. And thus the Creator's benevolence appeals to and excites man's hope. By Jesus Christ, as a teacher, the intellect of man is enlightened in respect to the means, by which this great boon of immortal life and bliss may be attained ; and hope,

guided by the intellect thus enlightened, prompts the man to action, or to a course of life, according to the condition stated, viz., conformity to the laws of his moral nature. But as Phrenology teaches that man's moral is superior to his animal nature—that the spiritual is paramount to the carnal—it follows that, in living according to the laws of his moral, he subjects to them the impulses of his animal nature. *In the degree* in which he does this, after his hope is thus excited and his intellect enlightened by the Gospel, in that degree is he regenerate; for in that degree he comes under the laws of his moral, whereas he was before under the dominion of his animal nature; “Not that was first which is spiritual, but that which is animal.” Or, in still other Scriptural language, “Whereas he had before had his conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and its affections,” he now “crucifies the flesh with its affections and lusts, and walks in the spirit,” i. e., in newness of life.* “Being made free from sin, he has become the servant of right-

* Eph. ii. 3. Gal. v. 24, 25. Rom. vi. 4.

cousness.”* How perfectly does this harmonize with such language as this: “They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”† And the metaphysics of Phrenology show us plainly why. Because, the moment that the mind that was once carnal, in that the animal, the flesh, predominated in it, does become subject to the law of God, and is no longer at enmity against him, but is reconciled with him, from that moment that mind is no longer carnal—no longer prevalently sensual, but spiritual; no longer does the animal predominate, but he is a new, a moral, a spiritual man, a child of God. And inasmuch as this change in his character has been effected by means of the light and the hopes of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which was given to the world by the grace of God, we may say, with equal truth,

* Rom. vi. 18.

† Rom. viii. 5, 6, 7.

either that he is “renewed by the grace of God,” or that “he is created anew in Christ Jesus,” or “begotten again by the word of truth.”

If there be any one who shall object to this exhibition of the doctrine of Regeneration, that it does not distinctly recognize the fact that the work is *instantaneous*, I reply, that that fact is recognized by implication, if not expressly; for if the work itself consists in a change in the course or direction of the general current in the stream of human life—the change, viz., which consists in flowing now away from God and now toward him—howsoever long may be the process by which the change in the whole current is effected, there must be a moment—visible only, perhaps, by the eye of Infinite Intelligence—when the animal ceases, and the moral begins, to predominate in the character; when the flesh lays down the sceptre, and the spirit takes it up; when the general course of the current of life and conduct turns from the evil toward the good. And no one, I believe, holds, that while the stream of human life flows through time, i. e., in this world, there is any

case—excepting only that of the Author and Finisher of the Christian faith—in which *all* the waters *always* flow smoothly and quietly on in the right way, without an occasional eddy or counter current; especially near the shore, where the fruits and flowers that grow upon the bank seem to invite the onward tide to cling to earth, to linger in its way, or even to flow back a little to enjoy some pleasant things that it had once passed by. Even the best sometimes find that when they would do good, evil is present with them. The best find that, while they live, there is a law in the members conflicting with the law of the mind; but he is the *most thoroughly* regenerate who, in the language of Spurzheim already quoted, finds the least “difficulty in subjecting the animal nature to the faculties proper to man,” or who, in the words of Paul already cited, “keeps under the body, and brings it into subjection.”

In perfect accordance with both these, Calvin says, “While we dwell in the prison of the body, we must wrestle strenuously with the vices of our corrupt nature, and therefore with

the animal (anima) that is naturally within us. Plato often said that the life of a philosopher is a constant contemplation of death. But we may more truly say that the life of a Christian man is a perpetual study and exercise in mortifying the flesh, until, it being evidently slain, the spirit of God obtain its ascendancy over us." This sentiment, as it is the simplest of all, has also appeared to me to be in entire harmony with the verity of the Scripture.*

What, then, has the truly evangelical Christian to fear from the moral philosophy and metaphysics of Phrenology? Calvin, Spurzheim, Paul, and our own observation and experience of human life—wherein do they differ? Have we not succeeded in pointing out some harmonies, especially between St. Paul and the phrenologists, which, by those whose feelings were hostile to Phrenology, because of its supposed irreligious tendencies, were somewhat unexpected? Have we not shown, further, that Phrenology, in its beau

* Inst. Rel. Christianæ, lib. iii. ch. iii. § 20, p. 229.

tiful and intelligible metaphysics, has furnished us with a key, the best that ever has been furnished, for unlocking and laying open some things which the peculiar phraseology of St. Paul had hidden, at least from some eyes—a key that is so exquisitely fitted to all the wards of the great disciple of Gamaliel's metaphysical lock, and that plays so smoothly through them all, that the conviction is irresistible that they were both wrought out by the skill of the same Wisdom, and under the eye of the same Truth? I know that they were fabricated in different ages, and through instrumentalities widely different. But this, so far from being an objection to the accuracy of either, is, to my mind, an evidence of the truth of both. And the weariness which must have been felt by most of my hearers, while trying (most kindly) to become interested in a discourse somewhat remarkable for its length, and still more so for its dryness, will, I hope, be patiently borne, if not forgiven, from the consideration that it was induced while listening to an humble effort to throw the light of an intelli-

gible metaphysics upon some dark portions of the records of Christian revelation, and, in so doing, to place that revelation itself upon the basis of a demonstrative science.

THE END.



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