

allotted to some distinct purpose; as, for example, that of forming the seat of thinking, or of the soul; the seat of the local senses of sight, sound, taste, and smell; and the seat of that general feeling which is diffused all over the body; but as the nice hand of the anatomist has confounded even so rational a speculation as this, by proving that many of the nerves productive of different functions originate in the same division of the brain, while others, limited to a single function, originate in different divisions of it;* as it has hereby shown that we know nothing of the reason of this palpable conformation, nor the respective share which each of these grand divisions takes in producing the general effect,—how fanciful and presumptuous must it be to partition each or any one of these divisions into a number of imaginary regions, and to guess, for, after all, it comes to nothing more, at the respective duties allotted to these boundaries of our own conceit!

But the most serious, or perhaps I should rather say the most *ludicrous*, and as it appears to me the most fatal, objection to this hypothesis, is the extraordinary fact that the different professors of it cannot agree in dividing the brain, or in mapping the scull-bone; some of them telling us, that a bump or protuberance in a given situation imports one faculty, and others, that it imports another faculty; while one or two of them have, at different times, assigned different faculties or manifestations to the same bump. The organ which Dr. Gall at first called that of courage, he afterward denominated that of quarrelsomeness, and still later that of self-defence. Now, the qualities of self-defence and of quarrelsomeness are as opposite as those of light and darkness; while that of courage is distinct from both of them. So the organ of the theatrical talent he afterward detected to be, and consequently denominated it, the organ of poetry; and Dr. Spurzheim has since found out that even this name, to adopt his own words, “does not indicate the essential faculty of the organ,”† which is rather that of fancy or imagination; and he has hence called it the organ of ideality. Gall asserts that there is no separate organ for hope: Spurzheim contends that there is, and that its protuberance lies near the crown of the head. Gall asserts that nature has furnished us with one region or propensity for assassination or murder, and two for thieving or stealing—daring and audacious stealing, and cunning circum-spect stealing. Spurzheim is more moderate: he contends that nature has given us but one for each, and maintains that the second stealing bump of Gall manifests nothing more than a general propensity to reserve or secrecy.‡ Gall makes the same organ which impels various animals, as the chamois or wild goat, to prefer lofty situations, indicative of pride or self-love in man. This, in Bojames’s table, is denominated the region of vanity or conceit; but as such a term will not cover the idea of fondness for elevated situations, Dr. Gall has since called it the region of haughtiness. Now, this would do well enough for a conundrum-maker:—why is a wild goat like a proud man? because it is fond of what is haughty or lofty;—but such quirks and punnings are altogether unworthy of the dignity of serious philosophy. Dr. Spurzheim, indeed, has felt it so; but then he has still farther confounded the hypothesis, by honestly confessing, in the first place, that he does not know where the organ that impels us to prefer one place rather than another resides, though he apprehends there is such an organ; while he positively affirms that the bump or protuberance of self-love or pride lies in another part of the head than that affirmed by his colleague and master.

“Who shall decide when doctors disagree?”

A thousand other objections and inconsistencies, each of them perhaps fatal to the hypothesis, might be pointed out if we had time. I may especially ask, since murder and thieving have express organs in the brain, how it comes to pass that lying, and swearing, and backbiting have not equal organs? If the mechanic and the painter have organs that specifically identify

* See Study of Med. vol. iv. p. 6, 2d edit.

† Physiolog. Syst. p. 417.

‡ Ibid. p. 400. 402.

them, why has not the haberdasher and the tailor? the latter more especially, since, as it has lately been attempted to be proved, by a learned writer on the subject, that the calling of the tailor is the oldest of all professions whatever; “a calling,” says he, “that commenced immediately after the fall: for it was then that mankind sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves clothes.”

Even upon the subject of the religious bump, upon which I have said so much already, the professors of the new school cannot altogether agree; for while Dr. Gall and Dr. Bojames affirm, that this protuberance on the top of the head indicates the existence of a God, and is the most cogent proof mankind possess of such existence, Dr. Spurzheim contends that it is no proof whatever—that his friends have mistaken the quality—and that it indicates neither religion nor morality; both which, it seems, in the opinion of this enlightened philosopher, have nothing to do with each other: for, “one man,” says Dr. Spurzheim, “may be religious without being just, and another may be just without being religious.”* Dr. Spurzheim gives to this protuberance, therefore, a different and a far ampler scope, so as to cover, as all his names do, fifty or a hundred qualities at the same time. He calls it, indeed, the organ of veneration, which at first sight appears to have an approach to the name given it by Gall and Bojames; but then he especially tells us, “that this faculty does not determine the object to be venerated, nor the manner of venerating; and that it equally includes the veneration of God, of saints, of persons, or any thing else, however mean or contemptible.” Yet this is the organ which Dr. Spurzheim has supposed to have been peculiarly developed in the head of the Saviour. As some amends, however, for his philosophical apostasy upon this point, he makes Dr. Gall’s organ of *moral* goodness, in his explanation, the organ of *Christian* charity,† for so he expresses himself; introduces a new organ, which Gall will not allow, and a bump which Gall cannot find out, to indicate religious hope and faith, and which he places next to Gall’s religious bump; at the same time totally defeating the value of his *amende honorable* by adding, that this organ of faith and hope, “in persons endowed with it in a higher degree, manifests credulity.”‡

Such, then, are a few of the inconsistencies of the new hypothesis, and the discordances of its different professors with each other.

But it may be replied, that there is no reasoning against facts; that the gentlemen I allude to are men of learning and character; and that they have actually determined the moral propensities of a multitude of persons, by a reference to the rules of their own art. I admit the learning and character of these gentlemen, and most freely pay homage to them on this score; but these qualities, though a full security against voluntarily deceiving others, is no proof whatever against self-deception.

There is no science, perhaps, among those professed formerly, and held in the highest estimation, which has fallen into more contempt than that of judicial astrology. Yet this, when it was in fashion, was for ages embraced by men of the greatest learning and talents, and of unblemished integrity; and who, in a thousand instances, foretold events that actually came to pass; and persuaded themselves that they foretold them by the rules of their own art. Such, to confine ourselves to times comparatively recent, were Baptista Porta, Cardan, and Kepler, of the sixteenth century: the first, the most distinguished scholar, and the last two the most distinguished mathematicians of their age; and such were the Abbé de Rancé, the celebrated founder of the monastery of La Trappe, and our own two learned countrymen and poets Cowley and Dryden, in the seventeenth century. And let the school before us, therefore, boast as much as they may upon this subject, we can bring far more numerous instances of individuals as honest, as successful, and incomparably more learned, who have devoted themselves to a science which is now utterly abandoned by every man in the possession of his senses. To talk, therefore, of the *occasional* success of the physiognomists before us, is to add not a barley-corn to the scale in their favour; since right they must

* Physiolog. Syst. p. 415.

† Ibid. p. 416.

‡ Ibid.

sometimes be, upon the common doctrine of chances and the very nature of things; right they may sometimes be, from the common physiognomy of the face; right they may still more frequently be, from the artful and sweeping amplitude of the reply which may be made to cover a variety of tempers or propensities at the same time; and necessarily and infallibly right they do not profess to be.

The whole, in truth, is founded on hypothesis: here it begins, and here it ends; hypothesis, too, unsettled and disputed, in many of its points, among themselves. And yet, planting their feet upon this tottering and unsteady ground, they are perpetually uttering the proud and lofty words, *science, proof, and demonstration*; than which a more palpable or grosser abuse of terms can never be employed or conceived.

In few words, how grossly imperfect must be the range and condition of that science, which, upon their own showing, is capable of deciphering to us, that this man is a good musician; that, a good painter; a third, a good linguist; a fourth, a good dramatist; a fifth, a good theologian; a sixth, a good murderer; and a seventh, a good thief; and that any or all these may at the same time be ambitious, or courageous, or conceited, or cunning: while, if you ask them whether they are good liars, good backbiters, or good swearers; whether they are inclined to gluttony or sensuality, to wisdom or folly, to sympathy or hypocrisy, to timidity or confidence, to mirth or to melancholy: characters the one or the other of which apply to every one you meet with, whether abroad or at home, they are compelled to acknowledge that their physiognomy or craniognomy does not extend to any one of these qualities, and that nature has either forgotten to put them into the catalogue with which the head is covered, or has marked them so bunglingly and obscurely, that they cannot read the writing.

LECTURE XIV.

ON THE LANGUAGE OF THE PASSIONS.

In an early lecture in the present series I observed that the passions, when called forth and operating, discover themselves by a double influence upon the organs of the body, the *EXPRESSION OF THE FEATURES*, and the *CHARACTER OF THE LANGUAGE*. The first we have already noticed; let the second serve as a subject for the lecture before us.

That the presence and operation of the passions give a peculiar style and animation to the language must have been observed by every one who has paid the slightest attention either to his own feelings, or to those of the world around him. The man who is in a state of calm and tranquillity will always have his ideas flow in a calm and tranquil current, and express them in an easy and uniform tenor. But let him be roused by some sudden and violent insult, or by some unexpected stroke of overwhelming joy or sorrow, and the tempest of his soul will give a corresponding tempest to his utterance. His speech, instead of being mild and uniform, will be vehement, energetic, exclamatory, and abrupt; his judgment will be borne down, his imagination ascendant; the face of nature will, in consequence, assume a new aspect, presenting a distorted, an unduly bright, or an unduly saddened picture, according to the nature of the predominant emotion; and the phraseology will partake of the colouring, and become proportionably figurative and fanciful.

This is not a sketch of any particular age or country, but of all ages and all countries; it is a sketch of mankind at large; and we draw from it these two conclusions: first, that the natural language of the passions is strong, ardent, and abrupt; or broken into short sentences or versicles; full of figure

and imagination, and consequently possessing all the radical characters of poetry: and, secondly, that we may expect to meet with the boldest and most frequent use of this kind of language in those periods of every nation in which the passions have been most unrestrained and luxuriant, and therefore in their earliest and least cultivated state; for we have already seen, that in this state the most vehement and energetic passions are in perpetual play and activity.

Now, the whole history of the world will confirm us in these two general corollaries; and it has hence been said, and in a restricted sense said truly, that the language of poetry is older than that of prose. Its principles are founded in nature, and in nature in her simplest and most unsophisticated state: and it is to these principles mankind uniformly recur, whenever hurried by a violent shock of feeling from the polished tameness and monotony of colloquial speech. It is then we return to exclamations, interrogations, broken sentences, bold and daring comparisons; and, whether we be indifferent to the world or not, succeed in interesting it in our fate and condition.

Where, among uncultivated tribes, the passions chiefly called into exercise have been of the pleasurable and sprightly kind, such as we have already seen are the natural result of warmth and beneficence of climate, of tranquil scenery, and an atmosphere perfumed by the rival odours of spontaneous blossoms and balsams, the rude burst of delight has assumed a more regular or measured character, and been uttered in the form of chant or brisk melody, with such corresponding attitudes or movements of the body as might best co-operate in proving the exuberant gaiety of the heart. And hence music and dancing are nearly of as early origin as poetry: they were prompted by the same impulse, and had a direct tendency to heighten each other's power; while ingenuity soon taught the more dexterous of the tribes to imitate musical sounds by the invention of the simple instruments of pipes and re-becks. The Greek philosophers ingeniously and perhaps correctly ascribed the first carols of the human voice to an imitation of the wild notes of the birds; and the first idea of musical instruments to the occasional whispers of the breeze among beds of hollow reeds. Lucretius has expressed himself upon this subject with so much sweetness, that I lament the constraint I feel under of quoting him before a popular audience rather in a translation than in his native beauty and elegance; yet the following verses will, I presume, give a faint idea of the high merit of the original:—

And from the liquid warblings of the birds
Learn'd they their first rude notes, ere music yet
To the rapt ear had tuned the measured verse;
And Zephyr, whispering through the hollow reeds,
Taught the first swains the hollow reeds to sound;
Whence woke they soon those tender-trembling tones
Which the sweet pipe, when by the fingers press'd,
Pours o'er the hills, the vales, the woodlands wild,
Haunts of lone shepherds and the rural gods.
Thus soothed they every care, with music thus
Closed every meal, for rests the bosom then.
And oft they threw them on the velvet grass,
Near gliding streams, by shadowy trees o'erarch'd,
And, though no gold was theirs, found still the means
To gladden life. But chief when genial Spring
Led forth her laughing train, and the young year
Painted the meads with roseate flowers profuse,—
Then mirth, and wit, and wiles, and frolic, chief
Flow'd from the heart; for then the rustic Muse
Warmest inspired them; then convivial sport
Around their heads, their shoulders, taught to twine
Foliage, and flowers, and garlands, richly dight;
To loose, innumerable time their limbs to move,
And beat with sturdy foot maternal earth;
While many a smile and many a laughter loud
Told all was new, and wondrous much esteem'd.
Thus wakeful lived they; cheating of its rest
The drowsy midnight; with the jocund dance
Mixing gay converse, madrigals, and strains,
Run o'er the reeds with broad recumbent lip:
As, wakeful still, our revellers through night