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A TALE OF VENICE.

It is well known, that during the youth of Mahomet, the conqueror of Constantinople, his father Amurath, wearied of a life of wars and victories, resigned to him the sceptre of the Ottomans; whose empire he had extended almost to the gates of the city of the eastern Cæsars. Mahomet giving no sign of that fitness for authority, which made him afterwards the greatest monarch of his day, abandoned himself to licentious indulgence, in such a manner, as to endanger the state of the Mahomedans in Europe. His father resuming the throne, condemned the degraded prince to a residence in one of the distant provinces of Asia Minor.

During this period of his disgrace, Mahomet is supposed to have first meditated the subjugation of the Grecian islands, many of which he visited in disguise, that he might be better enabled to effect his purpose, when supreme authority should be his own again.

On this journey of observation, he became enamoured of a young Venetian girl, the daughter of the Governor of the place, then absent from his command. The unsuspecting virgin received him as a prince, in alliance with the Senate of her native city, and had no fear of encountering objection on the part of her father, whose return was scarcely announced as at hand, when her lover suddenly disappeared.

After many years, Mahomet, having commenced the execution of his gigantic projects, sat down in person before the Island of Negropont, which he reduced, with the exception of the principal fortress; having taken captive the commander and his daughter, whom he discovered to be the almost forgotten object of his early love. On this discovery, he was liberal of his offers, to both the father and daughter; but both resisting equally his entreaties and his threats, he ordered the father to be placed in the front rank of his soldiers, in the next attack upon the citadel, and abandoned the daughter to the brutality of his troops.

Had Venice always continued to produce such instances of virtue in her children, the indignant moralist had never found room for the unavoidable reflections which her present state inspires.

## I.

Oh, Venice! when thou hast returned to earth,  
And the dull element that gave thee birth  
Shall rest upon thy ashes; when the wave  
Shall break above thee o'er a nation's grave;

## PHRENOLOGY.

BY TIMOTHY FLINT.

We are sorry to select for animadversion, an article on this subject, from the last number of the North American Review, a periodical, for the general character of which we entertain an entire respect. The review in question has been pronounced by the papers fair and manly; a view of the article, which we hope to disprove. We admit that it bears a seeming of candor; but under this is concealed a bigotry and dogmatism, which strike us as alike bitter, arrogant, and sophistical. We deem the article in question in many respects exceptionable, and of bad tendency. We have not space, nor is this the place for a sustained analysis of it. We shall limit ourselves, therefore, to a word in reply to each of the leading positions of the reviewer.

He finds much fault with the mystification of the writings on phrenology; and, as Longinus grows sublime, while writing on sublimity, the reviewer becomes periphrastic, verbose, and obscure; wrapping up his ideas, to our poor intellect, almost in Egyptian fog and darkness. For the justice of this assertion, as we have not room for quotation, we refer the reader to the article; to us one of the most nebulous and obscure we ever read. We are not sure that we have always found his ideas amidst the smoke and confusion of his verbiage; but we have honestly striven to do it. Even his two fundamental propositions, which ought, one would think, to be clear, if any thing in his article were so, and which, as he supposes, cover the whole ground of phrenology, are so diffuse, involved, and mystified, that, in interpreting and reducing them to intelligible proportions, we may have mistaken his meaning. But we believe he means to lay down the two following positions: 1. The human brain consists of separate portions of a *conical character*! 2. The liability to mental affection is in proportion to the relative development of these portions.

We say nothing of *conical character*, as a mathematical figure can hardly have a character; nor of the absurd phraseology of *liability to mental affection*: though in this connexion, and from a disclaimer, *ex cathedra*, against mystification, rather ridiculous modes of expression; we say nothing of the sneering, the attempted wit, and real dogmatism of the article, as these have no bearing upon the relevant matter in discussion. We come at once to the two positions on which he founds his argument. In the very threshold,

we remark the common dexterity of a sophist. He creates a ridiculous monster, having no existence but in his own brain, calls it phrenology, and then mercilessly scalps it with his dissecting tomahawk; and lo! it is done for poor phrenology. This has been the favorite mode of religious disputants, in all times, to give their *own odious view* of the opinions of their antagonists, that they might easily confute them, and render them hateful.

What the writer in question calls phrenology, and considers as covering the whole ground, we view as scarcely part, or parcel, of the science, and as only furnishing a single argument in its favor from anatomy. It seems to us of little importance to the science, whether the brain is cone-shaped, or quadrangular; whether it is white, brown, or gray, in color; or whether we can exactly define the boundaries of the phrenological provinces, or not. The great doctrines will remain unaffected by the admission, or denial of any of these suppositions. Yet we are astonished that the reviewer pretends not to know that any phrenologist has even attempted to define the boundaries of the phrenological provinces. We do not say that any one has done it in unanswerable demonstrations. But, certainly, he cannot but have seen phrenological casts of skulls, on which these provinces have been figured. He cannot but know, that they are all numbered, and their positions assigned. What then becomes of his candor, when he pretends not to know that any such effort has even been attempted? It is very true, that they who have dissected the brain, with the expectation of seeing reason at work in one province, and imagination in another, have been unfortunately disappointed; as they might naturally have predicted, when they commenced with the assumption, that these mental processes are, in their nature, invisible. On no other ground than that these mental acts might be the subjects of vision, could our anatomist expect to settle, by his compasses or dissecting knife, where the province of one of these empires commenced, and the other terminated, in the brain. After all the anatomical arguments of Gall and Spurzheim, to prove that the organ of number occupies one position in the brain, and that of combativeness another, our reviewer will readily be believed, when he affirms, that neither he, nor any other anatomist, has ever seen these faculties at work in their separate provinces. Suppose we, who assume to know nothing about medicine, or anatomy, should choose to affirm that bile is not secreted by the liver; will any learned professor show us the process, actually and visibly going on, by morbid anatomy? Is he not obliged to prove it, unquestionable as it is, by inference and analogy?

For ourselves, we have no doubt, that Gall, Spurzheim, and others, have demonstrated, anatomically, that the brain is a complex combination of organs. But we have never relied on the ana-

tomical arguments for phrenology. Our convictions would remain the same, whatever should be proved to be the figure and color of the brain; and whether it be visibly divided into compartments, or not. We do not go to Gall, Spurzheim, or Combe, for the proofs. We can even withstand the witty German adage against the doctrine, that what of it is true is not new; and what is new is not true. We will not contend that phrenology is a modern discovery, for we do not believe it such. We are confident that all thinking men have been substantially phrenologists, since the creation. The ancients certainly were, because all the busts and heads of their great men, the Homers, the Socrates, and the Ciceros; the effigies of Plutarch, are all admirable phrenological specimens, and, whether they are likenesses or not, prove to us that they understood that all men, intellectually great, had heads of a certain form, indicating their *beau ideal* of a head finely developed for thinking. We are just as confident that a promiscuous American congregation would expect little from an orator, that they should see mounting the rostrum with the cranium of a New-Zealander, or a Congo black on his shoulders. We all read alike the labelling of intellect, or the want of it, with which providence has kindly marked its human samples.

We have no disposition to contend for phrenological extravagances. We do no more love to see phrenologists, than philosophers of any other school, on hobbies. That disciples of this school have uttered extravagant and untenable positions, we have no doubt; and we would be glad that there were not fools in other schools, as well as this. We can hardly believe that any sensible man has pretended to be conscious that he has, at the same time, poetized with one portion of his brain, and philosophized with the other, any more than to be conscious that his liver was secreting bile, while another organ was elaborating another fluid of life. Neither do we believe, that a man, to whom God has utterly denied wit, has become truly witty, while discussing phrenological *bumps*. Men have not been extravagant and silly in the school of phrenology alone. But we consider it unfair, to seize the absurdities of religious professors, and denounce them as the positions of religion itself. In the same manner, an ignorant and bigoted anti-phrenologist can dress out a monster of his own fancy, call it phrenology, and easily render it alike odious and ridiculous. Such is the goblin of the reviewer's creation, before us. He can dissect his Caliban, we doubt not, and find it perfectly homogeneous and un-compounded.

But while we disclaim his monster, as phrenology, and admit that it has done nothing for medicine or morals, we are bound to show, in a word, what we consider phrenology to be, and what, we trust, it will be able to accomplish for our species.

1. *We think, with the brain.* 2. *The brain is a complex organ.* These two positions, and their necessary inferences, in our view, cover the whole ground of phrenology. The shape and color of this complex organ; the boundaries of its several divisions; the protuberances which their development creates on the parietal surface of the cranium, and even the position, that the strength of the organ is proportioned to its size, are all to us incidental and unimportant circumstances in the science. Admit the two positions which we have advanced, and all the important consequences, for which phrenology contends, will follow: 1. That we think, with the brain, we will adduce no other argument to prove, than that we believe it matter of universal consciousness. We know not that any will be disposed to question the position; and with those who would, we have neither time, nor space, nor inclination for dispute. True, the language of poetry universally assigns the seat of the affections to the heart; but for truth, they might as well be assigned to the liver, or pancreas. They are undoubtedly elaborated where the intellectual functions are performed.

The real question, the *argumentum crucis*, between the old school of metaphysics, and the new school of phrenology, is *this*. Is the brain a homogeneous and simple organ, every part of which concurs to the production of every sensation, thought, and affection; or is it a complex organ, composed of as many simple organs, as there are distinct sensations, distinct powers of the intellect, and distinct affections, each performing its own functions, as incapable of interchanging with any other, as the heart with the liver, or lungs? Phrenology, as we understand it, affirms the latter; and it seems to us, the grand difference between the old and new school. The doctrine, that size gives strength and craniological development, are natural sequences.

Why do we believe that the brain is a complex organ, and that each specific mental act and affection has its appropriate organ? Though we have no space for the thousand reasons that offer to our thoughts, we can indicate some few of them. Is it probable, from analogy, that every function necessary to physical life, should have its specific organ, and that the nobler acts of the soul should all be the result of one uniform and simple organ? Is it probable that vision, and wrath, and mathematical calculation should all be going on at the same moment, in the same brain, and elaborated by the same uniform organ? thus, blowing, if we may so say, hot, cold, moist, and dry, with the same breath. We believe the soul to be spiritual, and immaterial, and that it acts by, with, or through the instrumentality of the brain; and we see no reason why phrenologists should be materialists, more than the disciples of any other school. But we pretermit any inquiry, touching these

opinions, because phrenology proper has nothing to do with them. Every one is aware that the nerves of vision, hearing, smell, and the other senses, terminate in the brain, each enabling it to perform the specific functions of its own sense, and of no other. When these nerves are severed from the brain, the function subserved by the several nerves, is completely destroyed. Could it be so, if the whole brain concurred to vision, hearing, and smell? Can there be any doubt that these functions are performed by particular portions of the brain; and that the hearing part can only hear, and the seeing organ only see? If the five senses have each its particular organ in the brain, which can interchange with no other, why not all the intellectual functions, as well as those of sensation?

The admission of this hypothesis beautifully explains all the phenomena of sensation, thought, and the affections. For example, in dreaming, admit that one organ sleeps, while the others are awake, and we should expect just those phenomena of intense action of some parts of the intellect, and the incongruous want of action in the other parts, which render dreaming consciousness so different from that of wakefulness. The position of the organs of some of the *propensities*, is so well ascertained, and so generally admitted, that we can hardly conceive any doubt to exist. If the organs of the senses, and propensities, have their appropriate position, can any one doubt that all the specific intellectual faculties have also theirs. If the brain be not a complex organ, how can we explain the well-known fact, that we can exercise one faculty, for example, that of music, until it is fatigued, and relieve it by instantly resorting to the study of mathematics; in short, that we can, at any time, allay mental fatigue, by varying the intellectual function. These phenomena are perfectly simple, on the admission that the brain is a combination of organs.

But we may not go into the argument in detail. Who does not know that he can strengthen any of the intellectual functions by use? Who does not believe that this strengthening consists in enlarging the organs? And who does not believe, that the enlarging them will cause a proportional enlargement of that portion of the cranium, under which they are situated? We have not a doubt that these facts have been the teaching of common sense to the men of all ages and countries, who have been phrenologists, without being aware of it. Who doubts, when he sees an idiot? The common solution is, that we discriminate by the physiognomy. Not so. It is an unconscious adoption of the important phrenological doctrine, that nature has labelled all her human productions with something like their value, in the great window of the soul, the forehead. We discern a prodigious variety of character. All admit, that we think with the head. Pass your hand over this

head, and you find the surface of the cranium as diversified as the lines of the countenance. Who can entertain any real doubt that these diversities of surface are, in some way, connected with diversity of character. Contemplate the heads of the great men of all ages and countries. Are not the marks of their greatness visibly impressed there? But we forbear, and leave those who doubt whether a New-Zealand and an African head is not as well constructed for thinking, as that of a Homer, Newton, or Laplace, to find the home of the soul by the dissecting knife, and to believe that one head is just as good and handsome as another. Against one point, in the review in question, we raise a more indignant strain. Feeling himself weak in reasons, he attempts to raise a hue and cry against phrenology, by putting it under the ban of religion, and representing it as ancient epicurism revived, and naturally leading to the doctrines of Voltaire and Thomas Paine. And this, say the papers, is fair and manly. What *fair* and *manly* mind will say, that phrenology has more tendency to infidelity, than any other doctrine of philosophy? If phrenology has any bearing, in a religious direction, it must be toward piety, because the disciple believes that religion is an innate and integral constituent of our nature. Not to name its host of ardent Christian disciples, we find such men as Chalmers and Combe enrolled in the ranks of the science in question. Names have little to do with truth. But our reviewers sneer at phrenologists, as if all Lilliputians. Certainly, none would think of naming Combe and Chalmers, beside the Goliath of *Gath*, that we find in our reviewer; though a modest man will feel in tolerable company with such names.

A word or two in answer to the question,—What has phrenology done for medicine, morals, and education? It ought to have done nothing, if, as the reviewer would have us believe, it is a doctrine ridiculous in itself, and received only by a few fools. Nothing, while such writers hold the keys of knowledge. What would Christianity have ever achieved, if such men as Julian the apostate had been the writers and teachers of his and all subsequent ages? To test the utility of phrenology, it should receive the same free and liberal investigation, as other philosophical opinions, instead of being denounced in the spirit with which paganism greeted christianity. Its antagonists affirm, that they have induced the age to scout it by acclamation; and then they triumphantly ask—What it has done? But our reviewer is mistaken, alike in his estimate of the folly of the leading advocates of phrenology, and the smallness of the number of their proselytes. Reviewers in the old and new world, except the Westminster, like the universities, are essentially gothic, and orthodox advocates of *autos da fe*, in regard to the disciples of new opinions. The Edinburgh sneer-

ed at the doctrine in question. But since Combe and Chalmers have written for that splendid periodical, it sneers no longer. The London, we believe, waives the subject. The North American Review is still antediluvian. France, which, at the time to which our reviewer adverts, was anti-phrenological, has now become almost a national convert. In America the progress of the science has outrun the most sanguine anticipations of its friends. In a few years it will be a matter of as much ridicule to question the fundamentals of this science, (and with its follies and extravagancies we have nothing to do,) as it now is, against the cry and derision of the chief priests and scribes, to assert them. This, of course, is to be received as *our* opinion; as the reviewer's estimate of the general scouting and extreme folly of the science is *his*.

What has it done for medical science? Little; for it has hardly yet made its voice heard above the clamor of bigots. But it would do, and must do much, and almost every thing, were it once universally understood, (for then it would be universally received,) particularly in regard to mental diseases. It would place nosology on its true basis, and commence medical science on the foundation of enlightened physiology.

What has it done for education? Little; for the bigotry of anti-phrenology has been transmitted to institutions and teachers, who are generally opposed to any innovations, but those of manner and fashion. Hence, running in the face of providence, the orthodox doctrine has been, that education creates all the difference of character. Hence we have tailors, who ought to be blacksmiths, and the reverse; ministers, who ought to be braziers and tanners; and poets, reviewers, and critics, who were formed to grind in a bark mill. In a word, disregarding God's unchangeable laws, which have assigned every child of our species some peculiar aptitude, education has been hitherto playing at cross purposes with nature. When phrenology shall be universally understood, and of course universally received, all this will be set right, and then we shall realize what the science can do for education.

What has it done for morals? Instead, as the reviewer most unworthily charges it, of being the handmaid of infidelity, phrenology will perform its best and highest ministry for morals and religion; for it promulgates an eternal, universal, and unanswerable argument in favor of religion, by proving, that man is constituted a religious being, as certainly as he is an eating animal. It declares, that the organ of religious sentiment is one of the constituents of his thinking organization, and of course of that spiritual nature, in which we believe. This sentiment will compel him to be religious in some form. It invokes him, in God's name, to cherish and enlighten this sentiment, and to adopt the undoubting conviction, that the being that has received from the Creator religious sentiment, as



a constituent of his moral nature, must be as certainly immortal as God is true.

Finally, the reviewer is very certain (from his own consciousness it must be,) that his brain has not increased a particle since he was seven years old, and it was probably of the most moderate size before. We believe him;—and in presence of a man so learned, an anatomist so profound, and a writer so clear, we venture humbly to suggest, whether such an infantine abortion is adequate to a sensible, fair, and manly discussion of phrenology in the North American.

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We are willing to let the following glowing lines go forth as one of the finest pieces of descriptive poetry, this country has ever produced. They bear the initials of Charles F. Hoffman, Esq., under whose auspices this magazine was started, and the first three numbers published. Though said to have been written on the back of a letter, while waiting for the steamboat, they are, nevertheless, combined with all the graceful playfulness of the author, and fraught with the full inspiration which the glorious scene they describe, with such power, would be calculated to produce.

## WEST POINT BY MOONLIGHT.

WRITTEN IN THE BAGGAGE HOUSE.

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I'm not romantic, but upon my word,

There are some moments when one can't help feeling  
As if his heart's chords were so strongly stirred

By things around him, that 'tis vain concealing  
A little music in his soul still lingers  
Whene'er its keys are touched by Nature's fingers.

And even here upon this settee lying,

With many a sleepy traveller near me snoozing,  
Thoughts warm and wild are through my bosom flying,

Like founts when first into the sunshine oozing;—  
For who can look on mountain, sky, and river,  
Like these, and then be cold and calm as ever?