Phrenology, its nature and uses : an address to the students of Anderson's University, at the opening of Dr. Weir's first course of lectures on phrenology in that institution, January 7th, 1846 / by Andrew Combe.

PHRENOLOGY—ITS NATURE AND USES:

AN

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TO THE

STUDENTS OF ANDERSON'S UNIVERSITY,

AT THE

OPENING OF DR WEIR'S FIRST COURSE OF LECTURES
ON PHRENOLOGY IN THAT INSTITUTION,

JANUARY 7. 1846.

BY ANDREW COMBE, M.D.,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF EDINBURGH;
ONE OF THE PHYSICIANS IN ORDINARY IN SCOTLAND TO THE QUEEN;
CONSULTING PHYSICIAN TO THE KING AND QUEEN OF THE
BELGIANS, AND CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE
IMPERIAL AND ROYAL SOCIETY OF PHYSICIANS
OF VIENNA.

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NOTE.—A wish having been expressed by the Trustees that the following Address should be published, the author has at once assented to a proposal so entirely in accordance with the aim for which it was written. He thinks it right to add, that, having been unable, from the infirm state of his health, to attend personally, the Address was read to the audience by his brother Mr GEORGE COMBE.

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INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,

ON seeing a stranger present himself before you to deliver a lecture introductory to a Course on Phrenology, it will naturally occur to you to ask, Why does he occupy the place which belongs of right to Dr Weir? The answer to this question will be found in the following brief history of the origin and progress of Phrenology, and of the events which led to the institution of a Lectureship on the subject in this University.

From the earliest dawn of science, the attention of anatomists and physiologists, and, I may add, of philosophers also, has been earnestly directed to the study of the brain and the nervous system. Enveloped in obscurity as these important organs were, facts of daily and hourly occurrence nevertheless forced the conviction upon the minds of all reflecting men, that, whenever their functions should be discovered, they would be found to fulfil the very highest purposes in the economy of man. Even the most cursory observation was sufficient to shew, not only that the brain is the seat and centre of sensation, voluntary motion, thought, and feeling, but that it exercises a paramount, although often indirect, influence over the whole bodily organization. Under the pressure of deep grief, for example, every function is impaired, and the powers of life become more and more enfeebled, till death at last closes the scene, and the individual is said to have died of "a broken heart." Under the influence of the strong passion which accompanies maniacal excitement of the brain, the action of the heart is characterised by unusual violence, the circulation becomes rapid and tumultuous, and the whole system is so instinct with energy, as almost to defy restraint. Under the calmer and more equally dif-

fused excitement of hope and joy, the different bodily functions are raised in tone, and so agreeably stimulated, that all the operations of life are carried on with a vivacity and ease which at once enliven existence, and form the best safeguards against the inroads of disease. A blow on the head, or a powerful narcotic, on the other hand, may, by disturbing the action of the brain, produce absolute insensibility of both body and mind, and lay prostrate the highest genius. The bursts of mental power and extraordinary bodily strength developed during the delirium of fever, or under the use of wine or spirits, form equally striking and instructive examples of the predominant influence of the brain in the animal economy; and its intimate connexion with the mind is perhaps nowhere exhibited with greater clearness, than in the regularity with which the different mental powers become developed and advance through the different stages of maturity and decay, in exact proportion as the brain itself passes from the imperfect development of infancy through *its* stages of maturity and decay.

These, and similar facts, all leading to the same conclusion, have forced themselves upon the attention of mankind in all ages and countries, and they form the groundwork of the almost universal conviction that the brain is, in some way or other, the seat or organ of the mind. An enlightened curiosity, however, does not stop short at this vague and general proposition—it seeks to discover farther under what conditions this association of mind with brain exists. It seeks to know whether, in producing and giving expression to the varied and complicated phenomena of thought and feeling, the brain acts as a whole or as an aggregate of many parts, each subserving a particular sense or faculty. For thousands of years philosophers have laboured to penetrate this mystery, but laboured in vain; and yet, in every succeeding age, the constant recurrence of the same phenomena has kept alive in its fullest force the conviction, that the discovery of the functions of the brain and nervous system would be fraught with important advantages to science and to mankind; both by explaining some of the profoundest mysteries of our being and position, and by affording principles of the highest utility for our future progress and improvement. Under this stimulus, inquiry never became apathetic, even when it seemed most unpromising. If it failed of success, this was not from want of zeal, talent, or perseverance, on the part of those engaged in it. The failure, as will be afterwards pointed out to you by my friend Dr Weir, arose solely from pursuing methods of re-

search which, because they were founded on a wrong principle, were incapable of leading to success. Not suspecting or perceiving where the error really lay, one physiologist after another, either entered upon the beaten path of his predecessors, without attempting to remedy the defects of method which had misled them,—or he *invented* a new *theory*, bearing the impress, not of nature, but of his own imagination, and of course failed in his turn to arrive at the truth. The anatomists also, from no lack of talent, zeal, or industry, but purely from a similar want of a guiding principle, expended their time in nearly profitless labour. Instead of attempting to trace the natural relations of the parts of the brain to each other, they continued for centuries to cut it into slices, and thus *destroyed, by their own act*, the very structure they wished to examine—a proceeding, the only parallel to which would be to examine the anatomy of a limb by slicing it transversely like a round of beef! Failing to arrive at any useful result by such destructive methods, they, too, had recourse to their imagination, and enlivened the dryness of their researches by the discovery of supposed resemblances of parts of the brain to natural or artificial objects, and believed that in giving names significant of these most grotesque resemblances, they were advancing the cause of science. Hence the learned application of the terms *nates* and *testes* to the quadrigeminal bodies. Hence the *aqueduct* of Sylvius, the *bridge* of Varolius, the *writer's style* or *calamus scriptorius*, and other equally unmeaning designations. From the same imaginative source was derived the fancy which gravely seated the soul in the pineal gland. Hence also the various "spirits" with which it pleased philosophers at different times to fill the ventricles of the brain! In reflecting on all these things, however, let us not give way only to a smile of ridicule or contempt. Seriously considered, these very vagaries indicated the strong and constant desire to arrive at the discovery of truths which were felt to be important. They sprang from no innate love of absurdity, but simply from zeal and activity of mind operating without a principle to guide them through the labyrinth which they sought to penetrate. If a man, set down in a new country, wanders in a direction the opposite of that in which he wishes to go, it is no proof that he is destitute of the power of motion. The greater, indeed, his power of walking in such circumstances, the farther will he be likely to go astray; but provide him with a sure guide, and then see how vigorously and safely he will advance! It is the same with the anatomist and physiologist; set them down without a guide to study the unknown

regions of the brain and nervous system, and the greater their talent, the farther will they be liable at times to wander from the way of truth. But once provide them with a guiding principle, and every step will then bring them nearer and nearer to the goal.

The more, indeed, we consider the nature of science and the history of the past, the more manifest does it become, that it has been the want of a sound method of investigation, and not any inherent difficulty in the subject, or any marvellous complexity of function, which has hitherto constituted the chief obstacle to success. Nature's laws and operations rarely remain wholly inaccessible to well directed and persevering inquiry, and they seem to be a maze of confusion and contradiction only when considered in a wrong point of view, or when examined apart from their natural relations to each other. When correctly understood, they generally present an aspect of remarkable simplicity. For a similar reason, many of the plainest of the laws or phenomena of nature appear the very image of incongruity to the untutored savage, who knows not how to trace the principle which binds them into harmonious connection. It is precisely thus with the anatomist of the brain and nervous system. If he has no sound principle to direct him where to begin, and how to proceed, many of his results must necessarily appear to him perplexing, incongruous, and inexplicable. By a lucky chance he may hit upon useful truths, which will remain like landmarks amidst the waste of error over which he has fatiguingly wandered; but he will do little to throw light upon the general scheme of Nature, and will often leave even his surest facts a subject of doubt to those who succeed him, simply because he cannot present them in harmonious connection with any other ascertained truths.

Here, then, is the source of the barrenness of results which has, in times past, so signally characterized most of the researches which have been made into the structure and functions of the brain and nervous system. False methods of inquiry, and not any insuperable difficulty in the subject, have been the causes of failure; and it is most important that at this your outset in a new study, you should fix your attention strongly on this fact, and satisfy yourselves of its foundation. If the method which Gall has followed be really superior to any hitherto in use, it becomes no longer wonderful that he should have succeeded in unfolding, to a greater extent than his predecessors, not only the real structure of the brain, but many of its most important uses; or that he should have put you in possession of means whereby you may, in

your turn, correct his errors, and improve what he and his followers may have left imperfect. I shall, in a subsequent part of this lecture, explain his method; but, in the mean time remark, that if I shall assign adequate causes for so many centuries of failure by other physiologists, and for the success which has attended the labours of Gall, it will follow, as a matter of course, that any condemnation of his discoveries, by those who have never zealously pursued his method, but derived their knowledge wholly from methods proved to be utterly inadequate, must be held, in the eye of reason, as of scarcely higher value than would be the hostile opinion of any uneducated man regarding any disputed point in modern chemistry, optics, or electricity. Ignorant as such an opponent must be regarding the uses of the brain, it is impossible that he *can* have anything except theory or early prejudices to oppose to the facts of Phrenology; and for these I have no respect as sources of evidence. I am as much disposed as any one to yield deference to authority, or to opinions based upon certain and positive knowledge, however much they may militate against my own prepossessions; but where mere opinion is brought against what I know, from direct, careful, and repeated observation, to be *clear* and *positive facts*, no matter how eminent the source of the opinion may be, I stand firm and unmoved, because Nature is at my back, and I have the fullest assurance that she commits no mistakes, and is never inconsistent; and I know that, on appeal being made, she will be found to speak the same language to-day as yesterday, or as a thousand years ago, and to bear out all I have advanced, if I have really been accurate in my observations.

To place this argument before you in its full force, it would be necessary, if your time permitted, to expose, in some detail, the inherent defects of the different methods of investigation resorted to before the days of Gall. This will be done more fully at a subsequent part of the course, by my friend Dr Weir. In the mean time, it will be enough for my purpose to state, that anatomists have tried to discover by dissection the uses of the different parts of the brain; but unaided examination of structure has never yet been sufficient to reveal the function of an organ; and, even if it did, the structure of the brain is, or was till very lately, as little known as its uses. We might dissect the optic nerve till the crack of doom, without being enabled, by that means alone, to demonstrate that its use is to convey visual impressions from the eye to the mind. It is by observing the concomitance of the faculty of vision with the existence and deve-

lopment of the nerve, and the effects of its diseases in destroying sight, that we arrive at the discovery of its function. *Having once made this discovery*, anatomy steps in to confirm its truth, by shewing its consistency with the relations of the nerve to the eye on the one side, and the brain on the other. It is the same with the nerve of hearing, with the nerves of sensation and motion, and, indeed, with every part of our bodily structure. We might dissect them all for centuries, apart from observation of the living phenomena, without being thereby enabled to discover their uses. A familiar proof of this is to be found in our still remaining ignorant of the functions of the spleen and thyroid and mesenteric glands, and of parts of the brain itself, of which the structure is now pretty well ascertained. Even the structure of a muscle, plainly as it speaks *after* we perceive its function, does not, of itself, suffice to teach us that its office is to contract. It is by observation of the actual concomitance of contraction and structure that we first ascertain the fact. Dissection may prove the *compatibility of function and structure, after the function is found out by observation*, or disprove an alleged function, by shewing its incompatibility with *well ascertained* structure; but, in the case of the brain, neither of these principles can be very safely applied, because the structure itself is even yet too imperfectly known to lead to positive results; and hence, among those who reject the discoveries of Gall, there is to this hour no agreement whatever regarding the functions of the different parts of the brain—whereas, if structure revealed function, there would be unanimity amongst them.

Metaphysicians, on the other hand, have attempted to solve the problem of the cerebral functions by the aid of *Consciousness;* but their failure has been equally signal. So far from revealing to us the uses of different parts of the brain, consciousness does not even reveal its existence. We know that there is *something* within the skull, but we have not a trace of information from consciousness what it is, how composed, or what its form. If it had been possible to discover the functions of the brain by reflecting on the phenomena of our own consciousness, they would not now have continued to prove as great a stumbling-block to the modern as they did to the ancient metaphysicians; and I need only appeal to yourselves, and ask what amount of information you can derive regarding the operation of your own brains, or of any internal function, from consciousness alone. Did consciousness enable any one to anticipate Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood? or does it throw any light on the

phenomena of digestion or of respiration? None whatever. We know that we breathe and digest, but we are left to find out, by observation, both the manner and the mechanism; and it is the same with the brain. We have a kind of consciousness, that we think and feel by means of our heads; but none whatever that our skulls contain brain, much less of the uses of its component parts, or of its particular uses even as a whole.

The only other channel through which information has been sought, and sought in vain, is the study of the effects of injuries and diseases of the brain, and the effects produced by mutilating the brains of animals. Dr Weir will, by and by, demonstrate to you the inadequacy of this method also, to furnish the information required. Suffice it for me to say, that it is not amidst the suffering of disease, or the general disturbance of system caused by wounds or mutilations, that healthy regularity of function is to be found. Where any part of the nervous system is concerned and suffering is excited, general results become too much mixed up with those which are local, to admit of being properly discriminated; and, accordingly, not one new fact of any radical importance to the physiology of the brain in its connection with the mind has yet been demonstrated by this method of inquiry, notwithstanding the many and persevering efforts made in recent times to turn it to account; and, except for the light thrown upon its results from other quarters, many of them would remain before us nearly as destitute of meaning as at first.

Such, then, was the state of the physiology of the brain down to the time of Dr Gall, and such continues to be essentially its state even now, among those who reject his discoveries. If, therefore, any adherent of the old methods of inquiry should happen, in your presence, to enlarge upon the demerits of Phrenology or the presumption of its disciples, you need be under no alarm for the consequences; you may at once turn the attack against himself, by requiring him to shew what he can put in its place. If he has made any discovery of his own of the functions of the brain, he must be a very modest man indeed, to hide its brilliancy under a bushel; for, as yet, nobody has claimed any such merit. If, therefore, Phrenology contain *any portion* of truth, science can only gain by its candid and unprejudiced examination; and you are interested in exact proportion to the amount of truth which it embodies, in not rejecting it heedlessly or unexamined.

But what, then, you will ask, *is* this boasted method by which Gall has derived such a rich harvest from a field

which others have cultivated with so little success? The answer is simply, that, in investigating the functions of the brain, he has followed the same principle which, applied to other organs, has led to the discovery of their functions, but which, from various causes, had never before been systematically applied to the brain. When the physiologist wished to ascertain the function of any particular organ of the body, he did not rest satisfied with examining its structure, and speculating on the purposes for which that structure seemed in his eyes to be adapted. He began by direct observation, and watched what kind of function *appeared during life as the invariable accompaniment of the presence and action of that particular part;* and, by repeated and careful observation, he at last succeeded in discovering the functions. The knowledge thus obtained was afterwards verified, confirmed, and completed, by the examination of structure, and the observation of the effects of its injury or diseases.

It was by this method that the liver, for example, was proved to be the secreting organ of the bile, many centuries before its true anatomical structure was ascertained. This fact being once arrived at, its truth was confirmed by observing, further, that bile is met with only in animals in which a liver also is found, and that its secretion varies in amount with the development of that organ, and is affected by its diseases. The same with the kidneys: observation, during life, of the concomitance of organ and function, is the *first source* of all our authentic knowledge of the part they perform in the animal economy; and it is only *after* having thus ascertained that they serve to secrete the urine, that we become enabled to extend and complete our information, and to trace the true relation of structure to function. Even of the muscles, our knowledge has been acquired in the very same way: we *observe*, in the living body, the concomitance of muscular motion with muscular fibre, and thence infer that its function is to execute motion. Here, then, is the very principle which Gall has succeeded in applying to the elucidation of the functions of the brain; and he was led to its adoption by an accidental observation at school, of the concomitance of a particular kind of talent with a peculiar appearance of the eye, which he found afterwards to be caused by the development of a particular part of the brain. At school, at college, and in many other places, and under wholly different circumstances, the same concomitance of talent with development of brain came under his notice so frequently, as to arrest his attention to the probable or possible success which might attend the application of a similar mode of discovering

a connection betwixt other mental talents and the development of other portions of the brain. In this respect Gall resembled in no small degree the illustrious Newton, who, from the accidental fall of an apple at his feet, was led to the discovery of the law of gravitation. Like Newton, having once obtained the clue, Gall never lost his hold of it as a guide to discovery; and he found it, on trial, to prove like a lamp to his feet, in the investigation of nature.

It was by the persevering application of the method of inquiry which accident had thus suggested to him, and not, as many suppose, by an effort of imagination, that Dr Gall was at last enabled to place the physiology of the brain upon a solid foundation, by demonstrating, *first*, that the brain is an aggregate of many different parts, each serving for the manifestation of a particular mental faculty; and, *secondly*, that, *all other conditions being equal*, the size of each of these cerebral organs is an index of the power of its function. These two propositions, as will be afterwards fully explained to you by Dr Weir, constitute the distinctive or fundamental principles of Phrenology. The first of them, however, is not new. The impossibility of reconciling actual phenomena with the notion of a single organ of mind has, for many centuries, suggested the probability of a plurality of organs; and it is stated, that, influenced by this incompatibility, the great Haller, among others, "*felt a necessity for assigning different functions to different parts of the brain;*" just as, for a similar reason, many physiologists felt a necessity for inferring that the nerves of sensation and motion must be different. But it remained for Dr Gall to *demonstrate* the fact of a plurality of organs in the brain; just as it did for Sir Charles Bell to demonstrate the distinction between the different kinds of nerves; and before the conclusion of this course of lectures you will be better able to appreciate the merit and consequences of this demonstration than you are now. At present I need only allude to an objection sometimes inconsiderately made by medical men against the possibility of the existence of any such cerebral organs—namely, that, on looking at the brain, no visible separation between its constituent parts can be detected, such as we see in the organs of the five senses. On examination, the whole force of this objection is found to depend on overlooking the very different nature and functions of the internal and external faculties. The organs of the five senses require to be distinctly isolated from each other, because, from their being the media of communication with the external world, each requires a distinct apparatus to place it in harmony with the kind of impressions it is destined to receive and transmit to the brain.

The eye, for example, being adapted in structure to the rays of light, is unaffected by impressions of sound; and the ear, being adapted to atmospherical vibrations, is unaffected by the rays of light; and hence each of the senses has, and must necessarily have, a specific apparatus for itself, so distinct in its mechanism from that of the rest, as almost to preclude the possibility of the organs being grouped together in close connection with each other. With the organs of the internal faculties, however, no such necessity exists for their absolute separation. On the contrary, their complete isolation would serve only to impede that consentaneity and harmony of action among several of them which is required in almost every mental operation. Accordingly, the objectors forget that, even in the case of the nerves of sensation and motion, where simultaneousness of action is often indispensable to the due regulation of our movements, a still more intimate connection of fibres of different kinds, and performing distinct functions, exists for a similar purpose; and that it was precisely this apparent blending of two sets of nervous fibres which so long misled physiologists to the belief that the nerve was a single organ, consisting of fibres serving equally for sensation and motion. This hasty and erroneous inference was arrived at in the face of many opposing physiological phenomena, solely because, on examining the really compound nerve, no visible distinction could be traced between its two sets of fibres; and it remained for Sir C. Bell, in the nineteenth century, to demonstrate their actual existence, and thus to reconcile their structure with the functions which they were ascertained to perform. The objectors forget, also, that a similar peculiarity characterizes the spinal marrow, and was equally the cause of the obscurity in which the distinct functions of its constituent parts were so long involved. In all ordinary circumstances sensation and motion, irritation and reflex action, are most intimately associated; because the one is the exciting cause, and, in one sense, the director of the other: but on some occasions, and more especially in morbid or abnormal conditions of the system, their distinct and independent operation becomes so evident as to be explicable only on the idea of a corresponding plurality of nerves.

The very same principle applies to the different cerebral organs which serve to manifest the different primitive faculties of the mind. In most mental operations, associated action of several of the primitive faculties is almost indispensable to the accomplishment of their object; and to admit of this at once consentaneous and combined action of several faculties in themselves distinct, their cerebral organs must be

in intimate connection with each other; and, accordingly, such is found to be the order of nature.

But, it may be argued, if the internal faculties of the mind generally act in combinations of a greater or less number, does it not follow that the brain must, as a single organ, serve for the whole of them, instead of each having a part of the brain appropriated to itself? This conclusion, however plausible it may seem, would be as fallacious as the similar inference of the identity of the nerves of sensation and motion, from the general fact of their combined and consentaneous action. It is true that several of the faculties are generally active at the same time; but their elementary distinctness and independence of each other are shewn, not only by their different degrees of strength bearing no constant relation to each other, but by the ever-varying combinations, in number and in kind, in which they manifest themselves. For if they were all general results, of one general power, operating through one organ, there would be in all instances a fixed proportion in the manifestations of feeling and thought, and a definite order in their sequence and arrangement, in harmony with the unity of action of a single organ. This is not the occasion on which to enter more fully into the objection; but I trust that I have said enough to satisfy you, that it is in reality more specious than sound, and that it is refuted both by direct evidence and by the analogy of other parts of the nervous system, the functions of which are now well ascertained.

Of the truth of the two fundamental principles of Phrenology, and of the possibility of applying them successfully to the discovery of the functions of the different cerebral organs which serve to manifest the different mental faculties, it would be easy for me to adduce ample evidence, were this the proper time to do so. That, however, will be afterwards satisfactorily done by your able lecturer. For the present, I must be allowed to assume their truth, and on this assumption to press upon you the necessity of examining both the facts and evidence for yourselves. You cannot with safety continue to neglect this inquiry; because the truth is advancing while you are inactive, and you are not in possession of any other knowledge which can warrant you in condemning the claims of Phrenology untried. In common fairness, you are bound at least to make yourselves acquainted with both sides of the question, and to suspend your judgment till you have done so. I may go farther, and urge what to many will seem still stronger grounds for recommending you to give Phrenology a fair hearing. Your own interest is deeply con-

cerned in your decision. If Phrenology be true, and if you remain unacquainted with its principles and facts, you will soon find yourselves left behind by those who have had the courage and sagacity to follow the guidance of truth. If true, there is no branch of knowledge which can be of more direct practical interest and utility to the physician or to the philosopher. If true, it furnishes a key, not only to the physiology of the brain and nervous system, but to the philosophy of the mind; and, as such, there is scarcely any form of disease, on the nature and consequences of which it is not calculated to throw some light, or in the treatment of which it does not afford valuable aid.

Many suppose that it is only in cases of insanity, that a knowledge of the physiology of the brain is of any great consequence to the physician. In the discrimination and treatment of every form of nervous and mental disease, it is indeed invaluable, or rather, I may say, indispensable; but from much experience I may further add, that there is scarcely a case to which a medical man can be called, in which an acquaintance with Phrenology will not smooth down difficulties and afford him efficient aid, both in regulating the treatment, and in dealing with the friends of the patient, so as to secure their hearty and complete co-operation. The afflicted are beginning to make this discovery for themselves; and the day is gone by, when advocacy of Phrenology was an objection to a medical man. The bias is now turning the other way; and I have myself received many applications for advice from invalids in different parts of the kingdom, who stated that they were induced to consult me by a belief that Phrenology would throw light upon their ailments. In ordinary private practice, also, the utility of Phrenology is already appreciated by many; and professional men who understand it, are sought after in preference to men of equal skill who remain in ignorance of its value. Here, again, I speak from actual experience; because, since bad health compelled me wholly to relinquish the exercise of my profession, I have repeatedly been applied to by invalids to recommend an adviser who was well acquainted with Phrenology. Indeed, it is to the actual experience of its benefits by a former patient, that you are indebted for being now assembled in this hall. The late W. R. Henderson, Esq., devoted much time and attention to its study, and became deeply impressed with the services it was destined to render to mankind. In his own person and under many drawbacks, he had, both during health and in disease, experienced its practical utility, and thence became more fully aware of the numerous and

beneficent applications of which it admits, to the relief of suffering, as well as to the moral improvement of man. Under this conviction, he resolved to do all in his power for its more extensive diffusion. With this view, some years before his death, he devoted part of his leisure to the delivery of lectures on the subject to the working classes of Galashiels, in the neighbourhood of which he then resided. An impediment in his utterance rendered this effort less successful than it would otherwise have been; but to secure the more effectual and permanent attainment of his object, he made a will, by which, after providing annuities for several friends, he bequeathed all his property to Trustees, to be devoted to the more extensive diffusion and cultivation of Phrenology; and specially recorded, that he did so from no transient fit of enthusiasm, but from a calm, well-considered conviction of the truth and practical value of Gall's great discovery. He lived for four years after making this will; and his conviction that he had done wisely in dedicating his funds to such a purpose became only the firmer. Need I add, then, that, in now providing an endowment for a lectureship on Phrenology in this University, Mr Henderson's Trustees, of whom I have the honour to be one, and as whose representative I now address you, are merely acting in the spirit of the instructions which he left for their guidance, and thereby fulfilling the aim which he had in view. To them, indeed, there seems to be a peculiar appropriateness in this particular application of the Henderson Trust, which renders the present duty doubly gratifying to them. Looking to the motives which actuated Mr Henderson, and to those which actuated the founder of this Institution, in making their respective bequests, what could be conceived to be more congenial in nature and in spirit? In proof of this, I need only read an extract from Mr Chambers' biographical memoir of the late Mr Anderson. After his appointment to the mathematical chair in the College of Glasgow, says Mr Chambers, Mr Anderson "entered upon the business of his class with an enthusiastic ardour of application which we may safely pronounce to have been without example in any Scottish university. Not contented with the ordinary duty of delivering a course of lectures—though he performed the duty in a manner alone sufficient to obtain distinction—he was indefatigable in studying and exemplifying the application of science to mechanical practice; visiting, for this purpose, the workshops of artizans in the town, and receiving, in return for the scientific doctrine which he had to communicate, a full equivalent of experimental knowledge. The

most estimable characteristic of Professor Anderson was a liberal and diffusive benevolence in regard to the instruction of his race. Under the inspiration of this feeling, which was in that age more rare, and therefore more meritorious than it is at present, he instituted, in addition to his usual class, which was strictly mathematical, one for the working-classes, and others, whose pursuits did not enable them to conform to the prescribed routine of academical study, illustrating his precepts by experiments, so as to render it in the highest degree attractive. He continued to teach this *anti-toga* class, as he called it, twice every week, during the session, to the end of his life; and it would not be easy to estimate the aggregate of good which he thus rendered to his fellow-creatures."

From the preceding extract, and from what I have mentioned regarding the motives of Mr Henderson's bequest, it is evident that both testators were induced to make the arrangements we are now reaping the fruits of, by the anxiety they felt to insure, long after they should have themselves mouldered into dust, the continued and wide dissemination of useful knowledge, as the surest way of benefiting and improving their fellow-creatures. In like manner, the Managers of this Institution, acting in a kindred spirit, discarding the narrow prejudices which have retarded the progress of Phrenology as of every other great discovery, and looking only to your advantage, have cordially welcomed the proposal of Mr Henderson's Trustees to establish a Phrenological Lectureship within your walls; and I feel assured, that, so far from ever having occasion to regret their liberality, they will one day be glad to have it in their power justly to boast that the University over which they preside was the first to teach the new philosophy as a branch of science.

Another circumstance which adds to the appropriateness of the present lectureship, is the rising eminence of your Institution as a school of medicine, and the increasing number of professional students who are attracted to its halls. Phrenology, considered as the philosophy of the mind, must be deeply interesting to all classes of reflecting and educated men; but to the intelligent and well educated medical man it offers still more powerful points of attraction, by presenting to him, for the first time, a firm foundation for a true and complete physiology of the brain. In this point of view it will, I am confident, speedily become an *indispensable* branch of knowledge to every physician who desires to keep pace with the progress of science, and to maintain his place either in general society, or among his well educated brethren. Conscientiously

entertaining this belief, I cannot but rejoice that you have been provided with an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the nature and evidences of Phrenology, and with its applications to the treatment of disease; and I would strongly urge you not to let slip the facilities which Dr Weir will afford to you of forming your own judgment, on the only safe ground—that of examination of evidence. Dr Weir is well qualified to be your guide, and he is not untried. He has been long known to you as a successful teacher of medicine, and as an able physician. He has already lectured on Phrenology; and from him you will learn all that is requisite to enable you to prosecute with advantage your own farther researches into the anatomy, and the physiology and pathology, of the nervous system. He will prove to you, what many are anxious to conceal, that Gall's merits are not confined to the physiology of the brain; and that, on the contrary, it was he who, by abandoning the old plan of slicing this organ like a cheese, and adopting the rational method of tracing its elementary structure as it exists in nature, first gave the impulse and the direction which, in recent times, have done so much to improve our knowledge of the anatomical relations of the different parts of the brain to each other, to the spinal marrow, and to the nerves; and that such men as Reil, Blumenbach, Blainville, and Cuvier, did not disdain to acknowledge their obligations to him as an anatomist, even while they doubted his physiological doctrines.* Dr

* Bischoff mentions in the preface of his *Exposition of Dr Gall's Doctrines*, that Reil, after witnessing the dissection of the brain by Gall in 1805, said, "I have seen in the anatomical demonstrations of the brain made by Gall, more than I thought that a man could discover in his whole life."—(See *Phrenological Journal*, vol. vi. p. 307). Blumenbach, in like manner, writes to his friend Dr Albers of Bremen, in September 1805—"I need not inform you, that I congratulate myself uncommonly on having heard Dr Gall, and become more intimately acquainted with him. His lectures were equally interesting and entertaining to me."—*Phrenological Journal*, xix., 41. The celebrated comparative anatomist and professor, Blainville, again, in his *Report on Foville's Anatomy of the Brain*, read to the Academy of Natural Sciences, on 28th June 1828, "placing truth above selfishness, declared," says Dr Spurzheim, "that Gall and I have given to the researches of the brain and nervous system, an impulse and direction altogether new; that this new direction has diverted anatomists from the beaten track to which they had attached themselves before our labours; and that, if we had done nothing but this, and were all the points of our anatomy to be successfully contested and completely refuted, there would still remain to us the honour of having discovered a new impulse, and that, consequently, to us must be referred, as to its source, all that may be valuable in future labours on that subject."—*Phrenological Article of the Foreign Quarterly Review, by Richard Chenevix, Esq., F.R.S., with Notes by J. G. Spurzheim, M.D.* 8vo. Anderson,

Weir will prove to you farther, that, in proportion as the principles of Phrenology have been examined and tested by extensive observation, they have been adopted and appreciated both in and out of the profession, and have made their way into books and practice, in an open or unavowed manner, to a far greater extent than those who look only at the silent surface of things are apt to suppose; and that hence we may expect their future progress among men of science to become every day more rapid. It is now fifty years since Gall proclaimed his discovery to the world, and surely half a century of active and determined hostility would have been sufficient to extinguish a system such as his, had it really been based on error and assumption, as it was said to be! And yet so far from being extinct, Phrenology gives every day new signs of increasing vitality. The works in which it is expounded have been sold to a large extent, and yet their sale still continues steady and regular. Does not this simple fact betoken an inherent interest in the subject, which, because truth is on its side, no misrepresentation can destroy? Even in Germany, from which Phrenology was expelled almost at the instant of its birth, it now rears its head, and gives indications of vigorous and enduring vitality. Germany not only possesses a journal devoted to Phrenology, and published regularly at Mannheim, but there is every reason to hope that, in the University of Heidelberg, the very focus of the celebrated Tiedemann's active opposition, a lectureship similar to your own will shortly be established, and given to Dr Scheve, who has already made himself advantageously known by his labours in the cause.

Many other facts might be referred to in proof of the increasing interest with which Phrenology is regarded, more especially among medical men; but time forbids me to enter upon them. Many who believe in and make use of its principles, are still afraid to avow the fact, from a dread of suffering in the estimation of their patients; but others are acquiring confidence in the force of truth, and proclaiming their convictions. The number of the latter is happily on the increase; but so many are still under the influence of apprehension, that it is those only who are either sufficiently acquainted with the subject to detect its features through the thin disguise, or are admitted to the confidence of the more cautious followers of Phrenology, that can form a cor-

Edinburgh. 1829. See also *Phrenological Journal*, vi. p. 307. I may add, that I have heard Blainville express similar sentiments, in equally strong terms, in his lectures in Paris.

rect estimate of its actual progress. Being myself in the enjoyment of both of these means of judging, I have no hesitation in expressing my conviction that the new physiology of the brain is daily extending its influence, and that ere long all timid reserve will be thrown aside, and even credit be claimed by many for a conversion which they are still anxious to conceal. The indications to be derived from the state of the medical press, both in this country, in America, and on the Continent, lead to the same conclusion. In the United States and in France, especially, the principles of Phrenology are as unhesitatingly adopted in many practical works, as if their truth had never been doubted by any one. In England also, they have found their way into many recent publications, where they can easily be recognised by those who have studied the subject. Among our professional periodicals, again, the ablest and most influential of them all —Forbes's British and Foreign Medical Review—has, within the last few years, and in several articles, enforced on its readers the necessity of investigating the phrenological physiology; and for many years past, the Medico-Chirurgical Review and the Lancet, and more recently the Medical Times, have advocated still more strongly its claims to attention. I have reason to know, indeed, that the conductors of both the Lancet and Medical Times have recently expressed a desire to give their readers reports of phrenological lectures. Significant as these signs are, I must refrain from commenting farther upon them; your own reflection will suffice to elicit their meaning.

But, Gentlemen, I have still a word or two to address to the more general part of my audience. Many are now present who do not belong to the medical profession, and they may naturally ask, What interest can Phrenology have for us, who also are invited to attend? My answer is, that it has *much*. If Phrenology be true, it is destined one day to unfold the whole philosophy of human nature; and, therefore, to all who live in society, and wish either to improve themselves or exercise an influence over others, Phrenology is of indisputable use. By unfolding to us the nature and sphere of action of the different powers of intellect and moral feeling and their laws of operation, it throws a flood of light on the principles of education, on the moral government of the world, and on the means for elevating and improving the condition of all classes of society. In the regulation of our own conduct, in the training of our children, and in our whole social intercourse, whether for business or for pleasure, it steps in with a helping hand, of

which those who have experienced its efficiency can best appreciate the practical value. I could point to educators among yourselves who avow that they owe to its aid almost the whole of the superiority and success which have distinguished their career; I could point to parents who have experienced its blessings in the management of their families, and who would not give up its assistance for any consideration which could be offered to them; and, lastly (to come to my own experience), I have, for many years, declared that my obligations to Phrenology, both in my private and professional capacity, are very great—greater, indeed, than to any other single branch of science. When I began to avow belief in its doctrines at the outset of my career, I was warned that if I persisted in doing so, it would prove an almost insurmountable barrier in the way of my professional success. Trusting to the sustaining power of truth, I continued, nevertheless, to avow my convictions, and to advocate its cause, whenever the occasion required it; and the result amply justified the reliance which I placed on the omnipotence and stability of truth. My advocacy of Phrenology did *not* prove any impediment in my professional career; on the contrary, it in many respects extended my field of usefulness, and greatly contributed to my happiness, by giving a more definite and consistent direction to the faculties which I possess. No doubt, some who might otherwise have employed me, were at first deterred, by their prejudices, from doing so; but their place was more than supplied by others, who, in their turn, would not have sought my advice except for Phrenology; and, ere long, many even of the prejudiced ventured to return, and ultimately took place among my warmest friends. The truth is, that, in the long run, professional success or failure does not depend on a man holding this or that particular opinion which happens, for the moment, to be popular or the reverse. Success depends almost entirely on professional skill and attainments, on general soundness of judgment, on readiness in resource, moral integrity, kindness of disposition, discretion, and persevering industry. These are the qualities which elicit confidence in the hour of danger; and you may depend upon it, that if you give decided evidence of your possessing them in a high degree at the bedside of the patient, you will compel even the most prejudiced of your opponents to respect your opinions on this as well as on other subjects, even while they may differ from you. In the private relations of life, also, I have derived the utmost advantage from the lights of Phrenology, and have gained a firmer hold on the confidence of my patients, by pointing out

to them its great practical value in conducting the intellectual and moral training of the young, in promoting mutual forbearance and general kindness of intercourse, and thereby adding to their general means of happiness. It is for Dr Weir to dwell upon all these points in detail; here I can only give you, in a few imperfect words, the general results of my own experience, and leave you to attach what importance to them you may think they deserve. I owe this testimony to Phrenology; and now that I am cut off from the active duties of life, I rejoice in the opportunity once more afforded to me of repeating it before such an assembly as the present. Some among the young and ardent minds who now listen to my words may be impressed by them, and stimulated to the study of a science which, rightly used, may not only greatly contribute to their professional success, but amply repay them for their trouble, by its utility in every relation of life.

But while I estimate thus highly the value of Phrenology, it is right to warn you that it is of Phrenology as it exists in the minds of its well informed cultivators after years of study and observation that I speak, and not of the fancy which many substitute for it in their own minds, and designate by its name. Of the latter kind of Phrenology, nobody can have a lower opinion than I have. It neither is nor ever can be of any use, either to its possessor or to others. The Phrenology which I have here recommended to you is a science which cannot be mastered or judged of in a day, in a week, or in a month. Like other sciences it must be studied before it can be known. Many entertain the notion that they have only to read a book or a pamphlet to qualify themselves to estimate its bearings, and pronounce authoritatively on its merits. This is a grand mistake; as well might we expect to become the equals of Liebig or Faraday, by reading a volume on chemistry. Till we become acquainted with Phrenology in its details, with its evidences, and with its manifold applications to medicine, education, and morals, we are in truth as incapable of forming a correct opinion of its nature and uses as we should be of those of chemistry, while in a similar state of ignorance.

I am aware that, by many persons, medical men are supposed to be qualified by their professional knowledge to pronounce an *ex cathedra* opinion without any previous study of its doctrines; but, speaking again from experience, I have no hesitation in seriously affirming that this also is a gross delusion. A medical man enjoys many facilities for becoming acquainted with and verifying the truth of Phrenology, but

he possesses no intuitive or acquired power of judging without careful examination in this department of science more than in any other. In my own case, I was so far from being conscious of the possession of any such power, that it was only after witnessing the examination of many brains in the extensive hospitals of Paris, that I became convinced that the skull really represents the configuration of its enclosed brain; and it was only after upwards of two years of observation, and meeting with many striking instances of the concomitance of the development of particular cerebral organs with the possession of the corresponding mental powers, that I became assured of its truth, and aware of its many important applications. Singularly enough, too, it was while attending the clinique of the philanthropic Esquirol, who was himself opposed to Phrenology, that my faith in its truth became fixed. As I was then investigating the subject, I became a regular attendant at the Salpetrière, for the double purpose of studying the nature of insanity, and of ascertaining how far its phenomena were explicable by means of Phrenology. For the first two or three weeks, every thing which I saw, and every description which dropped from the lips of Esquirol, coincided so completely with the representations given by Gall and Spurzheim, that I could not help regarding Esquirol himself as a convert. Judge, then, of my surprise, when, calling one day for Dr Spurzheim, and expressing this opinion to him, he significantly said to me—"Yes, Esquirol's *lectures* are phrenological, because he faithfully copies Nature, and Nature and Phrenology are one: but personally he is an opponent." Astonished at this statement, I replied, that surely he must have recently changed his views, as every word that he uttered seemed to me to embody the doctrines of Gall and himself. My lamented friend smiled, and answered, "Oh no! Esquirol has not changed; wait, and you will see. One day he will speak out his opinion." The event entirely justified Dr Spurzheim's prediction. Esquirol *did* ultimately speak of Phrenology by name, and he did so only to declare his dissent from its tenets. In the very few reasons, however, which he assigned for his scepticism, there was not, in reality, a shadow of ground to justify his hostile conclusion. On the contrary his mode of classifying and explaining most of the phenomena, seemed to me to imply, not only an acquaintance with, but a belief in, at least, the general principles of Phrenology. This was also the exact state of his opinions on the subject when I revisited the asylums of Paris twelve years afterwards (1831). While kindly conducting me through the wards of Charenton, M.

Esquirol mildly repeated his disbelief, and referred, in support of it, to objections which were either palpably irrelevant, or based entirely on misapprehension of Gall's statements. The singular contradiction between Esquirol's facts and inferences made a strong impression on me on both occasions; and he himself seemed in some degree sensible of its strangeness, for, in his lectures, his mention of Phrenology was very slight, and he never again referred to it by name, but went on as before, unconsciously making every day new use of its principles and adding new force to its evidences.* That I was not mistaken in regarding the cases which he brought under our notice as confirmatory of its truth, may, I think, be fairly presumed from the circumstance that the celebrated Georget, his own friend, relation, and disciple, who lived for years in the midst of those cases, not only became an avowed phrenologist, but, by his phrenological writings on insanity, did much to diffuse those sounder views of its nature and treatment, which are now effecting so much good, and for which he was, in no small degree, indebted to the able work which Dr Spurzheim published shortly before on the same subject.

Having gone through this long and varied course of inquiry before I became fully aware of the extent and importance of the subject, I need scarcely say, that I feel as little respect for the favourable opinion of those who style themselves "great believers," formed on the evidence of an hour's study, or of two or three lectures, as I entertain for the hostility of those who, on equally slender grounds, reject its claims. Of the two, indeed, the "*great believer*" is perhaps the more dangerous enemy, for his credulity is apt to excite disgust in the minds of more thoughtful and philosophical men who happen to meet with him, and erroneously assume him to be a fair representative of the doctrines which be only brings into contempt.

But while I inculcate the necessity of patient inquiry, as the only means by which to acquire a competent acquaintance with the practical details and applications of Phrenology, I should be sorry were any one of you to be deterred from studying it by an exaggerated estimate of its difficulties. In this respect it possesses a great advantage over the ordinary systems of mental philosophy, many of the doctrines of which are so abstract as almost to defy comprehension. Even while I write, a document has been put into my hands, in which the superior intelligibility of Phrenology is so clearly stated, that I cannot do better than

* The reader will find a more detailed examination of M. Esquirol's opinions on Phrenology in the *Phrenological Journal*, viii., p. 653.

use its words. The document referred to is a prospectus just issued by the Phrenological Society of Paris, offering a prize of 1000 francs (called, from the name of the donor, the *Prix Pecoul*) for the best essay on the application of Phrenology to metaphysical analysis. After alluding to the contradictory vagueness of most metaphysical speculations, the writer continues:—"It is important to remark, that the propositions of Phrenology concerning the nature of man, and that of the animals most nearly allied to him, are precise, and have the great merit of resting upon real data, easily tested by facts which everybody can observe; while in the philosophy of the schools, human nature remains an enigma, or at least a purely ideal conception, abounding so much in hypotheses wholly unconnected with experience, that neither teacher nor moralist, nor judge nor legislator, can derive from them any of the principles which are so much wanted to guide them in the action they exercise on each other, on individuals, and on society." In the justice of these remarks I entirely concur; and I would add, that, from the light which Phrenology throws upon many of the most intricate phenomena of human nature, there is scarcely any situation in which a man can be placed which does not afford opportunities for interesting and useful phrenological observation. From its very nature, it is in society and in our daily intercourse with the sick, and not in the closet, that we are to look for most of its evidences, and that we find ample scope for its applications; and in this way it becomes an object of interest, and almost of amusement, in the very hours which would otherwise be often thrown away. Let no one, then, who is possessed of a strong love of truth, combined with even average powers of intellect, fear to engage in the study; for although, in its applications to human improvement, Phrenology affords full scope for the exercise of the highest mental endowments ever vouchsafed to man, it also presents much that is at once intelligible, and in a high degree useful, to minds of an ordinary calibre. I know some persons of this description who, by patient perseverance, have not only thoroughly mastered its principles, but succeeded in applying them in the affairs of every-day life with so much tact and success, as to have added largely to their usefulness, comfort, and happiness.

In making these remarks regarding the utility of Phrenology, and the increasing interest now felt in its diffusion, I ought, perhaps, to warn you, that, as a system or body of doctrine, it is far from being regarded by its adherents as either perfect or complete. On the contrary, no one knows so well as

the true phrenologist how much still remains unaccomplished. Let those, however, who are opposed to it, on the ground of its incompleteness, fairly try its merits even as it stands, by comparing them with those of any other philosophy or physiology of the brain, and we shall fearlessly abide by the result. Utility is a prominent characteristic of truth. Whatever is true, becomes of some use, even when imperfectly developed; whereas error serves only to mislead, however ingeniously it may be propounded. Tried by this test, there is this remarkable difference between Phrenology and any other physiology of the brain or philosophy of mind that I ever heard of:—On the one side, we have the direct and explicit testimony of physicians, moralists, philosophers, clergymen, lawyers, teachers, parents, superintendents of asylums, prisons, and schools, merchants, students, and, in short, of numbers in all ranks and professions, certifying, in strong terms, and from their own experience, that they have found Phrenology of great utility in the practical business of life; whereas there is not, on the other side, so far as I am aware, a single instance of any one volunteering similar testimony with regard to any other view of the functions of the brain, or any other philosophy of mind, from the days of Aristotle downwards. For my own part, I am certainly within the mark when I say, that I have seen, heard, or received explicit testimony to the practical advantages of Phrenology from at least a hundred different persons, many of whose communications were by letter and from individuals wholly unknown to me; and I know that other phrenologists could state the same thing. How, then, are we to account for this remarkable fact? A high and revered authority tells us, that truth may be known by its fruits, and admonishes us, therefore, to try all things, and hold fast by that which is good. Is it wrong, then, to infer, with this evidence before us, that there must be at least a large infusion of truth in that which all who know it have found to be a source of happiness, improvement, and advantage to them? And am I wrong in urging you to try Phrenology for yourselves, and to abide by your experience of its results?*

* Among other unequivocal symptoms of the estimation in which Phrenology, as a practically important science, is held, I may refer to the bequest of about L.15,000 to the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh, by the late Dr Roberton of Paris, who died in 1840, and who had taken a warm interest in the subject for nearly thirty years. In a correspondence which occurred a few months before his death, Dr Roberton mentioned that he thought at first leaving money for the purpose of founding a Professorship of Phrenology in the University of London; but that, on consideration, he preferred leaving the disposal of his funds to the Phrenological Society. The legacy, however, has not yet been forthcom-

But time warns me to have done. Before parting, however, I would once more earnestly recommend to you, while listening to the instructions of Dr Weir, to observe nature for yourselves, and exercise your own judgment, on the subjects submitted to your attention. Your object ought to be truth alone; and that, unfortunately, is not to be found unmixed with error in any of the works of man. Man is, at best, but a fallible being, and no one who values science at its just rate will ever seek to rest its facts and doctrines solely on his own or any other human authority. So far as Phrenology is true, it has nothing to fear from either the wit or the malice of man; and so far as errors may have mingled with its truths, it can only gain by their exposure and rejection.

After what I have already told you, you will easily be able, without farther explanation, to understand the motives which have led to the establishment and endowment of the present lectureship. Addressing you, not as your teacher, but merely as the representative of Mr Henderson's Trustees, it was no part of my object to explain to you the nature, the evidences, or the uses of Phrenology; and consequently, if I have said enough to convince you that the subject is one of intrinsic importance, and eminently deserving of careful study on your part, my aim and that of the other Trustees will be entirely fulfilled. It will remain for Dr Weir, as your teacher, to do the rest, and I have no doubt that he will give you the most able and efficient assistance in conducting your inquiries. Looking back upon the aid and comfort which I myself have derived from Phrenology, both in my private and professional capacities, during the last twenty-five years, I cannot but feel an earnest desire that you, who are now only entering upon your career, should also share largely in its benefits, and contribute in your turn to its future improvement and diffusion. It is this feeling which has impelled me, at the cost of a greater effort than I have of late been accustomed to make, to prepare the present address; and, had strength permitted, nothing would have given me greater satisfaction than to witness in person the commencement of an undertaking which, by its permanent results, will, I trust, redound equally to your advantage and to the credit of Anderson's University.

ANDW. COMBE.

Edinburgh, January 7. 1846.

ing, and a law-suit is now pending in Paris, at the instance of the Society, to compel Dr Verity—the sole executor under the will—to fulfil the intentions of the testator. This he at present declines to do, on the groundless plea of the non-existence of the Society; and he even repudiates the competency of the French courts to entertain the question at all.

APPENDIX.

THE following letters are so interesting in themselves, and bear so directly on some of the points touched upon in the preceding Address, that no apology can be required for introducing them here. They were all written to Mr George Combe, in answer to a request made by him that each of his correspondents should favour him with his opinion on the subject of the Andersonian Lectureship. They were, consequently, all written without the slightest intercommunication or knowledge on the part of any one of the sentiments expressed, either in the Address itself or in any of the other letters. In this point of view, the definiteness and coincidence of opinion by which they are characterized, and the unconscious testimony which they bear to the accuracy of the author's representations, must strike every reflecting reader.

A greater number of such letters might easily have been procured; but those now presented will suffice. They are all from distinguished men, and each of them may be regarded as the representative of a distinct class of society. To the medical world, both at home and abroad, Mr Carmichael has been long known as standing at the head of the surgical profession in Dublin; and his brethren will not soon forget either the ability, zeal, and success, with which he has, for many years, laboured in the cause of science, or the munificent contribution (L.500) which he gave, two or three years ago, to promote the cause of medical reform. Professor Gregory, also, is too well known, from his position and writings, and from his former connection with Anderson's University, to require any notice here. Of Dr Browne of Dumfries, and of the value of his testimony, little need be said. He is well known as one of the ablest and most enlightened men who ever devoted their energies to the cause of the insane. Of Mr Hodgson, again, it will be sufficient to say, that as Principal of the Mechanics' Institution of Liverpool, he has for several years stood at the head of what is

now one of the largest, most important, and most successful educational establishments of this country, and that to his untiring energy, enlightened views, and great talent, it owes no small share of its efficiency and prosperity.

LETTER I.—*From* RICHARD CARMICHAEL, Esq., M.R.I.A., *President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland; President of the Medical Society of Ireland; Honorary Member of the Royal Academy of Medicine of France, &c. &c. &c., and Surgeon of Richmond, Hardwick, and Whitworth Hospitals, Dublin.*

RUTLAND SQUARE, DUBLIN,
December 24. 1845.

MY DEAR SIR,—It afforded me the greatest satisfaction to learn that a Lectureship of Phrenology has been at length established in a University; and it reflects the highest credit upon the managers of the Andersonian University, to be the first to throw off early prejudices, and to acknowledge the importance of Phrenology, which, I have no doubt, will soon be generally regarded *as the true physiology of the brain, and immeasurably beyond every system of metaphysics hitherto propounded, in accounting for the workings of this hitherto inexplicable organ.*

When Spurzheim first arrived in this country, I witnessed his dissection of the brain; and I well recollect the gratification I felt, when I observed him tracing the nervous fibres from their origin to their termination, instead of cutting them transversely, as had been previously the habit. Just as well might we attempt to display the muscles of a limb, in order to explain their action, by cutting them across. But, notwithstanding this obvious improvement in the mode of dissecting the brain, Gall and Spurzheim were stigmatized for this, as well as for their other discoveries, in the *Edinburgh Review*, as impudent impostors and charlatans. But *now their* dissection of the brain is the only one pursued, I believe, in all the anatomical schools; and their Phrenology will soon, I trust, be equally taught, as the true philosophy of mind, in all the universities of Europe.

Phrenology, under the able lectures of Spurzheim, continued to make progress with the public, notwithstanding the opposition of established moral philosophers and metaphysicians, at the head of whom was the celebrated Dugald Stewart, who actually refused to admit Spurzheim into his presence, although he brought him a letter of introduction.

A second virulent article against Phrenology appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, in which that most unmerciful of all weapons, *ridicule*, was unsparingly and skilfully employed by its able editor. But Phrenology has withstood all this violence and persecution ; and, so far from being crushed, is every day advancing in public estimation ;—a strong proof of which is the fact, that the language of Phrenology is often employed, even by its opponents, when they attempt to convey opinions respecting the mental characteristics of others, which they find it difficult to render equally intelligible in ordinary language.

I shall not occupy your time, by adverting to the flood of light which Phrenology has thrown on the principles upon which education, jurisprudence, and prison discipline, ought to be conducted, viz., by the improvement of the intellectual and moral organs, so as to keep in check the influence of the animal propensities. It would be equally superfluous to insist on the advantages it affords in treating the insane. You will agree with me, that no individual who is not a skilful Phrenologist, can reach the same degree of efficiency, in superintending an asylum for such patients, which he could attain by its aid. Indeed, the assistance it lends in establishing a confidence in ourselves, and acquiring the confidence of our patients, is of the greatest utility in the treatment of those ailments which depend upon a morbid state of the brain, or some other portion of the nervous system, such as epilepsy, hysteria, hypochondriacism and neuralgia.

The example of the Andersonian University must in time be followed. Other similar institutions cannot leave the students in that unenviable state of ignorance, which would render vain all competition with those who are well grounded in this most important science, and aided by the light it sheds on so many fields of knowledge.—I remain, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

RICHARD CARMICHAEL.

GEORGE COMBE, Esq.

LETTER II.—*From* WM. GREGORY, Esq., M.D., *Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh.*

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY,
5th January 1845.

MY DEAR SIR,—Having only returned from the country two days ago, I could not sooner acknowledge the receipt of your letter, which I found waiting me here.

I rejoice that you are to deliver the opening lecture of the first course of Lectures on Phrenology founded in any public educational institution in Scotland.

As having formerly held office in the Andersonian Institution; and as having, in 1839, delivered, within its walls, a brief popular course of Lectures on Phrenology, I feel naturally much interested on the present occasion.

The Managers have always been distinguished by liberality of sentiment; and in no one of their proceedings have they more honourably acted up to the liberal spirit of their Institution, or more conscientiously performed the duty which they owe to society, than in assisting in the foundation of a Lectureship on Phrenology.

It is possible that some may look on this step as imprudent, or even unjustifiable; but no one acquainted with the recent progress and present state of Phrenology will hold such an opinion. On the contrary, those who have attended to the subject, and watched its progress most closely, cannot but look forward with confidence to the time when there shall be a chair for teaching the true physiology of the brain in every flourishing seminary, as no longer remote. The example now set by Anderson's University will, ere long, be followed by other seminaries; and the managers and members of the Andersonian University will then derive just honour and praise from the result of their foresight, candour, and liberality.

The students attending these lectures will enjoy very great advantages; for they will no longer be shut out from the rich harvest of observations, and the valuable practical applications of these which abound in the works of phrenologists. When they listen to their learned instructor, Dr Weir, of whom it is unnecessary, and would be very presumptuous, for me to speak in terms of praise, they will find it impossible to hold the doctrine, so comforting to indolence and prejudice, that a phrenologist is necessarily a bad or inferior anatomist. The subject being presented to them as it ought to be, not in the form of a gross caricature, but in the words of the great founder and promoters of Phrenology, they will soon perceive, that the cerebral anatomy of Gall and Spurzheim surpasses that of their predecessors, as much as their cerebral physiology does; and that no discoverer ever lived who adhered to the golden rule of induction from carefully observed facts more strictly than Gall. These fortunate students, hearing Phrenology spoken of like any other branch of natural or physiological inquiry, as a field for observation and induction, and not sneered at, when alluded to at all, as an absurd system of divination, will proceed to the

study of nature in this branch of physiology, without having to unlearn a mass of prejudices which have, in many cases, proved an insurmountable obstacle to the progress of young anatomists, trained in some of the existing schools to a blind and unreasoning contempt of Phrenology.

Thus freed from the shackles of prejudice, and trained to employ their own faculties in observing Nature, as well as in reasoning on the phenomena observed, they will soon discover that Phrenology furnishes the key, so long sought for in vain, to many perplexing facts; that it explains, in a natural and simple manner, the phenomena of partial genius, and of partial insanity; that it throws equal light on innate tendencies, whether intellectual, moral, or sensual; that it yields the most precious hints for the treatment of the insane, as well as of the criminal; and, finally, that it forms the only rational foundation for an enlightened education.

What less, indeed, can be predicated of the physiology of the brain, when studied on rational principles? Indeed, were I to enter here on a list of the invaluable applications of Phrenology, I should appear to exaggerate, when, as you well know, I should speak very sober truth.

Let me observe, in conclusion, that I never cease to rejoice that it has been my fortune to live in a time and country which admitted of my becoming acquainted with Gall's Physiology of the Brain, as expounded and illustrated by Spurzheim and yourself; and that I feel a thorough conviction, that Dr Weir's pupils in the Andersonian University will, one day, echo the sentiment, and will ever feel grateful to the Founders of the Lectureship, for the inestimable benefits which have flowed from the Institution. I remain, yours very sincerely,

WILLIAM GREGORY.

LETTER III.—*From* W. A. F. BROWNE, Esq., M.D., *Physician, Crichton Institution for the Insane.*

CRICHTON INSTITUTION, DUMFRIES,
3*d January* 1845.

MY DEAR MR COMBE,—I understand that you are to deliver a Lecture before the Members of the Andersonian Institution, Glasgow, introductory to the Course of Dr Weir, the newly appointed Professor of Phrenology.

All men, whether holding my sentiments or not, must regard this as a most important event in the progress of moral and physical science. But those who have faithfully investigated the subject of cerebral physiology, who have marked the progress of public opinion, who are aware that

a large body of educated men have adopted the principles of Phrenology; that an equally large body of men, it may be unconsciously, *think* phrenologically, judge of conduct and character through the medium of Phrenology, and employ its phraseology; and, further, that the treatment and training of the young, the diseased, and the criminal, have been, in various places and countries, and in various modes, moulded and modified in accordance with these principles, cannot but regard the appointment as an indication of the general feeling upon this disputed question; and the Directors, not merely as patrons of science, but as benefactors, in the true sense of the word, in adopting means to diffuse a knowledge of truths which affect all men, in all states and stages of civilization, in all stations of life, and in all conditions, bodily and mental. This much, as to the act which you are about to signalize; then as to the importance and value of phrenological views I cannot now express myself otherwise, or better, than I did when addressing you ten years ago upon a different occasion.

I have been acquainted with the principles of Phrenology for upwards of twenty years; that, from proofs based upon physiology and observation, I believe these to be a true exposition of the laws and phenomena of the human mind; that, during the whole of the period mentioned, I have acted upon these principles, applied them practically in the ordinary concerns of life, in determining and analyzing the characters of all individuals with whom I became acquainted or connected, and that I have derived the greatest benefit from the assistance thus obtained. But although the utility of the science be most apparent in the discrimination of the good from the bad, those of virtuous and intellectual capabilities from the brutal and the imbecile, it is not confined to this. In the exercise of my profession, I have been enabled, by the aid of Phrenology, to be of essential service in directing the education of the young, as a protection against nervous disease, and in removing or alleviating the various forms assumed by insanity in the mature. For many years I have devoted myself to the study of mental diseases, and to the care of the insane. During my studies at Salpetrière, Charenton, &c., in Paris, I was able to derive great additional information from my previous knowledge of Phrenology; and since I have been entrusted with the care of public asylums, I am inclined to attribute whatever success may have attended my efforts to ameliorate the condition of those confided to my charge, to the same cause.

I may add, that I was *converted* from a confidence in the accuracy of the philosophy of the schools to a belief in Phre-

nology; that I did not accept its doctrines on the authority of my teachers, but tested their truth by repeated experiment; that I have since taught them to large bodies of my countrymen; and feel fully convinced that, until they be recognised and acted upon generally, no just conclusion can be drawn as to human character, nor as to the administration of punishments for the improvement, or rewards for the encouragement of mankind.—I have the honour to be, with great respect, your obedient servant,

W. A. F. BROWNE, M.D.

LETTER IV.—*From* W. B. HODGSON, Esq.

LIVERPOOL MECHANICS' INSTITUTION,
MOUNT STREET, 2*d January* 1845.

MY DEAR SIR,—It is with no slight pleasure that I have heard of the introduction of Phrenology into the Andersonian University of Glasgow as a regular branch of instruction, and from what I have heard of Dr Weir, I am convinced that his appointment will be of eminent service to the science. You are not unaware of the views which I have held for many years as to the expediency of teaching Phrenology in all universities, not incidentally, but thoroughly, openly, and systematically, as a distinct and most important branch of philosophical inquiry,—distinct, and yet closely allied with many other sciences, and forming in itself the great bond of union between physiology and metaphysics, the science of the body, and the science of the mind. Of the utility of Phrenology in various pursuits, there are not now wanting many influential witnesses. Of its importance to the Educationist I may speak, if with humility, yet with confidence, based on actual experience. To the practical teacher Phrenology is of eminent service, not merely in enabling him to form rapid and correct judgments of individual characters, but from its clear and simple philosophy of mind, the light it throws on the *nature of the being to be instructed*, and consequently on the true aim and wisest methods of education. But a letter is not the place for a full statement of the bearings of Phrenology on education. Once more I congratulate you, who have so long and so zealously laboured in this cause, on the present recognition of the claims of Phrenology to be formally taught as something true, and useful because true.—I am, yours very faithfully, W. B. HODGSON.
Principal.

The last letter is from Dr Conolly, late Resident, and now Consulting, Physician to the Middlesex County Lunatic Asy-

lum at Hanwell, and formerly Professor of Medicine in the London University. Dr Conolly is well known, both by his writings and by the improvements which he effected in the management of the Hanwell Asylum, and especially by the entire abolition of physical restraint, and the successful substitution of increased kindness and watchfulness among an insane population of upwards of 800. His experience has been so great, and his Clinical Lectures, now in the course of publication in the *Lancet*, have made him so extensively and advantageously known, that his authority cannot fail to have much weight.

HANWELL, *January* 5. 1846.

MY DEAR SIR,—Recollecting almost the commencement of your labours in the cause of Phrenology, when I had the happiness of being a student at Edinburgh, I cannot refrain from offering you my congratulations on the establishment of a Professorship of the science in the Andersonian Institution at Glasgow ; and I only regret that I cannot have the advantage and gratification of hearing the lecture which you have undertaken to deliver on the occasion.

Many and pressing avocations leave me no time just at present to express to you, in a manner at all worthy of the subject, my conviction of the great usefulness of habitual regard to the principles of Phrenology, especially in my department of practice, and of the confusion and imperfection of the views which seem to me to be taken, both of sound and unsound mind, by those who reject the aid of observations confirmed now by vast experience, and most of which may be daily verified in asylums for the insane. I am also convinced, that attention to the form of the head, conjoined with that cautious consideration of all other physical circumstances which no prudent phrenologist disregards, will often enable the practitioner to form an accurate prognosis in cases of mental disorder, and to foretel the chances of recovery or amelioration, or hopeless and gradual deterioration. But I am aware that I am now taking a very limited view of the applications of the science ; which, however, I know you will excuse, in consideration of the somewhat exclusive occupation of my mind on these subjects.

I always remember with pleasure your illustrative remarks on the shape of the heads of some of the unfortunate inmates of a prison which I was some years ago permitted to visit with you ; and I wish much for an opportunity of conducting you through the wards of Hanwell, and, with examples before us, benefiting by your great experience.

With all good wishes, believe me to remain, my dear Sir always sincerely yours, J. CONOLLY.

GEORGE COMBE, Esq.

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Anderson's University,
9th Feb.y, 1846.–

To the Trustees of Anderson's University,

Gentlemen,

I last week took the liberty of informing you that it is my intention to become a candidate for the Chair of Practice of Physic, in this University, now vacant.–

Permit me to submit to your notice the accompanying specimens of the Medical Papers which I have published from time to time, and of the tables and diagrams which I have prepared and distributed among my students, to enable them more easily to follow the lectures that I have now for nearly six sessions delivered in this University on the Institutes of Medicine.–

I am, Gentlemen,

With much respect,

Very faithfully yours,

Andrew Anderson, M.D.

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Quadruped.

Rabbit; from the side.

Bird.

Turkey; from the side.

Reptile.

Turtle; from the side

Fish.

Eel; from the side.

Rabbit; from above

Turkey; from above

Turtle; from above

Eel; from above.

Sketches of the BRAINS of Animals; to shew the progressive developement.

Principal Parts.

A. Olfactory lobe.

B. Cerebral lobe; anterior. } in man these

B' ..... ; middle. } conceal

B'' ..... ; posterior. } all the rest.

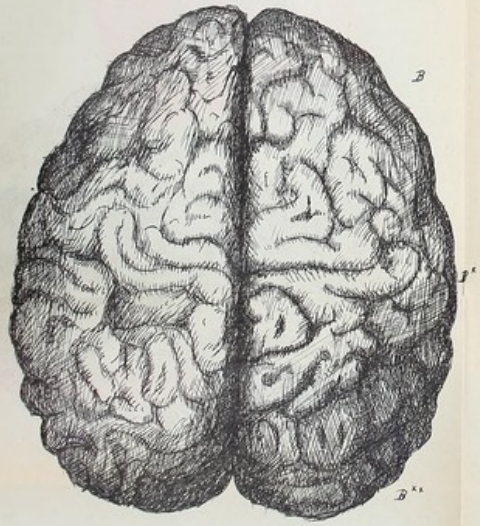
C. Optic lobe.

D. Cerebellar lobe; lateral }

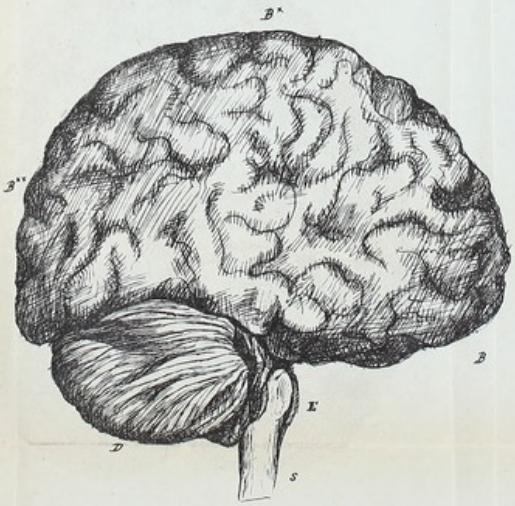
D' ..... middle }

E. Medulla oblongata.

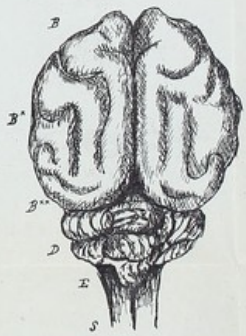
S. Spinal Cord.



Man; from above.



Man; from the side.



Cat; from above.

Monkey; from above.