

SELECTIONS.

CRANIOLOGY.—Upon Dr. Gall's theory, how many and what obvious advantages result! Nor are they merely confined to the purposes of speculative physiognomy; the uses of his theory, as applied to practice, offer to us hopes scarcely less delightful than those which seemed to dawn upon mankind with the discovery of the gases, and with the commencement of the French revolution, and, in these later days, with the progress of the Bible Society. In courts of justice, for instance, how beautifully would this new science supply any little deficiency of evidence upon trial! If a man were arraigned for murder, and the case were doubtful, but he were found to have a decided organ for the crime, it would be of little matter whether he had committed the specific fact in the indictment or not; for hanging, if not applicable as punishment, would be proper for prevention! Think, also, in state trials, what infinite advantages an attorney-general might derive from the opinion of a regius professor of craniology! Even these are but partial benefits. Our generals, ministers, and diplomatists would then unerringly be chosen by the outside of the head, though a criterion might still be wanted to ascertain when it was too thick and when too thin. But the greatest advantages are those which this new system would afford to education; for by the joint efforts of Dr. Gall and Mr. Edgeworth, we should be able to breed up men according to any pattern which parents or guardians might think proper to bespeak. The doctor would design the mould, and Mr. Edgeworth, by his skill in mechanics, devise, with characteristic ingenuity, the best means of making and applying it. As soon as the child was born, the professional cap—medical, military, theological, commercial, or legal—would be put on, and thus he would be perfectly prepared for Mr. Edgeworth's admirable system of professional education. I will pursue this subject no further than just to hint, that the materials of the mould may operate sympathetically; and therefore, that for a lawyer in *rus*, the cap should be made of brass; for a divine, of lead; for a politician, of base-metal; for a soldier, of steel; and for a sailor, of heart of English oak.

Dr. Gall would doubtless require the naked head to be submitted to him for judgment. Contrariwise, I opine,—and all the ladies will agree with me in this opinion,—that the head ought neither to be stript, nor even examined in undress, but that it should be taken with all its accompaniments when the owner has made the best of it, the accompaniments being not unfrequently more indicative than the features themselves. Long ago, the question whether a man is most like himself drest or undrest, was propounded to the British Apollo; and it was answered by the oracle, that a man of God Almighty's making is most like himself when undrest; but a man of a tailor's, periwig-maker's, and sempstress's making, when drest. The oracle answered rightly, for no man can select his own eyes, nose, or mouth; but his wig and his whiskers are of his own choosing.—*The Doctor*.

LIFE AT VERDAN DURING THE WAR.—Drinking, gambling and debauchery were the order of the day, and those who led the most irregular life were not the least esteemed. The first destroyed the health and ruined the future prospects of its votaries; the second drained their pockets and consigned them to prisons or to suicide; and the third brutalized them. Confinement without any prospect of being liberated, and the want of avocation, drove many active men to the bottle, which destroyed numbers, and others became complete sots. Mr. C—, a respectable gentlemanly man, was among the latter; he was continually getting into difficulties, and after all attempts by his countrymen to reclaim him had failed, and much forbearance shown by Wirion, he was sent to Bilche, where, emptying his wash basin, he overbalanced himself, fell through the window, and was killed on the spot. One poor fellow, after being given up by his doctor, asked for a glass of grog, which he apparently drank with as much relish as ever, and instantly died. I once upbraided a master for his idle habits, when he asked what I would have him to do? he said he had no employment, no amusement. He could get drunk twice a day for fourpence, and what could he do better? Another time passing along the street, I saw a Frenchman talking to him, whom he could not understand. 'Tell me,' says he, 'what this fellow wants.' 'He wants,' I replied, 'to be paid for pulling you out of a ditch, into which your horse threw you, and where he found you with your head stuck in the mud.' 'Tell him,' says he, with an oath, 'that I will not give him a sou; he ought to have let me remain there. I shall never die a better death. This same man, being taken suddenly ill in the street, near the lodging of a surgeon, a friend of mine, turned in thither, and while in the act of falling off his chair in an apoplectic fit, he was observed to kick off his shoes. The surgeon bled him immediately, and after he had brought him round, inquired his reason for doing so. 'Why,' says he, 'I was not going to die with my shoes on!' a cant phrase applied to persons that are hanged. In a large saloon at the Cafe Thiery, a set of blacklegs, from Paris, obtained permission of the general to establish a Rouge et Noir and a roulette table. For this permission, it was supposed he was paid at the rate of one hundred louis per month—if, indeed, he were not a partner. But it was made known to the inhabitants by the

following inscription in large letters, in French, that none but the prisoners were allowed the privilege of ruining themselves: 'This Bank is kept for the English; the French are forbidden to play at it.'—*Ellison's Prison Scenes*.

ORDINANCES OF CHINON.—The first fleet that ever left the shores of England on a foreign expedition was that of Richard I. for the Holy Land. For the government of the persons who went on that expedition, the ordinances of Chinon were promulgated by that monarch, and are a specimen of criminal legislation illustrative of the manners and feelings of the age in which they appeared.

The original ordinances are in Latin, and are published by the Commissioners of Public Records, in the 1st vol. of the collection of ancient State Papers, commonly known by the name of the 'Fœdera.' The following is an exact translation:—"Richard, by the grace of God, king of England, duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and earl of Anjou. To all men about to go by sea to Jerusalem, greeting: Know ye, that we, by the common counsel of good men, have made these ordinances underwritten. Whoever shall kill a man on board ship shall be thrown into the sea, bound to the dead person; but if he shall kill him on shore, he shall be buried in the earth, bound to the dead person. If any by legitimate witnesses shall be convicted that he drew his knife to strike another, or that he struck another and drew blood, he shall lose his hand; but if he struck with the palm, without effusion of blood, he shall be immersed in the sea three times. If any shall throw opprobrium, reproach, or the hatred of God on his fellow, as many times as he has reproached him, so many ounces of silver shall he give him. But the thief convicted of stealing shall be clipped in the manner of a champion, and boiling pitch poured on his head, and feathers from a pillow shaken over him, that he may be known, and he shall be thrown on the first shore at which the ships touch. Witness ourself, at Chinon."

THE DEATH-BED SCENE OF A MURDERER.—I shall never forget the horror of that young man's dissolution. He lay at times, the picture of terror, gazing upon the walls, along which, in his imagination, crept myriads of loathsome reptiles, which now some frightful monster, and now a fire-lipped demon, stealing out of the shadows and preparing to dart upon him as their prey. Now he would whine and weep, as if asking forgiveness for some act of wrong done to the being man is most constant to wrong—the loving, the feeble, the confiding; and anon, seized by a tempest of passion, the cause of which could only be imagined, he would start up, fight, foam at the mouth, and fall back in convulsions. Once he sat up in bed, and looking like a corpse, began to sing a bacchanalian song; on another occasion, after lying for many minutes in apparent stupefaction, he leaped out of bed before he could be prevented, and, uttering a yell that was heard in the street, endeavoured to throw himself from the window.

But the last raving act of all was the most horrid. He rose upon his knees with a strength that could not be resisted, caught up his pillow, thrust it down upon his bed with both hands and there held it, with a grim countenance and a chuckling laugh. None understood the act but myself: no other could read the devilish thoughts then at work in his bosom. It was the scene enacted in the chamber of his parent—he was repeating the deed of murder—he was exulting, in imagination, over a successful parricide.

In this thought he expired; for, while still pressing upon the pillow with a giant's strength, he suddenly fell on his face, and when turned over was a corpse. He gave but a single gasp, and was no more.

SAGACITY OF THE ELEPHANT.—A friend of mine, who had resided at Ceylon, went to the London Zoological Gardens. There was at that time an Elephant, a native of Ceylon, belonging to the Society, in the Gardens; he at first took no particular notice of my friend, showing him no more attention than he did to any of his other visitors; but when the poor animal heard himself addressed in the Cingalese tongue, he exhibited the most unequivocal signs of joy and pleasure; turning his trunk about, and caressing his new friend with all the delight of one who in "a strange land" welcomes the arrival of another from his native country.—*Miscellaneous Memoranda' Notes on Nets, by the Hon. and Rev. C. Bathurst*.

MUSLIM SAINTS.—Shah El-Karmanee, another celebrated saint, had a beautiful daughter, whom the Sultan of his country sought in marriage. The holy man required three days to consider his sovereign's proposal, and in the mean time visited several mosques, in one of which he saw a young man humbly occupied in prayer. Having waited till he had finished, he accosted him, saying, "My son, has thou a wife?" Being answered, "No," he said, "I have a maiden, a virtuous devotee, who hath learned the whole of the Kur-an, and is amply endowed with beauty. Dost thou desire her?"—"Who," said the young man, "will marry me to such a one as thou hast described, when I possess no more than three dirhems?"—"I will marry thee to her," answered the saint: "she is my daughter, and I am Shah the son of Shujaa El-Karmanee: give me the dirhems that thou hast, that I may buy a dirhem's worth of bread, and a dirhem's worth of something savoury, and a dirhem's worth of perfume."

The marriage-contract was performed; but when the bride came to the young man, she saw a stale cake of bread placed upon the top of his mug; upon which she put on her izar, and went out. Her husband said, "Now I perceive that the daughter of Shah El-Karmanee is displeased with my poverty." She answered, "I did not withdraw from fear of poverty, but on account of the weakness of thy faith, seeing how thou layest by a cake of bread for the morrow.—*Mr. Lane's Notes to his New Translation of the Arabian Nights*.

FASHION.—Some newspaper writer has made a good hit at fashion in the following:

1835. "Dear Mother, you must let me have fourteen yards in my new frock. Mrs. Thompson says she can't get a pair of sleeves out of less than seven. And you know, mother, a dress would look so bad with stunted sleeves. Did you see Miss Mixer's new dress, how awkward it looked—the sleeves all scrimped up, and she had five yards in them—you must get me fourteen, mother."

1838. "Oh mother, I do wish you would let me get my purple silk dress altered, those great sleeves look so awkward, and bungling, I positively can't wear them, they are perfectly frightful. Do, dear mother, let me have them made quite tight—small sleeves look so neat and graceful."

Oh! thou fickle Goddess!

PREJUDICE.—We are not careful enough to analyze the cause of our many prejudices against certain things and certain individuals. A man whom we dislike wears a certain colored garment, and we at once take up a prejudice against that color. He plays on a certain instrument, and that instrument, to us, makes, whenever heard, execrable music. Another may be peculiarly fond of that instrument, because a much loved person performs upon it, or has performed upon it in times long past, and we thoughtlessly call him a man of no taste, because to him its sound is delightful, awakening only pleasant sensations. And thus it is through all the relations of society. We are governed in our tastes and often in our opinions by prejudices which have but a sandy foundation and should at once crumble into dust.

'STAND AND DELIVER,' were the words addressed to a tailor travelling on foot, by a highwayman, whose brace of pistols looked rather dangerous than otherwise.

'I'll do that with pleasure,' was the reply, at the same time handing over to the outstretched hands of the robber a purse apparently pretty well stocked, 'but,' continued he, 'suppose you do me a favor in return. My friends would laugh at me were I to go home and tell them I was robbed with as much patience as a lamb; s'pose you fire your two bulldogs right through the crown of my hat; it will look something like a show of resistance.'

His request was acceded to; but hardly had the smoke from the discharge of the weapons passed away, when the tailor pulled out a rusty old horse pistol, and in his turn politely requested the thunder-struck highwayman to shell out every thing of value, his pistols not omitted, about him.

JOHNSONIAN PUNS.—Dr. Johnson and Boswell once lost themselves in the Isle of Muck, and the latter said they must "spier their way at the first body they met." "Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "you're a scoundrel: you may spear any body you like, but, I'm not going to 'run a Muck and tilt at all I meet.'"

Boswell inquired the Doctor's opinion on illicit distillation, and how the great moralist would act in an affray between the smugglers and the Excise. "If, I went by the letter of the law I should assist the Customs, but according to the spirit I should stand by the contrabands."

The Doctor was always very satirical on the want of timber in the North. "Sir," he said to the young Laird of Icombally, who was going to join his regiment, "may Providence preserve you in battle, and especially your nether limbs. You may grow a walking-stick here, but you must import a wooden leg."

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