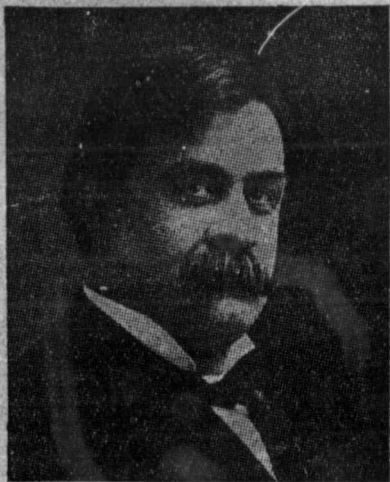


CHARACTER IN THE FACE



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Character in the Face

A French author has written a book entitled "John Ruskin and The Religion of Beauty," but Paul was nearly two thousand years in advance of Ruskin, for he marks a golden circle around the velvet bloom of all spiritual beauty when he uses that wonderfully descriptive and comprehensive phrase, "Whosoever things are lovely."

We have plain indications in holy writ that God is in love with the beautiful. In the description of the architectural splendors of the temple of Solomon we have these words: "On the top of the pillars there was lily work," and when we are asked to inspect the quality of the fabric woven into the veil of the temple we find the sacred curtain true to the divine specifications: "Thou shalt make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen." And we also remember that almost every precious stone is mentioned in the Bible: the diamond, the pearl, the emerald, the sapphire, the ruby, the topaz, the onyx, the jasper, the chrysolite and the amethyst. In fact, so great is the emphasis placed on the things which are known as beautiful that the words: "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" could almost be reversed and made to read, "Worship the Lord in the holiness of beauty."

But God has more than one Bible. Nature, too, is a revelation of the divine thought, and nature is robed in beauty. As a famous English writer has said: "God's greatest gift to man is color." Gaze upon the autumnal splendor of this very hour—valleys, plains and mountains clad in purple, crimson and gold!

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“God’s world is robed in beauty,
God’s world is robed in light.”

The rose on the cheek, the purple veined marble of the white brow, the pillared beauty of the well formed neck, the ruby splendor of the lips, the spiritual glory of the eye, the stately carriage of the head—these, these are all the incarnation of divine thoughts.

God is in love with the beautiful. He paints the lily. He distills the dew drop. He moulds the pearl. He arches the rainbow. He studs the starry night. He gems the ocean depths. He flecks the flowery fields. He robes the mountains in mist. He sends the clouds trooping in snowy splendor through the blue fields of space. God is in love with the beautiful.

The purple of the bird’s wing, the red of the rose, the stainless white of the lily, the golden glory of the sunset, the silver diadem of the night, the rippling surface of the sea, the waving gold of the boundless prairie—these, all these, tell me that God is in love with the beautiful.

Our God is a God of beauty! Every circling veil of mist, ten thousand crystal bullets of rain, diamond dew, shimmering stream, fragrant spirits of forest and field are all His children. Heaven’s dome of blue, earth’s carpet of green and ocean’s mosaic of sapphire are all the work of His hand. Tinting the ocean shell, painting the flower, silvering the leaf, purpling the grape, budding the branch, and crowning the hills with glory—yes, yes, our God is a God of beauty.

There is a beauty of the sea, a beauty of the mountains, a beauty of the morning and a beauty of the night. “Oh, thou art holy beautiful night!”

What an expression of beauty in the passing seasons: The tender loveliness of the spring. The full blown glory of the summer. The dying glory of the autumn. The silent aspect of the winter. I have an answer for the atheist—it is the God-painted flower and nature robed in beauty.

Then, add to all these, the sweet sadness of memory and the beautifying touch of increasing years. Time is a great artist. There is a beauty of Age, History, Heroism and Association. Every mosque in India, every pyramid in Egypt, every monument in Greece, every sculptured form in Italy, every castle-crowned peak in Germany, every old palace in fair France, every ivy covered cathedral in England, every ancient battle field in Scotland — all these set the imagination on fire and reveal the touch of an age-defying beauty. They kindle glories in the realm of the soul and feed the poetical instinct in the heart of man.

Beauty! Beauty!! Beauty!!!
 What is beauty? Beauty is nature's approach to perfection. When God says "Be ye perfect," He means, be round, full-orbed, well proportioned, even, symmetrical — perfect as a cluster of ripe grapes, perfect as a golden orange, perfect as a full blown rose, perfect as the opening leaves of a floating pond lily—perfect as an apple, luscious, sweet and beautiful.

There is a beauty of form and there is beauty of action. Art is beauty in expression. Architecture is beauty in proportion. Culture is beauty in mind and manners. Eloquence is beauty of speech. Grace is beauty of action. But the highest manifestation of beauty is in the human face and form. The

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climax of all beauty is to be found in the human face, in its features, voice, expression and character.

How the Greek sculptor searched the world for perfection in the human face and form. In one person he found a perfect arm; in another, a faultless brow; in another finely chiseled lips; in another, a well rounded chin; in another, a superbly arched neck; and in another a queenly pose. The historian affirms that one slight change, in one feature, of the face of Cleopatra, would probably have changed the course of history; but the Egyptian Queen entered the realm of beauty and Shakespeare has immortalized her in the words:

“Age cannot wither her, nor custom
stale

Her infinite variety.”

It is woman's love of the beautiful which guarantees the beauty of our home life. The mother pointed to the dimple in the cheek of her infant child and exclaimed, “That's where the angel kissed him!” It's the angel's kiss—the angel's touch—which makes life worth living. Beauty is the perfection of form, and if our wives did not love the beautiful, our children would be as homely as birds bereft of their plumage. A cultured woman said to Emerson: “I never feel so devout and religious as when I am well dressed.”

The best contribution which man or woman can make to the social pleasures of the world is—a beautiful face, sweet with love, faith, tenderness and goodness. Karl Bunsen, the German scholar, in his dying hour, looked into the face of his wife and exclaimed: “In thy face I have seen the eternal!”

The human face has a universal lan-

guage. A loving smile, smiled by an American woman or by a Canadian gentleman, in a humble home in China, does not need to be translated into Chinese. Everybody understands the language of a tear, the symbolism of a smile, the unuttered meaning of a frown, the threatening emphasis of a scowl, the suggestive expression of a glance and the plaintive music of a sigh. The face has a language all its own and it is a universal language. As George Eliot has well remarked: "A suppressed resolve will betray itself in the eye."

Impulse in the face. Preference in the face. Prejudice in the face. Passion in the face. Principle in the face. In the face of Gladstone, Conscience. In the face of Disraeli, Ambition. In the face of Emerson, Kindness. In the face of Tennyson, Spirituality. In the face of Bismarck, Purpose. In the face of Lincoln, Sympathy. God grant that we may find in the face of Youth, immortal hope; in the face of Manhood, immortal strength; in the face of Maturity, an immortal character; and in the face of Old Age, immortal memories.

The truly great face always has in it a beautiful blend of soul qualities. The prophet had a vision of four faces—the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox and the face of an eagle. The face of a man, intelligence. The face of a lion, courage. The face of an ox, endurance. The face of an eagle, aspiration. Four faces—The face of a man, reason. The face of a lion, passion. The face of an ox, submission. The face of an eagle, ambition. Four faces—The face of a man, sympathy. The face of a lion, energy. The face of an ox, stability. The face of an eagle, majesty. To sum it up, there are two

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things which God loves and man admires—Strength and Beauty.

The great face of history has been a strong face. "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee, from afar, a nation strong of face." "Son of man, set thy face against the mountain—set thy face against the South—set thy face against the North—set thy face against Zidon—set thy face against Jerusalem—set thy face against Egypt." Listen to the voice of the prophet, "I have set my face like a flint."

There are four things which dominate and determine the character of the human face. (1) The Eyes. (2) The Lips. (3) The Profile. (4) The Complexion. The mind is expressed in the eye, strength of character in the lips, calibre in the profile, and a blending of physical and spiritual qualities in the complexion. Is there anything so beautiful or so lovely as a clear, clean, transparent complexion—pure, sweet, divine and tinted with the rosy hues of health? Here the spiritual qualities of mind, heart and soul register themselves.

The science of phrenology (if there be such a department of human knowledge) deals with the question of brain capacity, and gives, perhaps, a hint or suggestion of the tendency of human thought. A phrenologist, of local fame, examining the head of James A. Garfield, remarked, "He deserves no credit for being religious, he could not help being so; no man with his head could be irreverent." Phrenological construction, in certain broad and general outlines, indicates mental calibre and brain capacity. In the small head, concentration and force; in the long head, thought and contemplation; in the broad head, construction and management; and in

the high head, imagination and poetry. Phil. Sheridan had the small "bullet" head; Ralph Waldo Emerson, the long head; Commodore Vanderbilt, the broad head; and William Shakespeare, the high head. The small head belongs to the "doer," the long head to the "thinker," the broad head to the "organizer," and the high head to the "dreamer."

But the quality of the man's spirit is of vastly more importance than the measure of his brain capacity. It is not the shape of the head so much as the lines of the face which indicates character and reveals power. The vital truth is that THOUGHT has power to transfigure and transform the physiognomy. Gaze on Stephen in the hour of his martyrdom—"And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, beheld his face, as it had been the face of an angel."

Have you considered the power of thought? Thought rules the world. Thought paints the picture, thought writes the poem, thought sings the song, thought inspires the speech, thought orders the battle, thought creates institutions, thought builds dynasties and project civilizations.

Thought never dies. Conventions adjourn, congregations dismiss, empires expire, civilizations pass away, stars become extinct, but great thoughts, once breathed by the soul, live forever in human consciousness.

Have you ever considered the spiritualizing power of thought? The transfiguration of Jesus was a scientific fact as well as a biographical incident. His very garments shone! "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow, so that no fuller on earth can white them." Everything about your person

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is saturated with thought. If you had better thoughts you would have better health. Every splendid inspiration from the spiritual realm enters the soul through the door of thought. All the space between the mind of God and the mind of man is crowded with thought. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every thought which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

My friend, open the windows of your mind to the beauties of the spiritual world. Place yourself in the middle of the stream of power. Remember that the hidden springs of inspiration are within. The window which opens outward upon the splendors of the spiritual realm is to be found in the throne room of the soul. No artist can paint a picture, but from within. No musician can sing a song, except from within. No author can write a book of original thoughts, unless he dips his pen in his own heart's blood. All real power is from within. Frances Ridley Havergal remarked, "One moment I have no idea of writing anything—the next moment, I have a poem!" Surrender yourself to a divine inspiration and you will find God. And, then, in the evening of life, your mind will be like a cathedral window shot through with all the glories of the setting sun. The fabric woven in the realm of thought is called MEMORY. Oh memory, thou art sweet as the breath of the morning, holy as the star-lit dome of night, serene as the vesper hour of the day, fragrant as the perfume of a field in springtime and musical as the soundful arches of an ancient abbey when the dying echoes of sacred melody find repose in hidden and unseen corridors.

Behind the face, lie slumbering, all

the thoughts of the soul. Before the face lie, outstretched, all the glories of the world. Charles Dickens placed five mirrors in his study at Gad's Hill that all the birds and flowers of field and forest might be multiplied. Beecher loved to gaze upon a handful of precious stones where the flaming facet of the diamond took on the glory of ruby, emerald and sapphire. You will remember the prisoner described by Byron, who, through a slight crevasse in the wall saw green fields, the blue sky and a singing bird. "A lovely bird with azure wings, a song that said a thousand things—and seemed to say them all to me."

"Two men stood behind prison bars, One saw mud—the other saw stars."

When Chief Justice Marshall stood, in a spirit of contemplation, amid the mountains of Virginia, he exclaimed, "No wonder Patrick Henry was an orator!" But an old farmer remarked: "Young man, those mountains have been there ever since, yet we have never had another Patrick Henry!" Ah, so much depends on what you can see. Ruskin was right when he affirmed that there are a thousand men who can speak where there is one who can think, and there are a thousand who can think where there is one who can see. God grant us the wisdom to see,—the angel in the marble, the blossom in the bud, the oak in the acorn, the building in the barn, the dawn in the darkness, the gold in the boulder, the future in the present and God in everything.

I behold Queen Elizabeth, in her old age, all her beauty gone, in anger dashing the mirror to the floor. But why should a woman quarrel with her features? Why should a man quarrel with

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his face? Somewhere, between fifty and sixty, physical beauty is almost sure to take its flight—and then—you are as handsome or as homely as your thoughts will allow you to be. When the early evening of life comes on, may it bring to you a glorious sunset wrapt in a conflagration of beauty—gold, crimson, purple, amber and burning clouds aflame with shekinah splendor, and behind all suggestions of the fulfilment of the soul's dream.

But remember—all the good qualities register themselves in the face. Anger, love, joy, fear, sin, hell, heaven—all these are to be seen in the face. And each face is dominated by a thought. The empty face of ignorance. The blushing face of shame. The drawn face of conflict. The yellow face of disease. The white face of death. The wrinkled face of age. The hardened face of unbelief.

There are some faces which chill me. In 1876 Messrs. Moody and Sankey were holding evangelistic services in Chicago. Mr. Moody called the chief usher in charge of the seating of a great tabernacle audience, and, pointing to one of his assistants remarked, inquiringly, "Who is that man?—to be real frank with you I don't like his looks—his face repels me!" The names of the usher was Charles A. Guiteau, who afterward became the assassin of the lamented James A. Garfield.

I do not like the clouded face. Worry should not write its strange hieroglyphics on the physiognomy of a Christian. Perpetual anxiety is a sin against God and a crime against your loved ones. I speak to the woman who is the incarnation of fret and fume, hurry and worry, concern and anxiety, fear and caution—Oh woman, worry not about the

flower in the carpet, lest some one should step upon it; one rose in your cheek is worth more than all the carpets in the house. "But somebody must worry," you answer. But why should a busy woman carry a burden which no business man is able to carry? A business is never established until you get it beyond the worrying point. The man who frets and fumes about his business is a nuisance to his friends and a joke-target for his commercial competitors.

I am afraid of the face which is empty. An empty crib means sorrow; an empty purse, poverty; an empty vault, bankruptcy; an empty brain, ignorance; an empty kitchen, hunger; an empty pew, neglect; and an empty face—a wasted life. Listen to the words of Frances E. Willard, in the hour of her dawning womanhood: "I am twenty-one years of age, to-day, and yet I have accomplished nothing."

Nothing but leaves! The Spirit grieves
o'er years of wasted life;
O'er sins indulged while conscience slept,
o'er vows and promises unkept,
And reap from years of strife—nothing
but leaves! nothing but leaves!

Nothing but leaves! No garnered sheaves,
of life's fair ripening grain:
We sow our seeds; lo! tares and weeds,
words, idle words, for earnest deeds—
Then reap, with toil and pain, nothing
but leaves! nothing but leaves!

Nothing but leaves! Sad mem'ry weaves
no veil to hide the past:
And as we trace our weary way, and
count each lost and misspent day
We sadly find at last—nothing but
leaves! nothing but leaves!

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Ah, who shall thus the Master meet, and
bring but withered leaves?

Ah, who shall at the Saviour's feet, be-
fore the awful judgment seat

Lay down for golden sheaves, nothing
but leaves! nothing but leaves!

I am afraid of the face which is hard. "I will never forgive her as long as I live!" said a woman whose face of granite revealed a heart of stone. "I'll have my pound," exclaims Shylock in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, and the hatred in the face and the vengeance in the eye arrested our gaze more than the empty scales and the glittering knife which were to cut and weigh the "pound of flesh." The man who "gets even" with his enemy drops to his enemy's level. Hatred is contraction. Love is life. A grudge is a self-inflicted curse. The memory of a wrong, fondly fostered, in the secret hours of thought, will take the color out of your cheek, the light out of your eye, the expression out of your face and rob you of your peace.

Give me the face which is full of tenderness, kindness, sympathy and love. Henry Ward Beecher was fond of telling a story of his father, the famous old Doctor Lyman Beecher. Dr. Beecher was, for years, pastor of a church at East Hampton, Mass. Hampton was, at that time, a veritable hotbed of infidelity. It was while the Beecher family resided at East Hampton that Harriet (the first child by that name in the Lyman Beecher family) died, and was buried in the village burying plot. When the Beecher family finally left East Hampton the only treasure not removed was the grave of little Harriet. Years afterwards one of the most pronounced infidel leaders of the place turned to his

wife one day and said: "Wife, I can't bear to have that little child of Dr. Beecher left, out there, all alone"—and so the big hearted agnostic dug out the little coffin, and removed it to his own plot in the cemetery, and in that plot there may be found to-day three graves—on one side, the grave of the infidel—on the other side, the grave of his wife—and between them the grave of Harriet. May it not be that the infidel was growing warm toward God, and that in the hour of his great tenderness, when he took the cold, silent, enclosed form of a neighbor's child to his bosom, in one supreme act of kindness, that the angel spirit of the dead child became a spiritual messenger to his soul and the guide of his future years, bringing into full realization the beautiful words of the prophet: "A little child shall lead them." There is hope for a man if his heart be kind; and a kind heart always sends its rich red blood to give quality to the physiognomy, color to the cheek, spiritual splendor to the eye, and tenderness to the face. Tenderness maketh a man's face to beam.

Thomas Carlyle had a very practical habit of placing before him, in full view, a photograph of the hero whose biography he was penning. Thus the character became real to him in the hour of his meditation, and inspirations were kindled which otherwise would have been unknown. It is with the hope of even a higher inspiration that I bring you, to-day, a divine portrait—*The sweetest face I ever saw*—"The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"Gaze for one moment on that face whose beauty wakes the world's great anthem." I present to you to-day, a beautiful Christ, concerning whom old-

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fashioned saints used to speak as "The Lily of the Valley," "The Rose of Sharon," "The Chief Among Ten Thousand," and "The One Altogether Lovely." "His name yields the richest perfume and sweeter than music his voice."—"Oh voice, oh chime, oh chant divine!"—"The sea hath its pearls, the heavens hath its stars, but my heart, my heart, hath its love."—"No mortal can with Him compare among the sons of men."

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast
But sweeter far THY FACE to see
And in Thy presence rest.

