

Transcription, September 2017:

The British Phrenological Year Book 1898 (London): 4-8. (James Webb, F.B.P.A., Past President, British Phrenological Association)

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‘Phrenological Delineation of Alfred Russell Wallace, Esq., F.R.S., LL.D.’

This gentleman has a very large head, 23 3/8 inches in circumference.

From the opening of the ears over Firmness he measures 14 1/2 inches; over the sinciput from Individuality¹ to the centre of *[[...photo of Wallace]]* Philoprogenitiveness 12 1/2 inches; from ear to ear over the Perceptive or Anterior portion of the cranium 12 3/4 inches; and from the same points over Philoprogenitiveness 11 7/8 inches.

The greatest diameters of the head are 8 inches between Indi-

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viduality and Philoprogenitiveness² and 6 inches between Destructiveness and Destructiveness. At Constructiveness the width is 5 1/8 inches.

The Frontal Sinus is small.

The Frontal, the Postero-parietal, and the Occipital convolutions, and the Cerebellum are large. The most amply developed portion of the brain is the pre-frontal area. Writing of this region, Dr. Ferrier says:—The “cortical centres of this region form the substrata of the psychical processes which lie at the foundation of the higher intellectual operations,” “a greater development characterising those possessed of the higher mental powers.” The organs here specially developed are Form, Weight, Locality, Number, Order, and Comparison. These have been the organs that have directed him to his life work; aided by his Philoprogenitiveness, Benevolence, Inhabitiveness, Firmness, and Intuitive Perception. Though by no means feeble, the organs of Size and Color have had less influence over him. Comparison is his largest organ. Comparison gives the sense of Analogy, ability in reasoning inductively, in Analysis and Classification. He reasons *a posteriori* with exceptional ability, and with his large perceptive he pierces into the inner realms of nature, and discovers facts and their relationship that few are able to discern.

The organ of Comparison has been an untiring servant, constant and reliable, ever recognising resemblances in the physical characteristics of apparently dissimilar and incongruous objects. To Dr. Wallace this organ has been a source of much pleasure and mental profit, immensely helpful to his somewhat less active organ of Eventuality. It has doubtless enlarged its size and power at the expense of this latter organ, for it appears that no sooner has he begun to assimilate his facts, than he has at once begun to compare and classify them, to discover their beauties and uses, as though eager to give immediate attention to the consideration of their peculiarities and characteristics, and classify them rather

¹ From the glabella over the frontal bone and along the saggital suture and crown to the occipital process. *[[on p. 4]]*

² Between the glabella and the occipital process. *[[on p. 5]]*

than burden his mind with facts and incidents incapable of classification at the time. And it is almost impossible to estimate the pleasure that this study of resemblances gives to him.

This love of comparisons appears to have a weakening effect on his organ of Wit. The sense of incongruities, of dissimilarities, of differences, gives little food to the imagination. It produces momentary merriment, and often panders to the basilar organs, but seldom aids the higher sentiments. Hence Dr. Wallace has made far less effort to amuse than he has to teach—and to teach others to observe.

Mirthfulness is exceedingly useful to the ambitious man, especially in his public speeches, to the caricaturist, to the merry-andrew: but these have not been the rôles played by Dr. Wallace. His large Caution, moderate Language, and weaker Secretiveness, help to indicate this. His work has been with Nature; his has been a life-long desire to help and advise others from his study—not to pose as a public champion. He has been the rank-and-file, not the captain.

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He could not act the demagogue, “the public man,” seeking his own interests and deceiving his admirers.

He is too practical to be satisfied with the metaphysicians, who, by mere “introspection,” satisfy themselves that their systems of mental science are thoroughly philosophical. He will not accept the conclusions of those who, “looking inwardly,” and without reference to observed facts and experiment, would have us believe their ruminations are in accord with positive science. He must have his beliefs substantiated by daily experiment.

His memory of persons and events will, at times, be disappointing to him. The movements of armies and of machinery, the deceptions of political intrigues and secret cabals, will have no attractions for him, and at times he will consider his historical knowledge hardly creditable to him. In public speaking his verbal memory will also be disappointing to him. He has no desire for notoriety. Coarse jokes and ugliness repel him. His large domestic propensities give him a love of everything that concerns his fellowman, intensifying his desire to know him better, to understand his wants, his hopes, his beliefs, whence he came, how he came, whither he is going, how he is going. The genesis of man, of animals, of plants, is peculiarly interesting to him, the result of a large cerebellum, of large Causality, and very large Comparison. His largest social organs are Love of Home, Wife and Children. Finding these organs large was somewhat of a surprise, because I had expected to find him somewhat of an ascetic; prejudice often misleads. On the other hand, he is a true patriarch. He is “at home” to his friends, and his home is home indeed. He can make a cup of tea for his friends, and enjoy a cup with them.

He has some ambition. He is not unacquainted with his mental capacity, and is somewhat desirous of seeing it recognised, and would be surprised and disappointed when no such recognition could be paid him.

Some organs are not nearly so well developed as others are. Two or three could be described as weak. These are Combativeness, Secretiveness, and Tune.

He is never on the defence. He is at a disadvantage when attacked. Though unwilling to defend himself, he always protects his friend. He is too forgiving under injustice. If I had to advise him I should recommend him to be more ready to combat a difficulty, or an unscrupulous opponent.

His moderate Secretiveness leads him to a greater frankness than is advisable when dealing with sly people. He should learn to bargain, to meet policy by policy, and ruse by ruse. He will never be a match, in cunning, for such people, but, by adopting a more politic course, he would be more safeguarded against the selfish and sordid.

Very often he finds his only recompense for honest work is the satisfaction he feels at having done his duty.

His organ of Tune seems to have been neglected. In fact, so far as

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cranial indications would lead one to judge, he has been but little interested in music. The music he loves best is the expression of Nature's manifold melodies—the harmony of the woods, the fields, the clouds, the sea-shore—the processes of Nature's laws, the adaptability of a created world to its functions and uses, the loveliness of a gentle spirit, and the music of Love.

A very prominent feature of his character is his patient effort under difficulties, the determined and settled conviction that the interests of science are of paramount importance as an object of study, that it would be more creditable to him to suffer pecuniary loss, than neglect to search out the laws of Nature, whether of mind or matter. He is steadfast in faith, and devoted to duty.

Though impolitic in his frankness, the moment he perceives danger his Caution takes possession of him, and, fearing injury, he sets his whole capabilities to work in his defence, and thereby avoids the threatening danger.

In regard to his Alimentiveness he is somewhat abstemious; still his appetite is not satisfied unless he is provided with food of a suitable character, his preference being for liquid food—milk, tea, soups, etc. Solid food, as generally understood by that term, is not taken with equal regularity. His large organ of Order intrudes itself into his domestic and vegetative life, in this way inducing him to take liquid food regularly, as well as in study and in his social habits generally.

He has a keen desire to travel, but, his Inhabitiveness being large, he feels it keenly when he turns his back upon his home: and, after a lengthened absence, he returns with an ardency few can appreciate.

Benevolence is the largest of his moral and religious organs. Faith and Hope are greatly affected by his powerful intellect. He is not willing to believe without satisfactory evidence. He hopes, but with fear, lest he should hope in vain.

He is agreeable with all, be they friends or strangers. Yet they must not presume too much, nor flatter him, for he abominates mere custom, pretence, and pride.

His sense of justice is keen, yet he will hardly think it wrong to benefit the poor by taxing the rich. He thinks that the profits of the masters should go to help the unfortunate poor, as well as fill their own money-bags. The unfortunate and deserving poor should not starve: the weak should not be trampled upon. These are his convictions.

His temperament is so equally balanced that one has a difficulty in giving any one of the four basic elements the preponderance. His large osseous system indicates the fibrous, motive, or "bilious" temperament; the large head, the relatively thin cranium, and the small frontal sinus, indicate the mental

temperament; the blue eyes, the sanguine temperament; and the colour of the skin generally the lymphatic temperament. And all four temperaments appear to be united in the hair, which is at the same time thick and strong

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(bilious), glossy (sanguine), silky (mental), and grey at an early age (lymphatic). Perhaps this description of the hair will seem strange to the non-phrenologist. To one who has given the best of his life to the study of the subject it is very clear. And I have no hesitation in saying, that, had he possessed more Self-esteem, Acquisitiveness, and Combativeness, he would have developed the Nervous-Bilious temperament at the expense of the Lymphatic. I may be thought presumptuous in doing so, but I have no hesitation in asserting that had he consulted an intelligent phrenologist in his youth, and taken his advice, he would have greatly benefited from it, and the world of mankind would have also benefited by the stimulus and example of the greater energy, activity, and sagacity that would have resulted.

It must not be understood that I am passing any unkind criticism on him: this criticism is purely phrenological, and it cannot be denied that even the best of men are less useful than they would be, were they alive to their less powerful parts and powers, and were to aim at bringing them into line with their more striking characteristics.

The Alfred Russel Wallace Page, Charles H. Smith, 2017.