

THE HANDBOOK OF PHYSIOGNOMY

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The Handbook of Physiognomy by Rosa Baughan

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ROSA BAUGHAN

**THE HANDBOOK
OF PHYSIOGNOMY**

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OF
PHYSIOGNOMY

BY
ROSA BAUGHAN

AUTHOR OF
'THE HANDBOOK OF PALMISTRY,' 'CHIROGNOMANCY,' ETC., ETC.

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PAPERS ON PHYSIOGNOMY.

CHAPTER I.

'La Fisonomia è lo specchio dell' anima.'

'THE face is the mirror of the soul,' says Finetta, a mediæval Italian writer on the subject of physiognomy, and, to those who take the trouble to study the matter, the intelligence, the sentiments, and the instincts of a person are all clearly manifested by the form of the head and features, and their relative proportions, by the colouring of the skin, eyes, and hair, by the fugitive expressions which, to an attentive observer, are seen to pass over even the most impassible faces, and 'last, but certainly not least,' by the lines left by the habitual passage of the expression of strong feeling, which, to the physiognomist, are visible even when the face is in repose.

I have said character is shown by the form of *the head* and face, because, though we have got to apply the word physiognomy to the *face* only, it has really a much wider signification. All things—animate and inanimate—have their physiognomy, and, when judging of the character by the form of the features of the face, it would be impossible to ignore that given by the shape of the head, for, without altogether believing that the brain is mapped out in the manner described by phrenologists, there is no doubt that a good development of the front of the head shows intelli-

gence, whilst a head which is inordinately protuberant at the back indicates the dominance of animal instincts in the organization. The advantage of this sort of 'outline phrenology' is that it may be exercised by the eye without any necessity for feeling for the so-called 'bumps' of the cranium. Thus, we may be sure, when we see a broad, full, but yet not necessarily high, forehead, that the intellectual faculties are strong; that if the top of the head is raised from the brow to the centre there is benevolence and the power of veneration—by veneration I do not mean alone religious belief, but also the quality taken in its wider, though not, perhaps, higher sense; all hero-worship is the result of the faculty of veneration, combined with imagination and ardour, which give enthusiasm. If the head is much raised just before it turns, it gives the same indication as the first joint of the thumb long—a *dominant* will; if the back of the head is fairly but not over developed, it gives power of affection: this is the same sign as that given by the Mount of Venus, full but without lines on it. If the back of the head projects far beyond the nape of the neck it indicates a sensuous nature; thus having the same signification as that given by the Mount of Venus inordinately large, with cross bars upon it, and the ring of Venus strongly developed. If the back of the head is quite flat it indicates coldness, want of passion in the nature. A head which is large just above the ears, shows a tendency to anger, and if the signs of benevolence on the brow and lips are entirely wanting, it would mean cruelty; but in physiognomy the signs on both the head and face must be considered as a *whole*, and the qualities shown by *both* weighed one against another before any right judgment can be arrived at. In this study, as in that of graphology and palmistry, a deductive power of mind is required. Among twenty persons who may be sufficiently interested in the science to study it, there will be scarcely more than

one who will become a good physiognomist. One among the countless objections which have been urged against physiognomy is that many physiognomists make erroneous judgments; but, granted that they do so, it is their want of discernment, or, more probably, their want of deductivity—not the science—which fails. To decry physiognomy because physiognomists are sometimes wrong in their judgments, is as foolish as to conclude that there is no reason because there is so much *false reasoning*.

There is a certain sort of *instinctive* power of judging character by the face, possessed by children and animals, which I have always found to be in harmony not only with my own observations, but with the theories of those who have thought and written most upon this interesting subject.

We are all of us—women, perhaps, more than men—daily influenced by this sort of *instinctive* physiognomy: for there are few people who do not, when they first see a stranger, form a judgment of him, in which they are, of course, only swayed by his outward appearance, although they may never have even heard the word physiognomy. Many persons, however, who have this gift of intuitive perception of characters fear to be guided by it, thinking it 'foolish' to be influenced by what they call 'first impressions.' To these I say, Study the principles of physiognomy, and you will find that these 'first impressions' are generally correct. Although this gift is a natural one, it can be perfected by study; and there is, in this study, an infinity of ever-varying interest—faces seen to-day are as different to those noticed yesterday as to those one shall come across to-morrow. No two faces are alike, as no two human beings are alike in character. No society, however seemingly devoid of interest, is altogether so to the physiognomist; for every human being is a study, and every new discovery a delight. It is interesting to distinguish between people who have created their intelli-