CHARACTER ANALYSIS BY THE OBSERVATIONAL METHOD; LESSON XIV-THE HAND AND THE FOOT; LESSON XV-INTERPRETING COMBINATIONS OF VARIATIONS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649443420

Character Analysis by the Observational Method; Lesson XIV-The Hand and the Foot; Lesson XV-Interpreting Combinations of Variations by Katherine M. H. Blackford

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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CHARACTER ANALYSIS BY THE OBSERVATIONAL METHOD

Figure 186A.—Mental Hand.

Illustration by courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, from Dr. William G. Benham's "Laws of Scientific Hand Reading."

Character Analysis

BY THE

OBSERVATIONAL METHOD

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Lesson XIV—THE HAND AND THE FOOT

Lesson XV—INTERPRETING COMBINATIONS OF VARIATIONS

FIFTH EDITION

New York

INDEPENDENT CORPORATION

1920

LESSON FOURTEEN

THE HAND AND THE FOOT

Physically there is no detail in which man is superior to other animals except the hand.

The elephant is heavier and stronger; the deer and the horse can run faster; the monkey can climb better; and the birds can fly better.

The eye of the eagle, the nose of the hound, and the ear of the cat are all far keener sense organs than those of man.

But there is nothing in all animal creation that can compare with the human hand. By means of it, backed up by the human brain and the human mind, man has again and again re-created the world in which he lives. Arts, sciences, invention, discovery, literature, religion, philosophy, government, and in short all that can be included in human civilization, intelligence and culture as we know them to-day would have been impossible without the human hand.

Hand and Brain.—Anatomically and physiologically the relationship between brain and hand is close. The development of the brain is actually begun by the movements of the hand.

Dr. William Hanna Thompson says:[1] "The faculty of speech is located in the hemisphere which governs the hand which is most used. Hand and speech, therefore, are physiologically connected. This remarkable fact brings us back to the origin,

[1] "Brain and Personality," pp. 109–10.

to the very beginning of this wonderful faculty of expression in man. It began by one personality longing to communicate with others, and the first thing which he did then, as every human being still does when endeavoring to communicate with those whose vocal speech he does not know, was to make gestures with his hands. Gesture language, therefore, was the first language, and few persons are aware how much gesture language still continues in living use. This is particularly noticeable among all peoples who have no written language; but even among the most civilized, whole races are characterized by the number and variety of their gestures while speaking, quite as much as by their vocabulary."

It is a fact well known amongst those who care for and educate feeble minded and deficient children that the more complete the mental deficiency the less muscular movement there is.

I was once told by Dr. Ladd, a most successful teacher of feeble minded children, that he began their education by teaching and inspiring them to do things with their hands; and the more complicated their manual labors became and the more skillful they were in the performance of them, the more their intellects developed.

Dr. Maria Montessori, whose methods of education began with idiot children, created a sensation throughout the entire civilized world. A very large part of her method is training of the sense of touch and of skill in the hand and fingers. So great has been her success with these methods that children of four have learned to write in six weeks and seemingly hopeless idiots have been taught to read and

write so as to pass successfully examinations in these branches given to normal children of the same age.

The Hand a Primary Sense Organ.—Dr. Edward A. Rumely, one of the most progressive and successful educators in America, head of the Interlaken School for Boys, says, in an address before the Minnesota State Bankers' Association:

"We have still to learn that our hand is our primary sense organ. Man differs from the animals and is superior to them not because he has better eyes, or a sharper ear, or a keener sense of smell than they. He is superior to them mainly because the two fore members of his body, that in animals are either the wings or the fore-feet, have been freed from the burden of merely supporting or moving his weight. In the fore-members that thus became free, the thumb moved opposite the fingers and made the hand able to take hold of things, and through the hand the human species grew in both spiritual and intellectual grasp of the world.

"The club and the stone, which at first were only weapons, gradually shaped themselves into tools, and while plying these tools against the material world a knowledge of the properties of materials was gained that has made man able to master them. Step by step, this knowledge of physical properties was accumulated, and organized until finally it was hand acquired. Through this hand knowledge has come our marvelous understanding and control of the physical world that has enabled us to build our machines, our railroads, our cities.

"I look at a piece of wood. I see its color and its shape, but neither would tell me how that wood could be used for this table, chair, or in a building as