

# PRACTICAL CHEIROSOPHY

A SYNOPTICAL STUDY OF

## *The Science of the Hand*

BY

EDWARD HERON-ALLEN

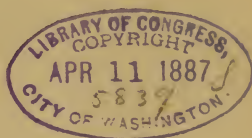
AUTHOR OF "A MANUAL OF CHEIROSOPHY," "THE SCIENCE OF THE HAND,"  
"A DISCOURSE OF CHYROMANCIE," "CODEX CHIROMANTLÆ," ETC.

WITH

## *Explanatory Plates and Diagrams*

BY

ROSAMUND BRUNEL HORSLEY



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## “ In Memoriam ”

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*To the Memory*

*Of days that are past, and of hours that have long gone by :*

*INSCRIBED*

*With the name of a Friend*

*Whose gentle hands have turned the last leaf*

*Of a book that is ended :*

¶ Dedicate

THESE LABOURS OF MINE IN A NEW WORLD

اتلان اوق کیرودونر

آنانکه محیط فضل و آداب شدند  
از جمع کمال شمع اصحاب شدند  
زه این شب تارک نبردند برون  
گفتند فساد و در خواب شدند

هارون

۱۸۵۶ م ۶۰

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## PREFATORY EXCURSION.

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THE first lecture that I had the pleasure of giving in the United States was delivered from the notes from which, in turn, this little book has been written,—has been written in odd moments saved from the wreck of time, amid the rapids of existence in New York. It is therefore, perhaps, necessary that I should apologize for the manner in which I have dealt with a subject that stands in no need of any apology in itself, and should offer this word of explanation of the style in which this Opusculum has been prepared. In revising the transcript of the stenographic notes which I caused to be taken of that lecture, I have frequently been astonished at my own temerity in attempting to discuss, within such narrow limits of time and space, a subject so vast as that of *The Hand*; were it not that I had pledged myself to the preparation of this permanent record of the remarks I was enabled by the time at my disposal to make, I should more than once have laid down my pen in despair.

I have done what I could, during the process of revision, to give to my work the semblance, at any rate, of a completeness which it does not, — cannot, possess ; but even now, at the moment that the sheets are ready to leave the press, I am overwhelmed by the knowledge of my inability to give completeness even to a *sketch* of the subject which has been identified with my name in two continents. At the request, therefore, of a number of those who were unable to be present on that occasion, and whom I shall never — in deference to a deeply rooted national aversion to twice-told tales — be able to address to the same effect in the future, I deliver these sheets to the printer, “*not* as a guaranty of good faith, but for publication,” in the hope that in gratifying a widely expressed curiosity with regard to that lecture, I shall not offend those to whom, like myself, the Science of Cheirosophy is a not un-important branch of the great study of human nature, — a branch incapable of being adequately honored between the covers of a “Hand-book” — the term being used in the literary and not the Cheirosophic sense.

I have taken advantage of the “cool reflection” which has followed the delivery of my lecture, to add a few passages, which I would fain have introduced

into my discourse, did I not hold it to be a lecturer's duty to his audience, to be as brief as circumstances will permit. I have also utilized the opportunities thus offered me, to append a fairly complete system of notes, which may help those of my readers who feel a sufficient interest in the subject to probe the matters referred to more deeply; and I have further made reference, where it has seemed necessary or advisable, to my larger works on the Science of Cheirosophy, so that this little work may, as it were, serve for an elementary guide to the study of those larger volumes.

I claim the indulgence of the public for this little book on one ground alone: that it may serve as an introduction to the Science, for many whose attention has not hitherto been called to its value as a practical means of diagnosing the characters of our fellow-men. May I hope, that in awakening a *new* interest in the minds of some of my readers, I have acted for them as pioneer along a path which may lead them—who knows?—to a solution of the intricate problem that must so often have perplexed them,—I mean themselves!

ED. HERON-ALLEN.

EVERETT HOUSE, NEW YORK,  
Jan. 7, 1887.



# PRACTICAL CHEIROSOPHY.

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## INTRODUCTION.

THE pleasure with which I approach the task which I have undertaken, in attempting to record in this form the remarks I have been privileged to make from the lecture-platform, is sensibly modified by regret,—regret that the space at my disposal is far too limited to enable me to write a fractional part of what I should wish to record upon a subject which has been one of intense interest to me in the years that are past, and which is one which touches us all very nearly. The subject, however, has this one great advantage: it stands in no need of any preliminary apology; its importance is its own introduction; and I will therefore address myself at once to the subject that we have before us, and call your attention to some points which I trust will interest you in connection with the human Hand.

There is, I think, no need for me to lay emphasis upon the paramount importance of the hand in the human economy. This has been acknowledged ever since Aristotle, in the fourth century before Christ, called it "the organ of the organs,"<sup>1</sup> the active agent of the passive powers of the entire human system; and we, in these latter days, shall hardly be prepared to controvert this statement, when we reflect that there exists no human action, and hardly any rite or ceremony, in which the hand is not, if not prime agent, at least an important actor. Look only at the fountain-head of all knowledge, — literature: is it not by means of the works of their *hands*, by their writings, that we are enabled to hold, as Galen says,<sup>2</sup> converse with all the venerable sages, both of remote antiquity and of the recent past, with all those intellectual heroes who have bequeathed to us in writing the intellectual treasures of their own divine imaginations?

We have only to pass from this to the contemplation of the manufactures (which it would be impossible to conceive, were men created without hands), to be brought to this inevitable

<sup>1</sup> ΠΕΡΙ ΖΩΩΝ ΜΟΡΙΩΝ. Book iv. cap. 9.

<sup>2</sup> De Usu Partium Corporis Humani. Book i. cap. i.

conviction:—that (to borrow an illustration from Darwin) it is by his hands that man hangs, monkey-like, from the branches of the Tree of Knowledge.

Not only in writing and in manufactures, but in verbal instruction, in the pulpit, in the senate, and in the drama, the part which is played by the human hand is one, the importance of which has occupied the attention of the highest authorities in these matters; and the varied emotions, expressions, and significations which may be conveyed by the hands alone have been made the subject not only of celebrated passages in the works of such writers as Quintilian the orator,<sup>3</sup> and Montaigne the essayist,<sup>4</sup> but of entire works upon the movements and gestures of the hands as an aid to oratory.<sup>5</sup> What could be more significant as a practical confirmation of what I say, than the fact that after the murder of Cicero at Caieta, his hands as well as his head were sent to be exposed in the Roman Forum, as the means whereby he had cajoled and deluded the Roman citizens?

<sup>3</sup> De Institutione Oratorica. Book xi. cap. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Apologie de Raimond Sebond. Book ii. cap. 12.

<sup>5</sup> *Sc. J. Bulwer: Chirologia; or the Naturall Language of the Hand.* (London, 1644.)

The ancients were therefore actuated by the keenest reasoning in looking upon the amputation of the hands as the severest punishment which they could inflict upon their enemies;<sup>6</sup> for a man without hands is not even the ninth part of a man. He simply cumbereth the earth, so far as any practical utility is concerned: though there have been recorded many instances of curious and minute forms of workmanship, and even the playing of such musical instruments as the violin, being effected by persons who have been either born without hands, or have been deprived of them early in life; even down to the instance quoted by Sir Charles Bell,<sup>7</sup> of the Russian beggar born without arms, who, haunting a wood a short distance from Moscow, used to murder wayfarers by stunning them with a blow of his head, dragging them into the wood, and despatching them with his teeth.

Many celebrated men have been one-handed. We know that Nelson lost his right arm at Teneriffe, and Cervantes the use of his left at the battle of Lepanto in 1751; but these acci-

<sup>6</sup> Xenophon: 'ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΝ. Book ii. cap. 1 (31).

<sup>7</sup> The Hand: its Mechanism and Vital Endowments. (London, 1832.)

dents did not, in the former case, interfere with the talents of Horatio Nelson as Lord. High Admiral of the Fleet, nor in the latter prevent the evolution of those heroes of romance — Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Still, all such cases must be looked upon as historic exceptions; and we come back to the original comments of Anaxagoras and of Aristotle, to the effect that man, being the wisest of all animals, has alone, of all animals, been gifted with hands, the instruments of his high intellectual faculties.<sup>8</sup>

To echo my words, I have said that man alone of all animals has hands: that is to say, in no other creature do we find either extremities so perfectly articulated, or mental powers so highly developed; and commencing at the lowest forms of animal life, and progressing upwards along the scale of created beings, the eminent natural historian, Milne Edwards, has observed<sup>9</sup> that “the faculties of the mammalia are elevated in proportion as their extremities are the better constructed for prehension and touch.” And, to go a step farther, we find an

<sup>8</sup> Aristotle and Galen: *vide* the passages quoted in notes 1 and 2.

<sup>9</sup> A Manual of Zoölogy. (London, 1863.) §§ 306-343.

ascending scale of intelligence among the animals which are gifted with the nearest approach to, and best substitutes for, hands; as in the case of the elephant, an instance which has been cited both by Lucretius and by Cicero.<sup>10</sup>

Sir Richard Owen, in a most interesting little book "On the Nature of Limbs,"<sup>11</sup> has traced step by step the homologies between the human hand and the paws of the brute creation, with the effect of demonstrating that the third finger is the one digit that no animal is without, and that as the extremities become less and less articulated, that is to say jointed, so as to be capable of varied movement, it is the outer fingers which we discover by comparative anatomy to be missing, and it is the third or middle finger that represents in man the hoof of the horse, and of such animals.

To man, then, and to man alone, is the perfect construction of the hand, as we see it, peculiarly adapted; and it is to man alone with his varied mental and physical requirements, that, as Galen remarked, the Creator has given, in lieu of every other natural weapon or organ

<sup>10</sup> Lucretius: *De Rerum Naturâ*. Book ii. line 536. Cicero: *De Naturâ Deorum*. Book ii. s. 123.

<sup>11</sup> London, 1849. p. 29.

of defence, that exquisite and universally endowed instrument, THE HAND.

We know, that as different orders of created beings have differently constructed extremities, so various races of men, even various nations of the same race, show marked varieties of characteristic in the shapes of their hands. It is my intention to carry the question farther still, and to put before you the data upon which I have formed my unalterable conviction that not only do these clearly marked diversities of characteristic occur between the hands of races and of nations, but that in every community of men and women certain physical and mental characteristics are clearly signified by certain concomitant peculiarities in the formation of the hands ; and that by observing these characteristics of the hands, we may read off those characteristics of the mind, by means of the simple and physical science of CHEIROSONOMY.

We are most of us prepared to admit, from the sculptor's point of view, the grandeur and beauty of a large and finely modelled male hand ; but there are very few of us who do not confess in our hearts a preference for the smooth and small and gently moulded hand that

characterizes for us, what has been called justly the softer, and unjustly the weaker, sex, favorably contrasting such hands with the rough and red fist, which, according to Sir Philip Sidney,<sup>12</sup> indicates "robust health, a warm heart, and distance from the metropolis," or, according to Don Quixote, great strength.<sup>13</sup> It is interesting to note, that some of the keenest and cleverest men that history has known have been renowned for the elegance, — the womanliness, of their hands. Among such I may quote the great Sultan Mahmoud II., Lord Byron, and Pope Leo X.

In Persia, the hawthorn blossom is called the "white hand of Moses,"<sup>14</sup> and "the white hand" is always looked upon as the symbol of innocence and of gratitude;<sup>15</sup> whence, conversely, our expression, "red-handed," as the synonym of guilt. I shall have something to say later on about the importance attached to the hand among Oriental nations, at present I have said

<sup>12</sup> *Vide* Ed. Heron-Allen: *The Science of the Hand*. (London, 1886.) ¶ 10.

<sup>13</sup> Don Quixote: Part ii. chap. 23.

<sup>14</sup> Rubaiyât of Omar-i-Khayyam. Nicolas' text and translation (Paris, 1867), 186th quatrain. Fitzgerald's translation (Boston, 1886) fourth verse.

<sup>15</sup> Arabian Nights (Burton), vol. iv. p. 185. Ed. Heron-Allen: *The Science of the Hand*, ¶ 11.

enough to serve as an introduction to a consideration of the bases upon which a complete science of — shall I call it divination? — has been raised, having the Human Hand as its point of departure.

Indeed, indeed, have I not some right to claim a hearing for the science of cheirosophy? The labors of Johann Kaspar Lavater have culminated in the establishment of the science of physiognomy.<sup>16</sup> The untiring researches and efforts of Franz Joseph Gall and Johann Kaspar Spurzheim<sup>17</sup> have secured a place among the sciences of to-day for that of phrenology. Now, I claim your attention for a space whilst I bring before you a science many centuries older than either of these, — a science which I trust I shall be able to prove to you to be more easy in application, more simple in acquisition, and more certain in its results, than either or both.

I am not going to bore you with theories. I have done that enthusiastically in my two larger works on the hand.<sup>18</sup> I ask your attention now

<sup>16</sup> J. K. Lavater: *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniss und Menschenliebe* (Leipzig, 1775-78).

<sup>17</sup> F. J. Gall: *Anatomie et Physiologie du système nerveux, et du cerveau en particulier* (Paris, 1809-19).

<sup>18</sup> Ed. Heron-Allen: *A Manual of Cheirosophy*. (London, 1885). *The Science of the Hand* (London, 1886). New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 27 West 23d St.

to a few notes upon the hand, which I trust will interest you as much as they have interested me, and to a short exposition of the actual principles and practice of my science, which may help you to understand the strange problems which must often have perplexed you, — namely, yourselves.

## PART I.

## HAND SUPERSTITIONS AND CUSTOMS.

I HAVE, before this, had occasion to say that I believe there exists no symbolical action, adopted by the human race, in which the hand does not play a — or THE — principal part. In proof of this, let us revert to simplicity.

How many times a day do we shake hands with our friends! Sometimes this action is quite mechanical and meaningless; sometimes it is quite the reverse: but, however we perform the ceremony, I do not think there are many of us who remember that people only go through it with one another to emphasize the fact that they are *not* concealing a weapon wherewith to surreptitiously murder the person with whom they are shaking hands. Yet such was the origin of hand-shaking. Now, indeed, that the custom has become, as I say, mechanical and universal, it is quite a study by itself,—the various methods in which people go through this ceremony, from the dreaded individual who

shakes hands with you “like *that*” (as Gilbert says), to the haughty person of whom the poet has written, —

“ With finger-tips he condescends  
To touch the fingers of his friends,  
As if he feared their palms might brand  
Some moral stigma on his hand ! ”

Closely allied to this, is the custom, which obtained among the nations of classical antiquity, and which, indeed, still exists among savage tribes, of holding up the hands as a sign of peace before coming to close quarters for the purposes of palaver ; and among modern civilized nations, those of us who know the lonely moor districts of England, and the still more lonely prairie roads of North America, may perhaps have been disconcerted by the sudden direction, “Hold up your hands!” from the mouth of the casual footpad : the signification in each case being to demonstrate the fact that the person so placed is unarmed, or at any rate powerless to resist.

Following the like analogy, — the abrogation of all power, and the consequent supplication for mercy, — we have the custom of folding the hands in prayer, a custom which has prevailed

since the earliest historic times;<sup>19</sup> and allied with this is the Oriental rule which ordains that the hands shall be hidden in the presence of a superior, by crossing the arms, or by hiding the hands in a fold of the robe. So, again, in giving the hand, as the bride does in the marriage ceremony, or as the vassals did to their lords in the mediæval ceremony of the homage, the like abrogation of will is intended to be symbolized. From this we get to the kissing of hands — perhaps the most abject expression of humility that is known to civilization,<sup>20</sup> being reserved solely for princes and fair women, to whom in this manner we signalize our allegiance and submission. Of course I do not overlook the kissing of the priest's hands in the celebrations of the Roman-Catholic Church, but this is more a matter of ritual than of personal homage from man to man.<sup>21</sup> It is said that the practice of kissing one's hands to people, by way of salutation, is a relic of the Parsee fire-worship; the ancient Persian custom being to place the hand upon the mouth, and raise it towards the sun.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Aristotle: *Περὶ Κοσμοῦ*: Κεφ Ζ'.

<sup>20</sup> Ed. Heron-Allen: *A Manual of Cheirosophy*. ¶¶ 18, 19.

<sup>21</sup> F. Rous: *Archeologicæ Atticæ* (London, 1685), p. 278.

<sup>22</sup> J. Brand: *Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*. Hazlitt's edition (London, 1870).

These instances are sufficient to point the fact that the hand is more or less universally regarded as a symbol of power. To such a point is this carried by the Moslem races, that in Morocco even the number five is never mentioned in the presence of the Emperor, and the fingers of the hand represent a rosary of the five precepts of Islam; viz., "Belief in Allah and in Muhammad his prophet," "Prayer," "Almsgiving," "The holy pilgrimage to Mecca," and "The Fast of Ramadan."

Again, we find traces of the same recognition in a thousand different words and phrases bringing in the word "hand," in its Latin, Greek, or English forms, with the signification of power or initiative force.<sup>23</sup> Thus we have many such lines in Shakspeare, as, "He is a tall man *of his hands*;" and in Bacon, as, "At an even *hand*," signifying equality.

Nothing was more common, at one time, than the oath by the hand, which was either held up, as is still the custom in Scotch and French courts of law, or laid upon the altar or Bible; customs which bring us to the various religious rites, such as the laying-on of hands in the consecration of priests, and in the confirmation

<sup>23</sup> A Manual of Cheirosophy. ¶¶ 14, 15.

service. The episcopal blessing, which is given with the thumb and first two fingers only extended, is most interesting to us ; for its signification is thus laid down in works upon the ritual.<sup>24</sup> The thumb is the representative of Unity in the Godhead—the cross, by the by, in baptism is directed to be traced upon the child's forehead with the thumb ;—the first finger is the emblem of Christ, the indicator of God's will, and its revealer to mankind. So, too, the first finger was held by the older cheiromants to be the representative of Jupiter. The second finger represents, in the ritual, the Holy Ghost. So that the three digits held thus represent the Trinity, which is invoked in the blessing. The ring in the marriage-service is placed upon the third finger, in token that after the Trinity the man's eternal allegiance is given to his wife, — the ring being the symbol of eternity. In the old marriage service, the ring used to be placed on the thumb and the first two fingers in turn, and then left upon the third finger of the woman's hand. This also is, of course, the origin of the position of the fingers in the little coral or metal hands worn in the

<sup>24</sup> Gulielmus Durandus: *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* (Venice, 1589), p. 140, *verso*.

south of Italy to avert the evil eye, the hand being cast either in the position prescribed for the blessing, or in that known as "the devil's horns."<sup>25</sup> The most potent of these charms is that known as the *Mano Pantea*, in which the hand is embossed with various symbols of occult meaning but infallible power!

Closely connected with "the laying-on of hands" was the old ceremony of "touching for the king's evil." On a given day, people afflicted with particular diseases used to assemble at Whitehall; and the sovereign used either to touch them personally, or used to have distributed to them pieces of money, or rings, which had been hallowed by the royal touch.<sup>26</sup> Many authentic accounts of this ceremony are to be found in contemporary literature. The custom is of the highest antiquity. Suetonius and Tacitus record instances of cures performed in this manner by the Emperor Vespasian at Alexandria, cures which are wholly marvellous in the recital;<sup>27</sup> and as late as the reign of

<sup>25</sup> A Manual of Cheirosophy. ¶¶ 23, 24.

<sup>26</sup> Gentleman's Magazine. 1747, p. 13; 1751, p. 414; 1829 (ii.), p. 499.

<sup>27</sup> Godwin's Lives of the Necromancers (London, 1834), p. 155. Hume's Essays, Part III., sect. x.

Queen Anne, Dr. Johnson was touched for some real or fancied ill by the sovereign. Her-  
rick has beautifully recorded such a cure in the  
lines : —

“Oh, lay that hand on me,  
Adored Cæsar, and my faith is such,  
I shall be cured, if that my king but touch.  
The evil is not yours, my sorrow sings,  
Mine is the evil, but the cure the king’s.”

*Hesperides.*

What I have now said sufficiently demon-  
strates the importance with which the hand has  
always been invested, and gives us some insight  
into the atrocity of the punishment of cutting  
off the hands, which was so much in vogue  
among the ancient Greeks and Romans, which  
has been largely practised in our own country  
[England], and which exists still as a favorite  
form of punishment among Oriental nations ; a  
punishment which is the most horrible that it  
is possible to conceive, for it entirely and per-  
manently precludes the possibility of the suf-  
ferer ever making his own living honestly in  
the future. As late as the seventeenth cen-  
tury, this punishment was inflicted in England  
upon persons who should commit any assault  
in a court of justice ; and Mr. Pepys refers

graphically and quaintly to an occasion of the kind.<sup>28</sup>

From the cutting-off of hands to the cutting-off of thumbs is but a short step; and from the Roman coward, who by cutting off his thumbs, lest he should be sent to the wars, produced the modern word "poltroon" (from the words *pollice truncato*), to the invention of the thumb-screw by the Spaniards, the amputation or mutilation of the thumb, as being the most important digit of the hand, has been awarded as a punishment for felonies and political offences of various degrees.

Upon the importance of the thumb in the study of the hand, too much stress could not possibly be laid. It was with the thumb that the Romans spared the fallen gladiator's life, or condemned him to death; it is by licking his thumb that the Ulster man clinches his bargains; whilst it was by biting his thumb at Abram that Sampson, in "Romeo and Juliet," engaged the adherents of the Montagues and Capulets in a street brawl.<sup>29</sup> It is by the pricking of her thumbs that the witch in "Macbeth" knows that "something evil her way comes," —

<sup>28</sup> Science of the Hand, *Index: sub* Amputation of the Hand.

<sup>29</sup> Act I., scene 2.

a peculiarity of this digit which was shared, we are told, by the Irish hero Fingal.

Who is there who has never heard of the itching palm<sup>30</sup> as a sign of avarice? Stevens has truly observed that all sudden pains of the body, which cannot immediately be accounted for, were anciently assumed to be presages of events about to happen. This theory concerning the itching palm has been developed from a much older one, which lays it down as an axiom that an itching palm is the forerunner of a coming legacy, or gift of money; — a superstition which came originally from Persia.<sup>31</sup>

Is there any one among us who has not heard a score of jingles and superstitions concerning finger-nails? Even as I write, there come flitting through my mind the old rhymes as to the days for cutting them, and the white spots which we find in them. As to what are the right days on which to pare the nails, the superstitions are innumerable and extremely antique. No Roman citizen would ever pare his nails save upon the *Feriæ Nundinæ*, which recurred at intervals of

<sup>30</sup> Science of the Hand. ¶ 4.

<sup>31</sup> G. Atkinson: Customs and Manners of the Women of Persia. (London, 1832.)

nine days ;<sup>32</sup> and I have come across old ladies in country districts who not only choose carefully the days upon which to cut their own and their children's nails, but even make a point of cutting them over the leaves of the Bible, to insure their continuance in the paths of honesty and of virtue.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Ausonius : *Eclogarium*, 373.

<sup>33</sup> Brand's *Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*. (London, 1870.)

## PART II.

### THE PHYSIOLOGY OF THE HAND.

LET us devote a few moments to the consideration of the exquisite construction of the member with which we are concerned at this present.

The first thing which cannot fail to strike us at once, concerning the hand, is its complete perfection. In no other combination of bones, muscles, and nerves, and in no other animal, do we find a perfection which results in such superiority with regard to strength, variety, rapidity, and extent of motion ; and this perfection resulting, as it undoubtedly does, from the intimate relations which exist between the hand and the intellect, we are irresistibly compelled to ask with Sir Charles Bell, "Is it nothing to have our minds awakened to the perception of the numerous proofs of design which present themselves in the study of the hand, to be brought to the conviction that every thing in its structure is orderly and systematic, and that

the most perfect mechanism, the most minute and curious apparatus, and sensibilities the most delicate and appropriate, are all combined in operation that we may move the hand.”<sup>34</sup> And further, we are bound to say, with Galen,<sup>35</sup> that its entire structure is such that it could not be improved by any conceivable alteration.

In the human hand, each part is subordinated to a harmonious combination of function with another part, and each by a special modification of its own, so that every single bone is distinguishable from another. Each digit has its own peculiar character and name; and the thumb, which among the lower animals is the least important and constant of the five digits, becomes in man the most important of all, making the member “a hand,” properly so called, as Professor Sir Richard Owen has justly remarked;<sup>36</sup> the hand, which characterizes man alone, in justification of the words of the Persian poet, Omar-i-Khayyam, —

“Ten Powers and nine Spheres, eight Heavens made He,  
And Planets seven of six sides we see;  
Five Senses, and four Elements, three Souls,  
Two Worlds, but only *one*, O MAN! like thee.”<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *op. cit.*      <sup>35</sup> *op. cit.*

<sup>36</sup> On the Nature of Limbs. (London, 1849.)

<sup>37</sup> Whinfield's translation, verse 120. (London, 1883.)

And when we come to consider the question, it is the thumb, and the thumb alone, that gives to the hand the finishing touch of its perfection. Without the thumb, how impotent, comparatively speaking, the grasp of the fingers! but let the thumb be brought into opposition and action, and the fingers find a fulcrum whence to apply their tremendous leverage, and the hand becomes, for its size, the most powerful mechanism of the human body.

"But," people have said to me, "I can never see any difference between the hands of different people." That this should be literally the case, seems to me to be impossible, regard being had to the fact that man is a sentient being, endowed with powers of observation. But a very little experience will enormously increase the acuteness of those powers of observation. And just as the specialist and the connoisseur come to distinguish infinitesimal variations in works of art, just as the banker's clerk detects the forged bank-note after it has deceived many people less accustomed to handling such things, the cheirosophist very soon comes to compare mentally the hands which he sees, with all those that he has ever seen before, until the classification of hands, according to the

leading types to which I am about to draw your attention, becomes a purely mechanical operation, and it becomes a familiar fact, that, just as our faces and characters present infinite variations, so no two hands, or pairs of hands, are identical.

There exists a very interesting account of a man discovering a murderer solely by the convolutions of the skin upon the ball of the thumb.

Visiting the scene of the murder shortly after its committal, the detective found upon the sill of the window by which the murderer had escaped, an imprint of the spiral lines of the ball of his thumb left in blood. Tracing this carefully, he tracked the murderer gradually from place to place, taking impressions of the balls of hundreds of thumbs on his way, under the pretence of telling men's fortunes by this means; but he never found a figure to correspond with the one traced in blood at the scene of the murder, until he found the murderer himself, and then, suddenly accusing him, brought him to confession and the scaffold.

This infinite variation is still more perceptible in the general formation of the hands; and by a careful study and comparison the cheirosophist

is enabled, as I shall presently show, to pronounce upon the capacities of the owner of the hand, just as the sportsman can tell from the foot of the dog or the horse the breed and capabilities of the animal. "*Ex pede Herculem*," is the motto upon which we proceed in cheirosophy, as in most other sciences; and by studying the infinite variations of hands, you will come imperceptibly, and by degrees, to a perfect understanding of the varied characteristics of man.

The gradual and perfect development of the hand is one of the most interesting studies of the physiologist. In the human embryo, when there appears no definite bodily formation, the rudimentary hand is plainly distinguishable. At birth, save for the disproportion of the palm to the fingers, the hand is perfectly formed, and the main osseous construction is complete at about the age of fourteen; so that at fourteen the permanent shape given to the hand by the mental capacities may be read like an open book, by the expert in cheirosophy. This perfected development of the hand is what must next occupy our attention; though, be it understood, I do not propose to discourse here at length as I have done in "*A Manual of Chei-*

rosophy," and in "The Science of the Hand," upon the anatomy of the member. Still it is necessary that, before impressing upon your minds the leading types of hands, you should be in a position to understand by the development of what tissues the variations of those types are produced.

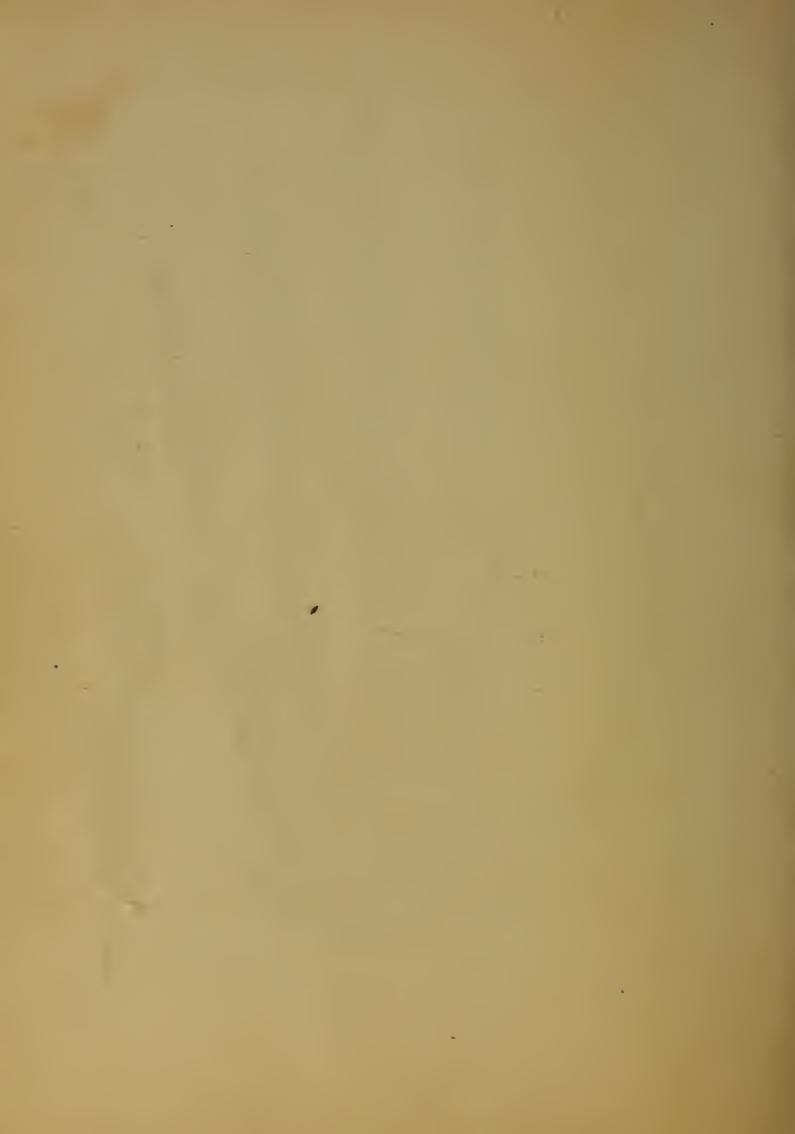
The skeleton of the hand consists of twenty-seven bones, eight composing the carpus or wrist, five composing the metacarpus or palm, twelve forming the phalanges of the fingers, and two forming the thumb. (Plate I.) The small bones of the carpus, fitting exquisitely into one another as they do, have their articulating surfaces covered with a layer of cartilage, so that the whole forms a quasi-solid and highly elastic mass, which is gifted with enormous strength, and which forms, as it were, a "buffer" which is capable of resisting a very powerful jar indeed. This mass of bones is not completely developed until the twelfth year, which accounts for the fact that until this age the wrist is comparatively weak.

The five long bones of the metacarpus are slightly incurved, which imparts the familiar hollowness to the palm. At the lower ends of these bones, a little mass of bone, termed an



*Plate I. — THE BONES OF THE HAND.*

(From a male adult skeleton.)



*epiphysis*, becomes gradually developed, and attaches itself to the shaft at about the twentieth year. This adds enormously to the strength of the hand, so that it may be said that the *perfect* ossification of the hand does not take place until that time.

The fingers consist, as we see, of three phalanges, and the thumb of two, which correspond with the first and third of the fingers, the middle phalanx being absent. Besides the little masses of bone to which I have alluded in the metacarpus, we often find among the tendons at the joint of the thumb, little embedded bones termed "sesamoid bones:" these enormously increase the strength, the leverage, of the joints; so that where you see prominent joints upon the thumbs, you may always be sure of finding great manual strength.

There are two principal layers of muscles in the hand, a superficial and a deep layer; they are attached to the ends of the bones by means of the tendons and the little ridges called *processes*; and the point concerning them, to which I desire to call your attention, is the exquisite mechanism and enormous strength of these tendons, which, radiating from the wrist, give unlimited variety, and almost unlimited force,

to the movements of the muscles of the hands. You see these particularly when the back of the hand is made rigid. Observe also the powerful tendon of the thumb.

The hand is perhaps more liberally supplied with arteries and veins than any other member of the body. It is, to a great measure, this fact which gives to the hand its intense keenness of sensibility of touch. There used to exist an interesting old superstition (which is, I regret to say, without foundation) to the effect that the third finger was connected directly with the heart by means of a vein.<sup>38</sup>

I should greatly like to discuss the nervous system of the hand, but the space at my disposal renders such a discussion impossible. We must, however, bear in mind that the nerves are more numerous, more delicate, and more highly developed in the hand, than in any other part of the human body, excepting perhaps the lips. In the hands and lips, the nerves are first developed in the human subject; and it is for this reason that a baby always grasps with that nervous infantile clutch any thing which presents itself, and carries it instinctively and immediately to its mouth for identification. This

<sup>38</sup> A Manual of Cheirosophy. ¶ 37.

nervous system reaches, as you know, its highest development in the skin; and it is the rows of touch corpuscles, the bulbs at the ends of the nerves, and the little sensitive heads called "pacinian bodies," which form the lines in the palms, with which we have presently to deal. These lines are formed by the culminating points of the sensory apparatus, and *not*, as people are so fond of saying, by the mere folding of the hands. If proof were required of this statement, we should find it in the fact that these lines are found in the palms of the hands at birth, and even long before birth, in the human infant.<sup>39</sup>

Concerning the physiology of the hand, I have done. I particularly wanted, however, to give you a few leading facts in this connection, because the formation, the physical composition, of the hand, like that of every part of the body, depends entirely upon the uses to which it is put, the circumstances and physical conditions which surround it; in a word, *upon the mental characteristics which prompt and direct those uses to which it is put*. It is a well-known physiological fact, that upon the duties imposed upon

<sup>39</sup> Science of the Hand, p. 70, note 91; and Quain's Anatomy, vol. ii. p. 214.

the limbs, their constitution and forms depend ; a fact of which I have treated at much length in "A Manual of Cheirosophy." I am therefore about to explain to you the science of cheirosophy by reading these data backward : that is to say, I am not going to tell you that certain mental and physical peculiarities will produce certain given forms of hand, *but* I am going to show you certain types of hands, and tell you what are the mental characteristics which have brought about the formation of those types, so that, by looking at the hand, you can tell at a glance the character, the instincts, the habits, and the intellectual faculties of such people as you may be thrown into contact with.

*This* is what I have been leading up to ; *this* is the science of cheirosophy ; and *this* is the art of which I am about to lay before you what have been erroneously called "the secrets."

## PART III.

ON THE SHAPES OF HANDS:  
CHEIROGNOMY.

THAT man should be ever striving to attain to that class of knowledge which is known as "divination," is hardly strange; man's nature, as we know (alas, too well!) being ever to progress. How many are there to-day, who from their hearts would say, like Democritus, "I would rather be the possessor of one of the cardinal secrets of nature, than of the diadem of Persia."

The time has passed when such studies as this should be met only with derision. Modern science has established the doctrine of the fixity of the Laws of Nature. We know that the events of our lives succeed one another *in consequence of one another*; that the whole system of human existence obeys the great law of cause and effect; and judging a man's character by means of a glance at his physical peculiarities is, after all, merely placing implicit faith in what

Newman Smyth has called "the divine veracity of nature."<sup>40</sup> The law of continual development, which has evolved astronomy out of astrology, chemistry out of alchemy, and craniology out of metoposcopy, has derived yet another science from an original, which was in its inception hardly more than the hap-hazard and conjectural vaticinations of the impudent charlatan; has brought the Science of Cheirosophy out of the ruins of the ancient and mediæval Palmistry.

No one will deny that the use of an organ or member is indicated by its aspects; and from the use indicated by the aspects, what is more easy to deduce than the mental characteristics which prompt that use? (Lavater told Goethe, on one occasion, that when in the practice of his priestly office he held the bag in church, he tried to observe only the hands; and he fully satisfied himself that in every individual the shape of the hand and of the fingers, and their action, were distinctly different and individually characteristic.)

Again, it has been said that forced labor of a particular kind will entirely alter the shape of the hands. Now, this is not the case. Labor diametrically opposed to the inclinations of the

<sup>40</sup> Old Faiths in New Light (New York, 1879), p. 252.

mind, if forced upon an individual, will often modify the *outlines* of a hand; but it will never alter the shape, so as to render it uncertain what was the natural bent of the inclination. The hand cannot alter. And it is here that I claim for cheirosophy an advantage over every other science of the kind. The phrenologist may be deceived by the growth of the hair; the physiognomist may be led astray by a fixed and unnatural expression of the face: but the cheirosophist finds in the hand an unvarying and unalterable indication of the character, a mirror whose images the bearer is powerless to distort.

The science of Cheirosophy is divided into two great branches, — Cheirognomy, or the science of deducing the characteristics of man from the shape of his hands; and Cheiromancy, or the art of expounding to man the events of his life, and the inner shades of his character, by an inspection of his palms. The latter of these two branches is of incomparable antiquity, but has been reduced within reasonable bounds, and invested with all the attributes of an exact science, only within the last fifty years, by Adrien Desbarrolles. The former is a comparatively new science, having been formulated at the beginning of this century by M. le Capi-

taine Casimir Stanislas d'Arpentigny, whose book, "La Science de la Main," it has been my most interesting task and labor of love to translate and to annotate.

M. d'Arpentigny first had his thoughts turned in this direction whilst serving with his regiment in the Peninsular war in the year 1820. One day, walking along one of the highroads of Andalusia, he was accosted by a gypsy woman, who offered to read for him his fortune upon his palm in exchange for the ordinary *douceur*. The language in which she clothed the indications which she expounded, struck him profoundly; and from that day forth he commenced to study the works of the older cheiromants, and to observe carefully the hands of all with whom he was thrown in contact. Near where he lived in the country stood the house of a celebrated mechanic and mathematician, whose wife was imbued with a strong taste for art. The result of this opposition of taste in husband and wife was that they gave a series of alternately artistic and scientific receptions, to which Captain d'Arpentigny went indifferently. By degrees, he found that he could class the various guests of his host and hostess by the aspects of their hands; and going a step

farther, he found that hands might be classed, for practical purposes, under eight categories, — hands which belonged to any one of seven clearly accentuated and distinguished types, or to an eighth class consisting of hands which could not be properly placed in any of the preceding seven.

The construction of these seven types, upon which I am about to embark, composes the science of Cheirognomy. Firstly, however, I will draw your attention to a few general indications with regard to the hand considered as a whole.

I If the palm of the hand is narrow and skinny, it denotes always timidity, a feeble mind, and want of moral and intellectual force. If, on the other hand, it is too thick and big and strong, it denotes a low intelligence, and a tendency to brutality. A hollow, deep palm always signifies misery, ill-luck, and failures in life.

II Fingers are divided into two great classes : these are, fingers which are smooth, i.e., whose joints are not prominent ; and fingers which are knotty, i.e., whose joints stand out and are clearly visible. These latter, again, are subdivided into fingers with one joint only prominent, and those with both.

a     Fingers which are smooth always denote a tendency to act upon instinct, upon impulse, upon intuition, rather than by reason, calculation, or deduction. If your fingers are smooth, you are highly endowed with more natural tact and grace than your knotty-fingered fellows.

     Fingers which are knotty denote always a tendency to order and arrangement. If your fingers are such, you will be gifted with good taste, which is born of reason, rather than with natural tact, which is instinctive. If the *upper* joint (A in Plate II.) is developed, it denotes a well-ordered mind, a neat, administrative disposition, and reason in the ideas. If the *lower* joint (B in Plate II.) is developed, this order and reason applies itself to things material rather than to things mental and psychological. The lower joint, therefore, is termed the joint of material order; the upper one is termed the joint of philosophy. The material and worldly mind is denoted by a development of the lower, whilst the philosophic mind is denoted by a development of the upper.

     Both joints developed indicate the most pronounced instincts of order and philosophy. Such hands denote science, analysis, and a

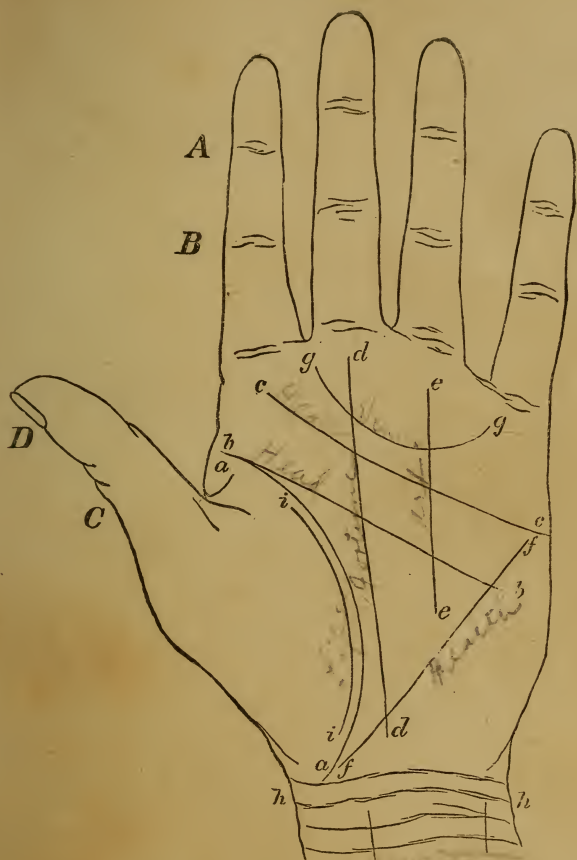


Plate II. — THE THUMB, THE JOINTS, AND THE  
LINES IN THE HAND.



strong love of and search after abstract and absolute truth.

Art is the domain of smooth, science is the domain of knotty fingers. These facts must be clearly laid hold of at the outset, for they are the very corner-stones of cheirognomy. A jointed hand can never become smooth, but with age and experience a smooth hand may become knotty. This change takes place when our minds have become more sceptic, more reasonable, and more mechanical than they were when the illusions of youth tinged all things with the roseate tints of poetry and of inspiration.

A hand is either long or short by comparison with its fellows, and the indications afforded by these peculiarities are of synthesis or of analysis. To explain: People with short fingers are quicker, more impulsive, act more on the spur of the moment, than people with long fingers; they prefer generalities to details, jump at once to conclusions, and are quick at grasping all the bearings of a subject or scheme. Their judgment is quick, and their action is prompt, making up their minds the moment a subject presents itself to them. If, however, the fingers are *very* short, it results in cruelty and want

of tact. Joints will assist the promptitude of short fingers, for the calculation of the joints will combine itself with the quickness of the short fingers.

With long fingers, on the contrary, we find a love of detail, an instinct of minutiae, and a punctilious carefulness, which amounts sometimes even to frivolity. Such persons are tidy as to their appointments, dignified, easily put out, and very careful about trifles. These characteristics will be intensified by a development of the upper joint in the fingers. Such people elaborate detail at the expense of the mass, are distrustful, and continually seek for inner meanings to things. M. d'Arpentigny himself had fingers of this description; and the result was, that his book on the hand is filled with an elaborate mass of details and side-issues, which is most distracting to the reader, unless his fingers harmonize with those of the author. Such fingers often also betray cowardice, deceit, and affectation.

Thus, therefore, large-handed people love details, and like things to be small and exquisitely finished and perfect, whilst small-handed people love masses, and like things to be large and grandiose. Minute workers always have

large hands, whereas the constructors of colossal works always have small hands. Thus, small-handed people always write large, whilst large-handed people always write small.

It is only the 'medium hand that can appreciate, *at the same time*, the mass and the details of a subject.

**VI** Thick fingers, especially at their bases, invariably denote luxury, and, when highly developed, sensuality. Twisted and malformed fingers, with short nails, denote cruelty, tyranny, and a worrying, teasing disposition. If a hand is stiff and hard, opening with difficulty to its fullest extent, it betrays stubbornness of character, and avarice. If, on the contrary, the fingers, being very supple, have a tendency to turn back, they denote, as a rule, cleverness and inquisitiveness, nearly always generosity, ending in extravagance.

If the fingers fit close together, it is a sign of avarice; if they are very smooth and transparent, they betray indiscretion and loquacity. If very twisted, so as to show considerable chinks between them, it is always a sign of that excess of sympathy, which is known to the vulgar as curiosity.

In examining the hand, observe particularly

whether or no the tips of the fingers are furnished with little fleshy protuberances, which stand out from the curved surfaces of the finger-tips. These, when present, always denote sensitiveness, which is more or less keen as the protuberance is more or less developed.

Beyond this, the tips of the fingers present four principal appearances. They are either spatulate (i.e., clubbed and broad), square, conic (or rounded like a thimble), or pointed. We shall consider the indications afforded by these formations, at greater length, when discussing the leading types of hands; shortly, their significations are as follows:—

If your fingers are broad—i.e., spatulate—at the tips, your main desire in life will be for action, activity, movement, locomotion, and manual exercises; you will love things from the utilitarian point of view; you will have tastes for agriculture, commerce, mechanics, industries, and the applied sciences. Bearing in mind what has been said concerning the joints, if your spatulate fingers are smooth, you will do these things spontaneously; if knotty, reasonably and by calculation.

If your finger-tips are square, your prevailing characteristics will be symmetry and exactitude

of habit and thought. You will have tastes for philosophy, languages, and logic ; in literature, you will require analysis and arrangement. You will be imbued with respect for established authority, and with a love of theories, of rhetoric, and of order and tidiness : *but*, unless your joints be developed, this love of tidiness will go no further ; i.e., it will not be practical. Both joints highly developed give one the most advanced passion for symmetry, regularity, and discipline. Square-fingered people are always musical : brilliant executants are always spatulate-fingered, but the most thorough musicians have always square hands. Singers, on the other hand, have always conic or pointed fingers.

With conic fingers, all your instincts will be artistic, your whole soul will be given over to a love of the beautiful, and you are certain to be enthusiastic and romantic. Joints give a certain moral force to such fingers as these, as also does a good-sized thumb.

If your fingers are pointed, — i.e., long and finely drawn out, — yours will be exclusively the domain of idealism, of religious fervor, and of indifference to worldly interests.

It must be borne in mind, that an exaggera-

tion of any of these formations indicates an excess, a diseased condition of the instincts indicated by the formation. Thus, an exaggerated pointedness will indicate excessive romanticism, folly, and imagination, which develops into the wildest eccentricity and into deceit.

The color of the hands varies so continually with the temperature, that it is practically impossible to lay down definite readings for it. But this one indication is infallible: if the hands are always white, never or hardly ever changing color, it is a sure sign of egoism, of selfishness, and of a want of real sympathy with the troubles of others.

As in physiology, so in Cheirosophy, the thumb is by far the most important part of the hand. It is divided into three parts: the root, or Mount of Venus; the second phalanx (C in Plate II.), which is that of logic; and the first (D in Plate II.), which is that of will. The second phalanx indicates our greater or less amount of perception, judgment, and reasoning power; the first, by its greater or less development, indicates the strength of our will, our decision, and our capacity for taking the initiative. If the nailed phalanx is short, weak, and

thin, it betrays feebleness of will, want of decision, and of promptitude in action, with want of self-reliance and constancy. With such a phalanx of will, if the lower phalanx (of logic) is long and strong, you will be able to give excellent reasons for your lack of decision. Your common-sense will be excellent, but you will not have sufficient strength of will-power to put your common-sense into practice, and act boldly on the suggestions of your better judgment.

If, on the contrary, the phalanx of will be long, and that of logic be short, you will be quick, active, impulsive, and tenacious of opinions and purpose; but, lacking the logic to guide your will aright, you will run into the danger of unreasoning obstinacy.

If the phalanx of will is not long, but broad, it indicates always obstinacy; and if this breadth is excessive, it betrays passion, furious impulse, tyranny, brutality, and even a tendency to murder.

When the upper joint of the thumb turns back, it is always a sign of extravagance, of luxury, and of generosity carried to an extreme. It will therefore be understood, as a generality, that a large or long thumb indicates strength of character, and individuality, whilst a small or

short thumb indicates the reverse. I have discussed all the minutiae of the combinations of large and small thumbs, with other formations of the hand, in my book, "A Manual of Cheirosophy."

The consistency of hands is a great point to be noticed ; indicating, as it does, the taste which the subject possesses for physical exertion. Soft hands are the indications of a quiet temperament, inclining to laziness and even to lethargy ; whilst hard hands denote always an imperious desire for action, and a love of hard physical exercise or manual labor. These differences show themselves in the way various subjects put their tendencies into action. Thus an artist with hard hands will depict scenes of action, of real life, of movement, rather than the ideal, imaginative pictures of the soft-handed artist. The soft spatulate hand will love the spectacle of action, and appreciate physical activity in others, rather than practise it himself.

Soft-handed subjects are always greedy of the marvellous, and fond of occult sciences, from their love of contemplation : whereas very hard hands are always superstitious, by reason of their want of reflection to make them otherwise. Soft hands are more capable of tender-

ness and affection than of true love, but hard hands are more capable of lasting affection than of tenderness or passion.

Smoothness and a gentle firmness of the hands always indicate delicacy of mind, whilst dryness and roughness always denote rudeness and insensibility of mind. A wrinkled hand, if it is soft, denotes sensitiveness and uprightness, but if it is hard it betrays pugnacity and irritability.

The gestures of the hand speak a language of their own, which I have made the subject of a complete section in my "Manual of Cheiросophy." To keep the hands always closed, denotes secretiveness, and often untruth. If you think a man is telling you a lie, look at his hands; he cannot lie with his hands *open*. The same remark applies when the hands are kept studiously quiet and impassive: this also denotes vanity and self-consciousness.

But little can be learned from the nails, but a few of their aspects have very marked and infallible significations. Nails which are short and broad indicate a spirit of criticism and pugnacity, a love of domination and control, and a tendency to fidgetiness and a meddlesome dis-

position. Women with short nails are generally inclined to be termagants. The good points of short nails are, of course, quickness of intellect, and perspicuity; in a good hand they will merely denote a spirit of sarcasm and of good-humored irony.

Long, curved nails betray cruelty of disposition. The finer and more delicate the shape of the nails, the finer and more delicate the mind indicated by them. The habit of biting the nails, it is hardly necessary to remark, results from nervousness and a self-worrying disposition. These are the main indications which may be read in a moment from a casual glance at the hands. We will now pass shortly in review the seven leading types of hands.

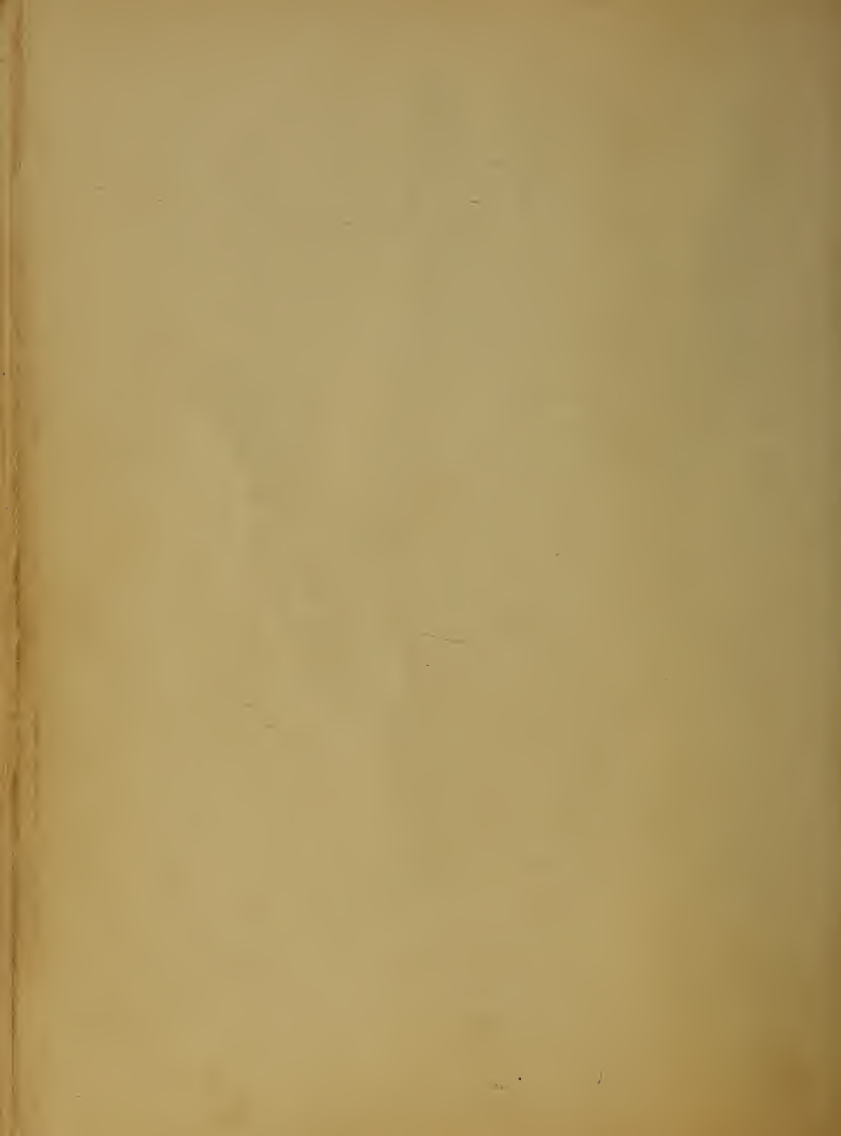
The seven types of hands are the elementary, the spatulate, the conic, the square, the knotty, and the pointed, with a seventh hybrid type which I have called the mixed hand. The Elementary hand (Plate III.) is so called from its belonging exclusively to the lowest grade of human intelligence, and argues merely sufficient intellect for the support of human life. The fingers are short, and thick, and stiff; the thumb is short, and slightly turned back; the palm is



*Plate III. — THE ELEMENTARY HAND.*

*Denoting the lowest grade of intelligence, sloth,  
dulness, and coarseness.*

(From the cast of an Esquimau hand.)



large and thick and hard, and, as a rule, longer than the fingers, as is the case in an infant's hand.

Such hands are very rare indeed in England or America, and, indeed, are hardly to be met with at all in the pure state in latitudes as southern, and in climates as clement, as ours. They betoken a crass and sluggish intelligence. They have no imaginations or passions beyond the merely brutish ones, no instincts of cultivation, and hardly the instincts of human society. Though, as I have said, the pure elementary type does not exist among us, we often find hands that come within measurable distance of it, and then we find a very distinguishable tendency to the characteristics which I have named.

The next type, the Spatulate (Plate IV.), or Active hand, is very much more common among us. This hand has the tips of its fingers slightly flattened out like the spatula with which the chemist mixes his drugs, and from this it derives its name. The thumb is rather large, and the whole hand has a tendency to hardness. The main characteristics of the type are action, movement, energy. Such subjects are resolute, self-confident, active, rather than delicate-minded; constant and faithful, but unromantic in

love. If such a subject has a small thumb, much of his energy and activity will be misdirected or aimless, though a long phalanx of logic will go far towards remedying this defect. Smooth fingers will give him elegance and spontaneity in his active pursuits, and inspiration in the direction of his exertions. Spatulate subjects make the best colonists, as they only look at the useful side of things, attaching themselves to countries only for the useful things they derive from them. They are very slightly sensual, and like travelling about and shifting for themselves. They like colossal architecture rather than beauty of design, wealth rather than luxury, quantity rather than quality. People talk a good deal of nonsense about a fine hand as an indication of ancient race. As a matter of fact, the pure descendants of the old fighting Saxon nobility are always distinguishable by their spatulate hands. In religion, spatulate-handed subjects are conventional above all things, Protestants rather than Catholics. It is thus that these hands are in a majority in Northern latitudes; whereas in Southern climes, where the atmosphere produces a more romantic turn of mind, the Catholic religion, and pointed or conical hands, have the numerical advantage. Promi-



*Plate IV. — THE SPATULATE HAND.*

*Denoting action, movement, energy, self-reliance,  
and locomotion.*

(The hand of the "great" Duke of Wellington.)



ment joints give an intense love of science to these hands, and make them expert in all mechanical or applied sciences. Such men are the best engravers, and the readiest inventors in mechanical arts and sciences. Softness, of course, as I have said, greatly modifies the active qualities of the type.

Next to this, and by way of contrast, we have the Conic, or Artistic hand (Plate V.). Of this hand the fingers are always slightly broad at the lower phalanges, diminishing gently to the tips, which are conic or rounded. The joints are not prominent, the thumb is generally small, and the palm fairly developed. If your hand presents these peculiarities of formation, you are ruled by impulse and instinct, rather than by reason or calculation; you are attracted by the beautiful, rather than by the useful, aspects of life and matter; you are attracted by ease, novelty, and liberty. Enthusiastic and impulsive, rather than forcible or determined, you are at heart a pure Bohemian, and your imagination is as warm as your heart is cold!

If the formations of your type are still more accentuated, that is, if the palm is larger, the fingers more drawn out, the thumb still smaller, you are still more the slave of your passions

and your impulses. Your enthusiasm is higher, your love warmer and shallower ; you are generous to a fault, painfully sensitive, and easily moved. With such a hand, you are right to strew the pathway of your life with roses ; but you must not forget that when the petals have fallen from the wreath of roses, it becomes a crown of thorns.

Unfortunately, if the thumb is very weak, and other bad signs, which I shall presently expound, appear in the hand, you will often find in such subjects only the bad qualities of the type, — sensuality, laziness, egotism, eccentricity, dissipation, and deceit ; but a hand must be very bad to show all this. The main characteristics, the guiding principles, of the type are, love of beauty and the beautiful, preference of the ideal over the real, intuition, impulse, and selfishness.

The next type is that of the Square, or Useful hand (Plate VI.). This hand is generally large, rather than small ; the palm broad ; the lower joint, that of material order, developed ; the tips of the fingers square, i.e., neither pointed nor spread out ; the thumb rather large ; the palm thick, hollow, and rather firm.

The leading instincts on which this hand



*Plate V. — THE CONIC HAND.*

*Denoting art, brilliancy, love of beauty, enthusiasm,  
and generosity.*

(The hand of Sir Frederick Leighton, P.R.A.)



finds its characteristics are perseverance, foresight, order, and regularity. To these hands, the useful is far preferable to the beautiful. Their great passions are for organization, arrangement, classification, regularity of form and outline, and the acceptance of things prescribed and understood as customary. They are great disciplinarians, and are strongly imbued with a sense of the fitness of things; they prefer privileges to complete liberty, and have a passion for experiences of all kinds.

If your hands are of this type, you are a slave to arrangement; you have a place for every thing, and every thing is in its place. Unless your joints are well developed, it is quite possible that your drawers and cupboards may be untidy; but you will be outwardly in perfect order, and, amid the chaos of your possessions, you will always know where to find every thing, for memory is one of the most precious attributes of the type. You will be handy with your fingers, tidy in person, and always most particular about your general arrangements. You are suspicious, and quietly cunning. Vigilant, and a complete master of intrigue, you are a flatterer, and you like to be flattered; and you are also quietly and unostentatiously ambitious.

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If the joint of order is absent, yours is a most enviable mind ; for you have the strongest aptitude for metaphysical and abstract sciences, with a natural capacity for checking your tendency to enthusiasm. This is the cleverest hand that exists. Heaven help you if with a square hand both your joints are developed ! you will be the most aggressively methodical creature that ever existed, living by rote and rule, and doing every thing by pre-arranged order. Good sense and reasonable egoism are the main features of the type.

The next is the Knotty or Philosophic type of hand (Plate VII.) : its appearance is most distinctive. The palm is large and elastic ; both joints are highly developed, especially the upper one, which, with the half-conic, half-square formation of the tips, gives a curious clubbed oval appearance to the fingers. The thumb is large, having its two phalanges of equal length.

The great characteristics of this hand are analysis, meditation, philosophy, and deduction ; and these continually lead to deism and democracy. Their main and vital instinct is, however, a love of and search after abstract and absolute truth. The joints give to the hand calculation, method, and deduction. The quasi-



*Plate VI.—THE SQUARE HAND.*

*Denoting order, arrangement, method, symmetry  
of form and outline, and discipline.*

(The hand of the author.)



conic formation of the finger-tips give it the instincts of poetry and real beauty, and the thumb gives it perseverance. Such subjects pay more attention to the significance of things than to their appearances; their literature, therefore, is notable for its clearness and utility, rather than for its form or literary style. They require to *account* for every thing. They require *reason* in every thing. They form their own opinions on all subjects, without reference to those of other people, and form them after the most careful analysis and consideration of the questions involved.

Subjects of the philosophic type are essentially sceptical in religion, for they refuse to look at the emotional side of any thing. They are therefore great advocates of social and religious freedom, being moderate in all their pleasures. The smaller the philosophic hand, the keener its search after the attainment of truth; the larger it is, the more analytical it becomes.

The last type, the Pointed or Psychic hand (Plate VIII.), is the most beautiful and delicate, but, alas! the most ideal and useless of all. Small and delicate, with a thin palm, and fine, long and pointed fingers, its joints are barely visible, and it has a pretty little thumb. The only thing to regret about it is its rarity.

To these subjects belongs the domain of the beautiful ideal. They have all the artistic instinct of their conic-handed fellows, with none of their bad points. They are guided entirely by their idealism, their impulse, and their instinct of abstract right. They never command, for they are above any such earthly aggrandizement, or material interests of any kind; but they always inspire respect, if only on account of the beauty of their brilliant incomprehensibility. In politics and religion, they acknowledge no leadership, being guided only by their innate sense of right and wrong. Theirs is the talent of inspired lyric poetry, and they possess, with this faculty, the more important one of communicating their enthusiasm to others. It is this that makes them such splendid orators and preachers. These are the men who have a real call to the ministry. I once heard the late Henry Ward Beecher say, that when God calls a man to preach, he generally calls a congregation to listen to him; when this happens, you may expect to see pointed fingers. Other kinds of men often say they have heard a call: maybe they have, but it wasn't for them, it was for somebody else! A joint will sometimes appear in a hand of this kind; this is fatal. Such a



*Plate VII.—THE KNOTTY HAND.*

*Denoting philosophy, analysis, logic, deduction, science,  
research, and truth.*

(The hand of Sir Richard Owen, F.R.S., K.C.B.)



subject will be prone to rush from one extreme to another ; he will be credulous, greedy of the marvellous, discontented, and eccentric. Psychic-handed people should never go beyond their own intuitions, for they have not the gifts of reason and of analysis. Sometimes, however, both joints will appear in such a hand ; this will give doubt, fear, dejection, and revolutionary *ideas* (but not practice). The only redeeming point of such a hand is its capacity for invention, which is not, however, supported by the necessary practical talents.

Finally, I must call your attention to the hybrid type, known as the Mixed hand ; that is to say, hands which being, as it were, intermediate, so nearly resemble more than one type, as to admit the possibility of their being mistaken for either. Thus a conic hand may be nearly pointed, a square nearly spatulate, a spatulate nearly philosophic, and so on. In such cases the peculiarities of both types are present in the character, and it is the task of the cheirosophist so to combine them as to give a true analysis of the subject under examination. Such subjects may generally be described as "jacks of all trades, and masters of none ;" they attain to skill in a variety of pursuits, but

seldom to excellence in any one. They are generally amusing, but seldom instructive. Their great advantage is their adaptability and readiness to suit themselves to any company in which they may find themselves; but these advantages are generally combined with lack of sincerity, application, or perseverance.

This is the Science of Cheiromnomy. From what I have said, you ought now to be able to tell, by a rapid glance at the hands, the character of any one into whose company you are thrown. In my "Manual of Cheirosophy," I have devoted a special section to the minutiae of Cheiromnomy, as applied to the hands of the softer sex. It is, however, only necessary for me to say here that the same remarks apply to women as to men, save that the qualities of the more robust types are less, and those of the gentler types are more, developed among them than among us. It should also be remarked, that the motives of the action of women must be sought for in instinct, impulse, and intuition, rather than in calculation or reason. It is, I think, very generally admitted, that the instinct of a woman is far superior to any amount of reason, and this is why they usually dispense



*Plate VIII.—THE POINTED HAND.*

*Denoting poetry, enthusiasm, idealism, abstract right,  
impulse, and high ideals.*

(The hand of "Violet Fane," the poetess.)



with the latter commodity. A ribald friend of mine used to say that he never knew but one woman who could understand reason, and *she* wouldn't listen to it. It will, therefore, strike the observer as natural that smooth fingers are in a majority among women, rather than prominently jointed ones.

I turn now to a branch of the science which, though not so useful, is perhaps even more interesting than Cheirognomy. I mean, to Cheiromancy, whereby, in examining the mounts and lines of the palm, the past, the present, and even the future, may be explained and foretold.

## PART IV.

## CHEIROMANCY OR PALMISTRY.

THERE have not been wanting authorities who have claimed for cheiromancy, or, as it used to be called, "cheiromancy," the support of Scripture, basing their arguments upon that oft-cited passage of the Book of Job, which I have dissected and discussed at such length in "A Manual of Cheirosophy," <sup>41</sup> and "The Science of the Hand." The passage to which I refer is cited in error, and there is no doubt now that the science of cheirosophy is not even remotely alluded to. But there is equally no doubt that this science is of incomparable antiquity; and Juvenal tells us, that in his time, —

"The middle sort, who have not much to spare,  
To cheiromancer's cheaper art repair,  
Who clap the pretty palm to make the lines more fair." <sup>42</sup>

The works of Aristotle, as I said some time ago, are full of references to the science; and

<sup>41</sup> pp. 55-58.    <sup>42</sup> Satyra vi., l. 581. (Dryden's translation.)

it is interesting to know that one of the first block books ever produced by the printing-press (before the introduction of movable types) was "Die Kunst Ciromantia," written by Johann Hartlieb in 1448, and published at Augsburg in 1495.

The absolute origin of the art, panoplied, as Mr. Edgar Saltus would say, "in the dim magnificence of myth," was probably Oriental. Mr. Herbert Giles, Her Majesty's consul at Shanghai, than whom probably no greater authority on Chinese culture exists, tells me that the science was practised in China many centuries before Christ. Philip Baldœus alludes to its antiquity in India, in the seventeenth century;<sup>43</sup> and we know that Apollonius of Tyana<sup>44</sup> studied magic in the time of our Lord, among the Brahmins in that country. Whatever its antiquity, the more one studies it, the more one is amazed by the truths — the inexplicable truths — which it teaches us.

It is strenuously objected to this science, that it professes to predict with certainty future events. Now, this is what *it does not do*;

<sup>43</sup> Wahrhäftige ausführliche Beschreibung der ost-indischen Küsten Malabar, etc. (Amsterdam, 1672), cap. v. p. 513.

<sup>44</sup> William Godwin: Lives of the Necromancers (London, 1834), p. 158.

but it teaches men to observe the great laws of Cause and Effect so closely as to be able to predict the almost inevitable results of existing circumstances. Cheirosophy aims at ascertaining the established conjunctions, which in their turn establish the order of the universe.

They say it is impossible to predict a future malady or death. What is more reasonable to believe than that, of a future malady, the germ already lurks in the system, which must ultimately supervene, and may prove fatal? Such a germ as this must affect the universal nerve-fluid, the vital principle; and what is more likely than that this affection should be visible at the point where the nerves are most numerous and apparent, and that is—in the palm of the hand?

Then, so surely as the future exists already for us, let us minutely examine the present, which is forming and modifying and developing that future. Our thoughts are free, as Sir Richard Owen has said, to soar as far as any legitimate analogy may seem to guide them rightly across the boundless ocean of unknown truth!

Cheirosophy is *not* fatalism. It never says what shall be, shall be: it merely warns us of what will happen if we pursue the course we

are adopting. If we neglect the warning, as I have constantly known people to do, turning aside with a lofty smile, we have only ourselves to blame when the events, which we might easily have averted by an effort of will, supervene to our harm and annoyance. It is true, that certain signs have been handed down from generation to generation, such as the indications of coming accidents and sudden death ; and, in numberless instances, my own personal experiences have proved the correctness of these signs, for the explanation of which it is impossible to hazard any reasonable conjecture. These *facts*, of which I will shortly give you a few instances, simply exist *as facts*, and *as such* we are bound to accept them.

As to the expounding of the past, I would argue, in the same way, that great events principally affect our nerves, and this affection of the nerves produces strange and infinitely varied combinations of the lines in the palm. If trouble can leave its marks upon the face, as Byron says, —

“The intersected lines of thought, —  
Those furrows which the burning share  
Of sorrow ploughs untimely there ;  
Scars of the lacerated mind,  
Which the soul’s war doth leave behind,” —

why should not the same effect be produced upon the hands, which are so much more sensitive than the face?

How continually one is told, by some one who imagines he has discovered a brand-new argument, that the lines are simply the result of the folding of the hands! The evidence against this is infinite. Quain has told us<sup>45</sup> that the lines are clearly traced even before a man is born; and it is easy to verify the fact, that the hands of women, and of men who never use their hands in active exercises, are always covered with lines, whereas the hands of labourers and men who work hard with them, are nearly always almost destitute of lines at all. It is activity of brain, and not of body, that causes the lines to appear; otherwise, how account for lines between the joints of the fingers, and in directions in which no folding could ever, by any possibility, take place?

No: the hands fold, it is true, upon some of the major lines, but the lines are not caused by the folding. However, let us get on. Why seek to account for facts, which, being *existent*, need no proof? Let us accept the axiom laid down by Herbert Spencer, by Henry Drum-

<sup>45</sup> Quain's Anatomy, vol. ii. p. 214.

mond, and by a host of the finest intellects of the day, that all science is more or less a mystery.<sup>46</sup> We can only tabulate facts, and, after letting them speak for themselves, draw our own deductions. I have advanced all the data that can be necessary, in the introductory arguments to my two larger works upon this science. Now I propose to lay before you what actually is the case, in the hope that you will not refuse to believe acknowledged truth, as did the hard-headed scientists of even so late as the end of the last century, who denied that aërolites either had fallen or could fall. This is not a superstition, this science of mine. But, if it were, superstition will only come to an end when exact science — if such exists — will take the trouble to examine without prejudice the facts it has hitherto distinctly denied ; that is to say, when it will approach them with the admission that things are not necessarily untrue because they are unexplained !

It is necessary to say, at the outset of the study of this branch of the science of cheirosophy, that the names of the planets applied

<sup>46</sup> Compare these passages: Herbert Spencer's *Study of Sociology* (London, 1873), chap. iv., and Henry Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* (London, 1884), pp. 28 and 88.

to the mounts and some of the lines of the palm are not astrological. When I speak of the mount of Jupiter, the plain of Mars, and the line of Saturn, I do not mean that the planets have as has been believed, and, I regret to say, written — any thing to do with those parts of the hand. The explanation of these terms is, that on certain parts of the hand are found the indications of certain temperaments, which we have come to look upon as peculiar to certain deities of the heathen mythology: so that when I say the mount of Venus, I mean that part of the hand upon which are found the indications of love; the plain of Mars, the part denoting audacity and warlike instinct; the line of Saturn indicates fate, and so on.

The five digits of the hand have, or may have, at their bases, mounts; i.e., little protuberances of muscle, each of which has a certain signification, and is called after a particular planet (Plate IX.). They are as follows: under the thumb, the mount of Venus (A); under the first finger, the mount of Jupiter (B); under the second, that of Saturn (C); under the third, that of Apollo, or the Sun (D); under the fourth, that of Mercury (E). Below this, on the hand, comes the mount of Mars (F); below that, again, the



Plate IX. — THE MOUNTS OF THE PALM.



mount of the Moon (G); and in the centre of the hand, the plain of Mars (H). The hand is crossed by six principal lines (Plate II.): the line of life, which surrounds the thumb (*a a*); the line of head, which starts at the same point, and goes to the mount of Mars (*b b*); the line of heart, almost parallel above the line of head (*c c*); the line of Saturn, or fortune, which goes from the wrist to the mount of that name (*d d*); the line of Apollo, or art, which goes from the plain of Mars to the mount of Apollo (*e e*); and the line of liver, or health, which goes from the base of the line of life to the mount of Mars or of Mercury (*f f*). To these are added two inferior sets of lines: the girdle of Venus, which encircles the mounts of Saturn and of Apollo (*g g*), and the rascettes, which appear at the wrists (*h h*). These two latter are not invariably found in the hands.

Every mount betrays certain characteristics in a greater or less state of development, and the mount which is highest in a hand gives the keynote to the character of the subject. A hand has seldom only one mount developed, and any well-formed mount will modify the signification of the principal one. Sometimes, instead of being high in a hand, the mount is covered

with lines (E, Plate IX.). This has the same effect as high development, and makes a mount the principal one in the hand. All the mounts equally developed indicate an evenly balanced mind, whilst no mounts at all betray a dull, negative character. A mount displaced towards another, instead of being immediately beneath the finger, takes an influence from that mount towards which it inclines. If, not only is it absent, but a hollow occupies its place, it denotes the converse, the opposite, of the qualities of the mount.

The lines in a hand should be clear, red, and apparently marked, not ragged, or broken, or indistinct. Pale lines in a hand indicate a phlegmatic disposition, and, in a man, effeminacy. A sister line following the course of a principal line (*i i* in Plate II.) will always strengthen and support it. A tassel at the end always indicates a disorder of the quality. Ascending branches (*a* in Plate X.) always announce a favorable issue of the qualities of a line; descending (*b*, Plate X.), the reverse. A chained formation indicates obstacles and worries connected therewith (*c* in Plate X.).

Beneath the first finger we find the mount of Jupiter. The predominance of this mount in

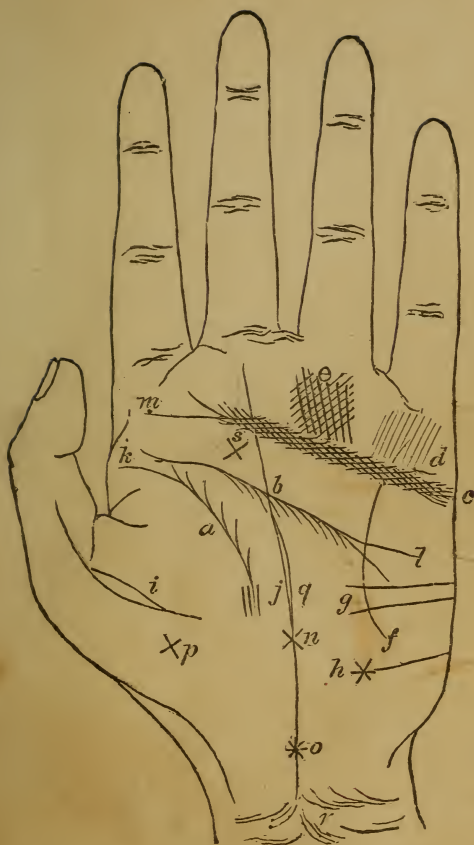
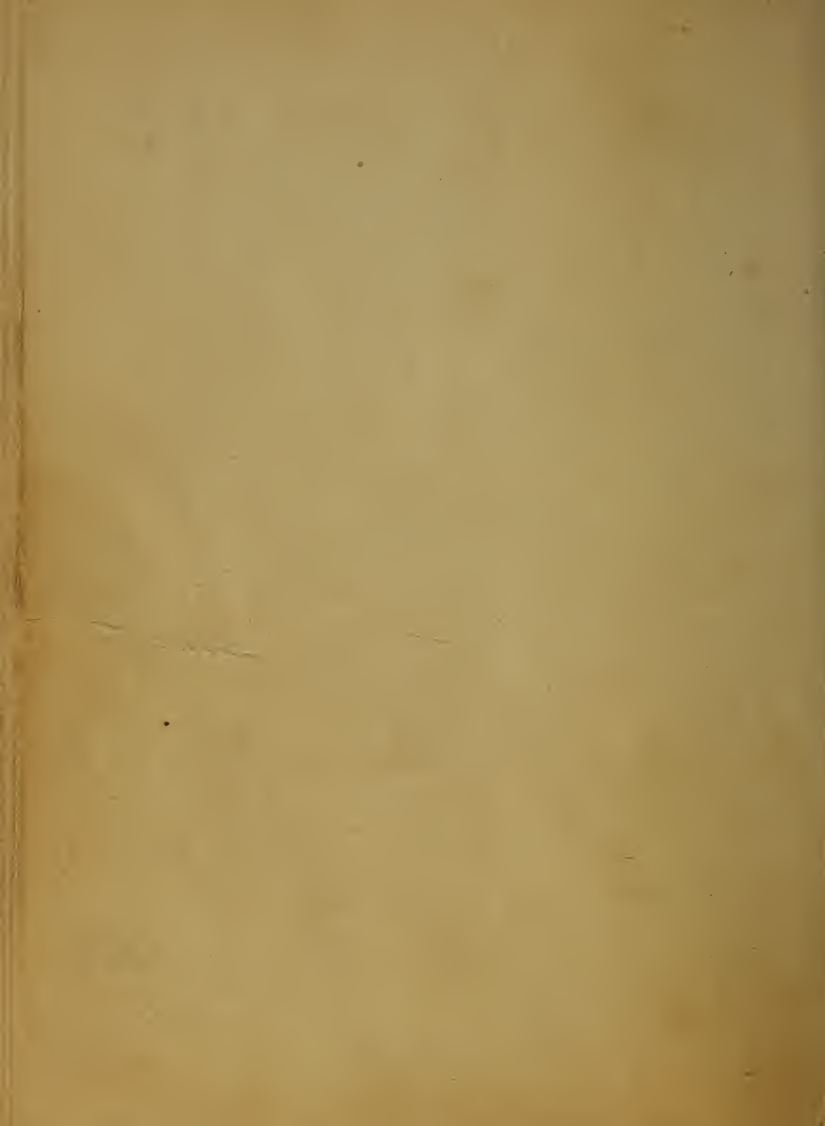


Plate X. — THE LINES AND MOUNTS.



a hand denotes ambition, honor, gayety, and religion. It also, if very high, denotes love of pomp and ceremony, with a certain amount of pride; and in excess the mount gives tyranny, arrogance, and ostentation; if the fingers are pointed, ostentation. Complete absence of the mount betrays idleness, egoism, want of dignity, and even vulgarity. Confused lines on the mount indicate a continued and unsatisfied ambition. A cross on the mount denotes a happy marriage (*a* in Plate XI.). If a star be there as well (*b* in Plate XI.), the marriage is also brilliant and ambitious. A spot on the mount indicates disgrace.

The next mount is that of Saturn (*c*, Plate IX.). When this mount is the highest in the hand, we find in the subject caution, prudence, and a fatality either for good or evil. Such subjects are sensitive and punctilious, given to occult science, to incredulity, melancholy, and timidity. They love solitude and a quiet life, taking naturally to agriculture, mineralogy, and kindred sciences. Developed to excess, the mount denotes a profound melancholy and morose taciturnity, remorse and morbid imagination, fear of death, and, at the same time, a tendency to suicide. Absence of the mount denotes an

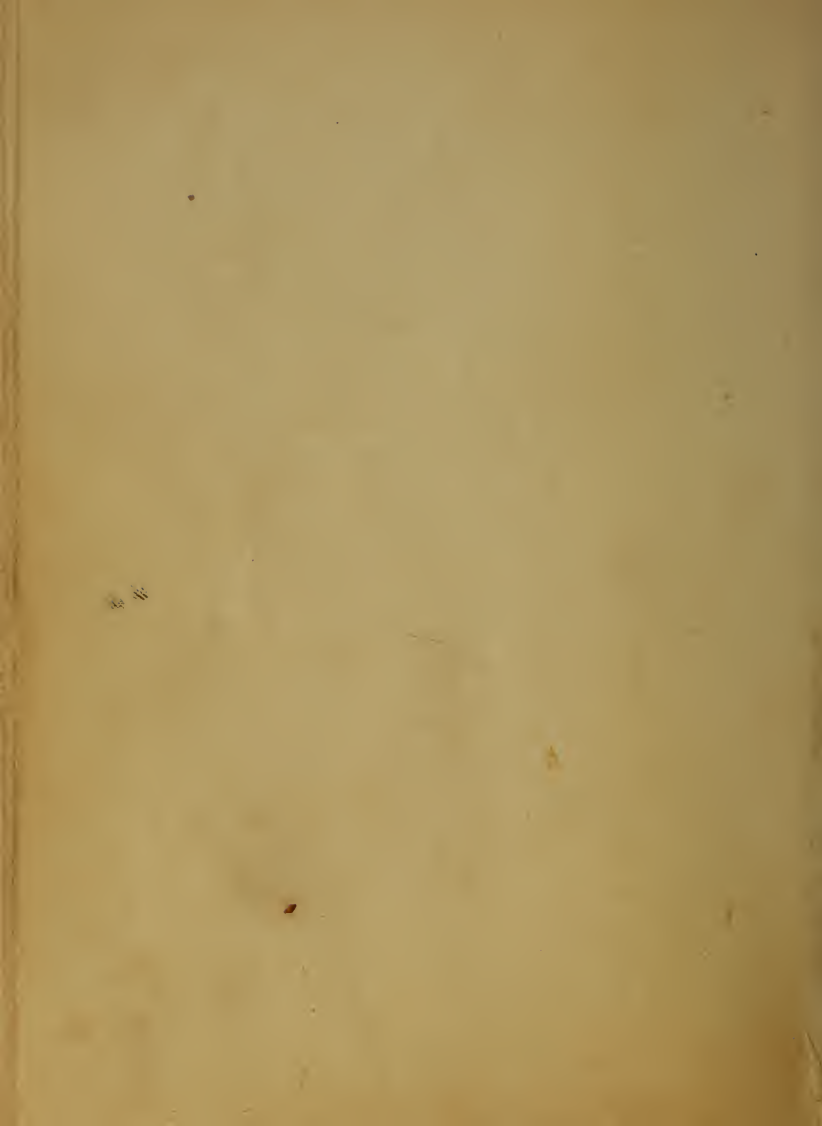
insignificant, uneventful disposition. A single line on the mount signifies good luck ; many (*c*, Plate XI.) signify bad luck ; and a spot on the mount denotes a great misfortune. Displaced towards Jupiter, it argues a great good fortune.

Under the third finger we find the mount of the Sun. When it is prominent in a hand, it argues a powerful love of art, and indicates success, glory, brilliancy, good fortune, the results of genius and intelligence. Such subjects are inventors and imitators, prone to shortness of temper, pride, eloquence, and a tendency to religion. In excess, the mount indicates love of wealth, extravagance, luxury, fatuity and envy, quick temper and frivolity. These subjects are also boastful and conceited. Absence of the mount denotes dulness, and a complete absence of the artistic instinct. A single line on the mount denotes fortune and glory ; two lines (*d* in Plate XI.) indicate talent, but probable failure in life ; and a confusion of lines (*e* in Plate X.) denotes a love of art as a science, and an analytical disposition. A spot on the mount always announces a disgrace.

At the outside of the hand is the mount of Mercury. Its prominence in a hand denotes



Plate XI.—THE LINES AND MOUNTS.



science, spirit, eloquence, commercial capacity, speculation, industry, invention, and agility. Such subjects are always quick and clever at occupations which require skill, and they are selfishly good-natured ; i.e., they are good to their fellow-men when it amuses them to be so, not when it goes against their inclinations. Excess of the mount is very bad, denoting theft, cunning, deceit, and treachery. Such subjects are always charlatans, and prone to the more evil forms of occultism and superstition. Complete absence of the mount betrays inaptitude for science, and no capacity for commerce. Many lines on the mount (*d*, Plate X.) denote science and eloquence ; little flecks and dashes indicate a babbler and chatterer. Lines on the percussion indicate *liaisons* and affairs of the heart if horizontal (*e*, Plate XI.), children if vertical. A marriage line terminated by a star proves that the love-affair has terminated with a death (*f*, Plate XI.). A great star crossing the vertical lines on the percussion indicates sterility. If the mount is quite smooth, it announces extreme coolness and *sang-froid*.

Below this we have the mount of Mars (F, Plate IX.), and the immediately contiguous part of the palm is called the plain of Mars (H, Plate

IX.). The mount denotes resistance, the plain aggression. If the mount is prominent, you are defensive rather than offensive; if the plain is developed, we find an aggressive, encroaching spirit. A subject with the mount of Mars high in the hand is cool-tempered, magnanimous, and generous. If it is excessive, i.e., spreading into the plain of Mars, he is furious, brusque, cruel, violent, and defiant in manner. The absence of the mount denotes cowardice and childishness.

Lower still upon the hand we have the mount of the Moon. This indicates imagination, poesy, melancholy, a love of mystery, solitude, and silence, and a tendency to revery. Such subjects love harmony, rather than melody, in music; they are capricious, changeable, and inclined to be idle; fond of voyaging, mystical, and void of self-confidence or perseverance. In a hard hand we get a dangerous activity and imagination. Excess of the mount gives irritability, discontent, superstition, fanaticism, and error; absence argues want of imagination and of poetry in the disposition. Lines on the mount (*g*, Plate XI.) give prophetic dreams, visions, presentiments, and the like. These are also shown by a curved line extending to the mount of Mer-

cury (*f* in Plate X.). Horizontal lines from the percussion (*g* in Plate X.) denote voyages ; terminating in a star (*h*, Plate X.) these lines indicate a voyage which will be terminated by death. A large star on the mount (*h*, Plate XI.) denotes hysteria, and, *with other concomitant signs*, madness. Many crossing lines (*i*, Plate XI.) betray self-torment and worry. An angle or circle on the mount denotes a danger of death by drowning.

The last mount with which we have to deal is that of Venus, at the root of the thumb. This mount gives to a subject beauty, grace, benevolence, melody in music (as opposed to harmony), and, indeed, all the more feminine attributes of character. Such people are great lovers of and seekers after pleasure, are gay and always charming. In excess, the mount betrays debauchery, effrontery, license, inconstancy, and other excesses. Absence of the mount shows coldness, laziness, and selfishness. Lines on the mount always indicate warmth of passion and strong affection. A line extending to the line of head indicates a worry (*j*, Plate XI.); extending to the mount of Mercury, it denotes a marriage (*k k* in Plate XI.), so does a strong line coming from the phalanx of logic to

the line of life (*ll*, Plate XI.) which surrounds the mount of Venus. Islands on the mount (*i*, Plate X.) denote opportunities of marriage which have been missed.

These are the interpretations of the mounts. I shall conclude this opusculum by noticing the principal lines and their significations.

The most important line in the hand is, of course, the Line of Life (*a a* in Plate II.), which surrounds the mount of Venus. Long, clear, straight, and well-colored, it denotes long life, good health, and a good character and disposition. Pale and broad, it indicates ill-health, evil instincts, and a weak, envious disposition. Thick and red, it betrays violence and brutality of mind; chained, it indicates delicacy; and of varying thicknesses, a capricious, fickle temper. The ages at which events have happened to one may be told by the points at which they have marked the line; for this purpose, it is divided into segments of five and ten years, commencing at the head of the line (Plate XII.), and breaks and so on in the line indicate events at the age at which the breaks occur. I have treated of this subject very carefully in "A Manual of Cheirosophy."

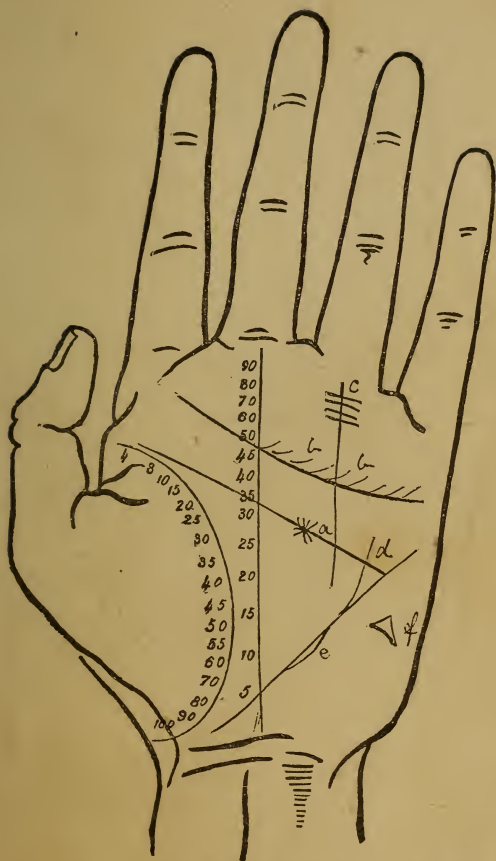


Plate XII.—AGES UPON THE LINES OF  
LIFE AND FORTUNE.



The shorter the line, the shorter the life ; and from the point at which the line terminates in *both* hands, may be accurately predicted the time of death. A break in the line is always an illness ; if in both hands, there is a grave danger of death, especially if the lower branch turn in towards the mount of Venus. Ceasing abruptly with a few little parallel lines (*j* in Plate X.), the death will be sudden ; a quantity of little bars across the line (*a* in Plate XIII.) denote continual but not very severe illnesses. Broken inside a square (*b*, Plate XIII.), it is a sign of a recovery from a serious illness, and a bar across the broken ends (*c*, Plate XIII.) has the same significance. However broken up the line may be, a sister line (*i i*, Plate II.) will always strengthen and mend it, and is a sign of excellent good fortune. A tassel at the end (*d*, Plate XIII.) is a sign of poverty in old age ; and a ray going to the mount of the Moon (*e*, Plate XIII.) signifies that the head will be affected by these troubles.

Rays across the hand from the mount of Venus (*j k*, Plate XI.) always denote worries, and the age at which they occur is shown by the point at which the rays terminate. Their variation is infinite, and I have discussed them

fully elsewhere. At the present moment I cannot do more — or less — than refer to them. A ray ascending to the mount of Jupiter (*f*, Plate XIII.) indicates success attained by merit with lofty aims, ambition, and egoism. Branches ascending from the line (*a*, Plate X.) denote ambition, and nearly always riches.

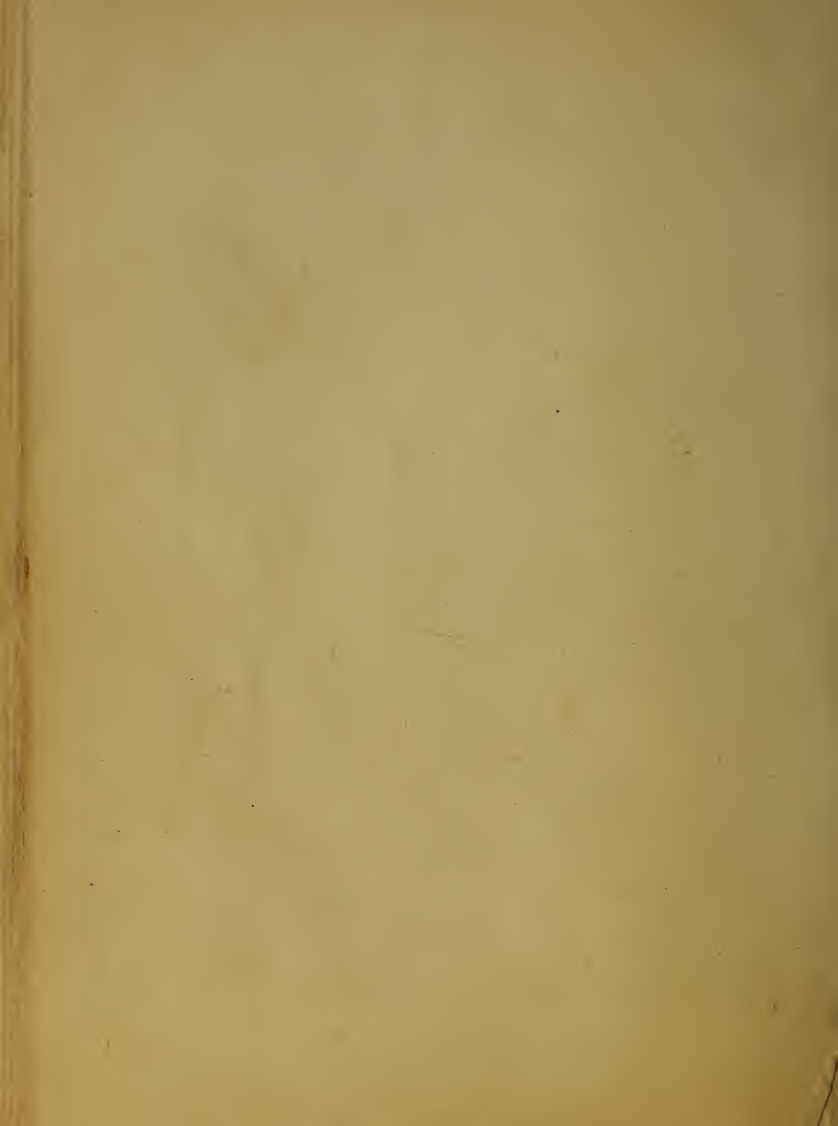
If the three lines are all joined together (*h*, Plate XIII.), it indicates grave danger of misfortune and sudden death. If, on the contrary, the line of head, instead of being joined to, is separated from the line of life (*k*, Plate X.), it indicates carelessness, extreme self-reliance, and generally foolhardiness in consequence.

An island in the line of life (*m*, Plate XI.) is generally an indication of some mystery as regards the birth of the subject, or else an illness during the years which it covers.

The Line of Head, which is the next great line in the hand, should be clear and well colored, extending from the beginning of the line of life to the base of the mount of Mars, without fork, break, or ramification. Pale and broad, it denotes feebleness or lack of intellect; short, it argues a weak will; chained, lack of fixity of mind; very long and thin, it denotes treachery and avarice. A long line of head gives domi-



Plate XIII. — THE LINES.



nation and self-control to a character; if it starts from the line of life under the mount of Saturn, it shows that the education has been acquired comparatively late in life, having been neglected in early youth. Such subjects are generally benevolent, and are generally great theorists. Stopping under the mount of Saturn is a sign of a sudden check to the intellectual development in early youth. Joined closely to the line of life for some distance at its commencement, it indicates timidity and want of self-confidence in a weak hand, caution and circumspection in a strong one.

Declining upon the mount of the Moon, it is a strong sign of a wild imagination. Coming very low (*i*, Plate XIII.), it leads to mysticism and folly, often culminating in madness, to which there is a strong tendency. In a strong hand it gives a talent for literature; but in a weak one, if it terminates in a star, with a star on the Mount of Saturn, it is a sign of hereditary madness. Turning *up* towards the line of heart (*n*, Plate XI.), it denotes a person with a weak mind, who lets his heart and passions domineer over his reason. If it touch the line of heart, it is a sign of an early death. A break in the line indicates an accident to the

head, especially under the mount of Saturn ; under these circumstances, the break has been said to be a sign that the subject will be hung. Ragged, it denotes a bad memory. Forked at the end, with one of the "prongs" descending towards the mount of the Moon, is a sure indication of hypocrisy, lying, and deceit, (*l*, Plate X.). Such subjects are clever sophists, always on their guard, and ready with excuses when necessary, reflecting that necessity is the mother of invention. With a good line of Apollo, it is a sign of great talent. If one "prong" go up to the line of heart, it is the indication of a fatal love-affair. A cross and a break in the line (*j*, Plate XIII.) are a sure prognostic of a violent death. An island on the line (*k*, Plate XIII.) is a sign of acutely sensitive nerves. A star (*a*, Plate XII.) is a sign of a wound. A ray going to Jupiter (*f*, Plate XIII.) betrays extreme egotism, and consequent good luck.

The next line is the Line of Heart. It should extend clear, well traced, and of a good color, from the mount of Jupiter to the base of that of Mercury. According to the length of the line we find stronger or weaker affections. If it goes right across the hand, from side to side, it indicates excessive affection, resulting in a

morbid jealousy. If it is chained (*c*, Plate X.), the subject is an inveterate flirt; bright red, it denotes violence in affairs of the heart; pale and broad, on the contrary, it indicates a cold-blooded *roué* if not a worn-out libertine. *Very*, very thin and bare, it is a sign of murder. Turning up and disappearing between the first and second fingers (*o*, Plate XI.), it indicates a long life of unremitting labor. Broken up, it is a sign of inconstancy, and often of misogyny. Forked, with one ray of the fork going on to the mount of Jupiter (*m*, Plate X.), is a lucky sign of great good fortune, and of subsequent riches; it also indicates enthusiasm in love, while spots on the line denote conquests in love, and according to the mount under which you find the spot you can tell the nature of the person with whom the love-affair has taken place. Turning down to the line of head is a sign of an unhappy marriage, or of very deep griefs of the heart. Lines ascending from that of the heart (*b*, Plate XII.) show curiosity, research, and versatility, but very often uselessness.

The fourth great line in the hand is that of Saturn, or of Fortune, which rises through the whole hand, from the wrist to the mount of

Saturn. It may start from the wrist (*l*, Plate XIII.), from the line of life (*m*, Plate XIII.), or from the mount of the Moon, (*n*, Plate XIII.). If it start from the line of life, it shows that one's fortune results from one's own deserts; rising from the wrist, it is always a sign of good luck; and starting from the mount of the Moon, the fortune comes entirely from a caprice, generally of the opposite sex. Sometimes it turns off, and goes to some other mount, instead of to that of Saturn: thus, if to Mercury, we find success in commerce, eloquence, and science; if to Apollo, fortune from art; if to Jupiter, satisfied pride and realized ambition. If the line cut through the mount, and extend on to the finger (*o*, Plate XIII.), we get a great fatality, which is either good or bad, according to the general appearance of the hand. If the line of fortune is stopped at that of head, it shows that an impulse of the head, or error of calculation, has stopped one's fortune; stopped at the line of heart, the ill-luck results from a love-affair.

Twisted or ragged at the base, it indicates ill luck in early life. Split and twisted throughout, it denotes ill luck and ill health through abuse of pleasure; or, at any rate, continual

quarrels arising therefrom. An irregular line betrays irritability; cut by little lines on the mount (*p*, Plate XIII.), it indicates misfortune late in life. Forked at the base, the life is a continual struggle of ambition and of love; both, however, will be successful and fortunate, if the line go well up to the mount. Any cross upon the line (*n*, Plate X.) indicates a change in the life or in the position of the subject. A star at the base of the line (*o*, Plate X.) shows a misfortune in early youth, happening probably to one's parents; especially if there is also a cross on the mount of Venus (*p*, Plate X.), when the misfortune arises through the death of a relation.

An island on the line of fortune (*q*, Plate X.) nearly always betrays a conjugal infidelity; and if a star appear on the mount, it has brought great misfortune in its train. A malformed line with an island at its base is a sign of illegitimacy. If, however, the rest of the hand is good, this island only shows a hopeless passion; if with a star on Jupiter, the passion has been for some celebrated or exalted person.

Less important than these last four, but not less interesting, is the Line of Apollo, or Brilliancy (*e e*, Plate II.), which rises from the plain

of Mars, or the mount of the Moon, and goes to the mount of Apollo. Whenever it is present to any marked degree, we find glory, celebrity, art, wealth, merit, and success. It is best when it is neat and straight, making a clear cut upon the mount. Such subjects have, in all their successes, the calmness of natural talent, and the contentment of a proper self-esteem. It must *always* appear more or less in a lucky hand. If, however, the fingers are twisted, and the palm is hollow, it is a bad thing to have this line in the hand, for these indications show an ill use of the talents denoting it. If it is absent from a hand, it denotes failures in the undertakings of the subject. Visible, but much broken up, it denotes a jack-of-all-trades, and betrays an eccentricity in matters artistic. Many little lines on the mount (*e*, Plate X.) denote an excess of the artistic qualities which bring the subject to naught. If the line is equally divided on the mount (*d*, Plate XI.), it shows that the subject has two counterbalancing artistic instincts; if, however, the line forms a trident (*g*, Plate XIII.), it is a sure sign of glory and of success. Cross lines on the mount (*c*, Plate XII.) signify obstacles to the success in art. A star at the top of the line is a sign of

great good fortune. A black spot at the junction of the lines of heart and of Apollo indicates blindness.

The Line of Liver, or Health (*f f*, Plate II.), comes from the base of the line of life, and goes towards — but seldom as far as — the mount of Mercury. Clearly traced, it seldom exists in a hand; but when it *is* found, it is a sign of good health, gayety, and success, with long life if the line extend up to the mount of Mercury. Complete absence of line, far from being a bad sign, gives to a subject great vivacity both of manner and of conversation. Any unevenness of *color* in the line denotes bad health; much twisted, it is a sign of biliousness; much broken up, of a weak or disordered liver. Forked at the top, it gives a great capacity for occult sciences (*d*, Plate XII.). A coming sickness marks itself on this line by a little deep-red cross-ray; a past sickness leaves a gap. Well joined to the line of head, it betokens a strong aptitude for all kinds of natural magic or psychology. An island in the line (*e*, Plate XII.) denotes a somnambulist.

Of the girdle of Venus (*g g*, Plate II.), we can dispose in a few words. Wherever you find it in a hand, it is a sign of hysteria and emotion.

You may generally look upon it as a *bad* sign, for these qualities in a bad or weak hand lead very frequently to the lower forms of vice ; but this is not invariable, especially if, instead of being a complete semicircle, it goes off on the mount of Mercury (*n n*, Plate XIII.), when it becomes merely a sign of great energy and enthusiasm.

If the girdle is much broken up, it is an indication of the lower passions of our natures ; and as I have discussed the question in A Manual of Cheirosophy, there is no need to allude to it here. The curious are referred to that volume upon the point.

On the wrist are found certain lines which are known as the Rascettes, or Bracelets of Life (*h h* in Plate II.). Each of these represents from five and twenty to thirty years of life. The general maximum is three of these lines ; and when clearly traced, they denote health, good luck, and a tranquil life. Chained, the rascettes indicate a laborious but fortunate life ; very badly formed, the lines are an indication of extravagance. Broken in the centre, and turning up towards the line of fortune (*r*, Plate X.) is a sign of vanity and of deceit. A star in the centre of the rascette (*s*, Plate XIII.) is nearly

always a sign of unexpected good fortune. Lines extending from the wrist to the mounts always betoken long voyages and good luck.

These are the lines of the palms, as far as it is possible for us to go into them. There exist, of course, in every hand, lines which do not come under any of these rules ; but the expert in cheirosophy will have no difficulty in reading these by reference to their position in the hand with regard to the mounts and the principal lines.

As to the signs which are to be found in the hands, I have alluded to them from time to time during the foregoing remarks, and their significance will have been more or less gathered.

A star is always an indication of some great event beyond our own control, it may be either good or bad ; but it is generally the latter.

A square is always protection from some great danger ; a spot is generally, if not invariably, a malady ; the island is always a mystery, something secret, and generally a disgraceful circumstance, connected with the line upon which it is found. A triangle (*f*, Plate XII.) is a symbol of a science.

A cross is seldom favorable, signifying generally an obstacle ; but at the same time, it usually highly accentuates the qualities of the mounts and lines on which it is found. A cross, by-the-bye, in the quadrangle, i.e., the space between the lines of head and of heart, the consideration of which the limits of space have compelled me to omit (*s* in Plate X.), is always a sign of superstition, and of a *penchant* to occult science.

Cross lines on a mount (*c*, Plate XII.) are always an obstacle to that mount, and accentuate its bad qualities.

In the foregoing remarks, I have endeavored to give you a short outline of some of the interesting points to be noted in connection with our hands. To hear the science ridiculed, I am perfectly prepared. It was the word "absurd," says Balzac, which condemned steam, which condemned the inventions of gunpowder, printing, spectacles, engraving, and, more recently, aërial navigation, and photography. The self-complacent stolidity of *lazy* incredulity is invincible ; but people who laugh at the science are, to the possessors of this knowledge, like the people in the gallery at a theatre, who can find no means

of expressing their disapproval save by whistling and cat-calling. It is as if people who were born blind laughed at people who could see, not believing in the sense of sight. Nay, more, it is the blindness of people who *refuse* to see; for here is the science, and any one who will learn it may do so with the greatest ease if he only have patience and intelligence.

There are even people who call it wicked; as if this intimate knowledge of one's fellow-men, and the works of an omnipotent Creator, did not tend to raise the hearts of men. They say it is wicked to go beyond the limits which nature has set upon our knowledge. They might as well condemn as wicked the use of spectacles, of telescopes, of microscopes, and of all instruments which tend to enlarge the field of our research. But I quote once more the words of Sir Richard Owen: "Our thoughts are free to soar, as far as any legitimate analogy may seem to guide them rightly, across the boundless ocean of unknown truth."

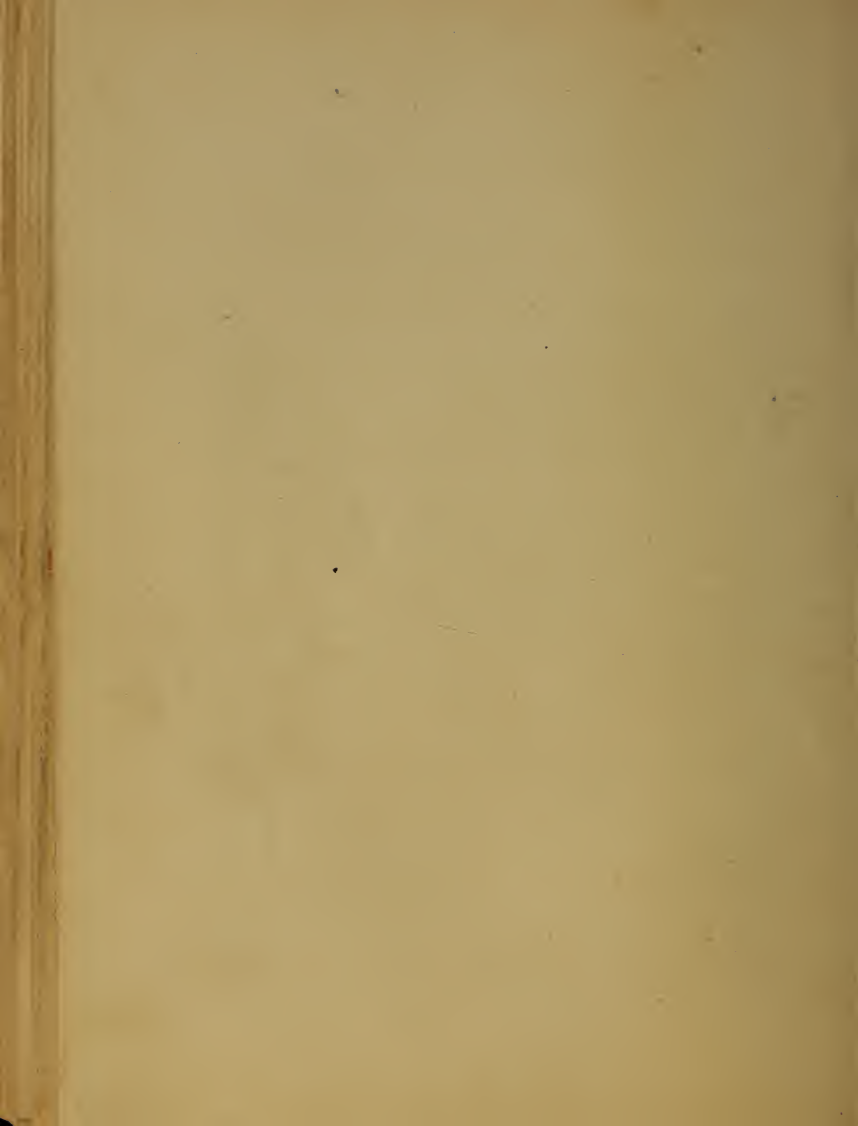
The acquisition of this science is a vast system of mental training; in its research it covers a vast historical and archæological field, and educates the mind to new and more acute habits of observation. What is more necessary to us

than that our first indelible impression of a man should be the right one? And, by means of this science, I claim that we are able at a glance to comprehend the mental development of whose-soever hands we are able to see. It is not, of course, sufficient to buy a book, and read it up; especially not the ancient ones of which I have placed a bibliography at the end of "The Science of the Hand." The science must be continually *practised*, so that the comparative size and development of a hand may be seen at a glance. The knowledge will soon come if the exercise is continual, — personal experiment, said Coleridge, is necessary in order to correct our own observation of the experiments which Nature herself makes for us, which are the phenomena of the universe. There must always be, as I have said before, a certain amount of mystery remaining; for all science is mysterious. Even the origin of muscular power and animal heat, the existence of which we shall hardly find any one to deny, are unknown and mysterious. The more we investigate this science, the clearer and the simpler it becomes; and even when we cannot exactly define the *cause*, the invariable *effect* is such as to establish cheirosophy as a fixed and exact science.

You must be prepared to find in this, as in all other sciences, occasional anomalies, contradictions. These must not dismay you. You will soon learn to profit as much by your failures as by your successes.

And with this, I have done. If I have succeeded in opening to you another page of the great Book of Nature, I shall feel myself more than repaid for the time which I have spent in tabulating these few notes, — too few, alas ! to give you more than a very meagre idea of this great science. And so I conclude. Let me hope that I have made clearer to you the simplicity, the beauty, and the enormous utilitarian value of PRACTICAL CHEIROSOPHY.

10TH MARCH, 1887.



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