

## Oration Argument

Delivered before the Lyceum of the 11th N.Y. Battery  
by J. D. A. G. course.

### Philosophy of Mind and Brain.

Nothing can be more vague and indefinite than many of the definitions in the standard treatises on the Philosophy of Mind. The Metaphysics of the schools has always been a topic so speculative and ideal—so refined and transcendental, that the popular mind, unable to comprehend it, has regarded the subject with contempt, as utterly unworthy of the attention of practical men.

The phenomena of the human mind in all its varied phases, have been treated of by philosophers in all ages since the dawn of letters; but how much has actually been ~~discovered~~ determined as absolute truth? Comparatively, very little. The different theories and systems are almost as numerous as are the prominent authors in this department of study.

The system of Craniology, first propounded by Gall and Spurzheim, appears to be the only one calculated to do away with these vague distinctions and endless discussions. Phrenology has at last placed the philosophy of mind on a firm basis—the Anatomy of the Brain—and reduced mental philosophy to the class of the exact sciences.

That Phrenology is true, is proved on the establishment of the following 4 points:

1st. The Brain is the organ of the mind, or the seat of the mental functions.

2d. The Brain is not a unit in its action, but is composed of parts; each part being the seat of some particular faculty of the mind. The parts can act singly or in various combinations.

3d. It is possible by observation and experiment to determine the locations of the several organs of the brain which are the seats of the various faculties of the mind.

4th. *As size, ceteris paribus, is a measure of power; the size of an organ is the index of its strength; and as the growth or decay of any part of the brain is accompanied by a corresponding elevation or depression of the skull, the prominence of any mental faculty is readily determined.*

It would be impossible in the limits of this brief argument to enter into a full discussion of the above 4 postulates. That the brain is the organ of the mind, is now universally conceded. The brain is not a unity, in the sense of acting as a whole, with every separate feeling to occupy the whole of it at one time, to the exclusion of all other feelings. If it were, then dreaming, monomania, partial genius and mixed feelings would be impossible. That Phrenologists have determined accurately the locations of the organs of the mental faculties is proved daily by the reading of characters from craniological developments.

In conclusion: The ordinary reader feels for the first time that he is able to grasp with some degree of confidence, the important facts of mental philosophy; and that it is a study of considerable, as teaching practical importance, as teaching him the constitution of his own mind, and the characters of those with whom he has association and intercourse.