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Select Tale.

PROFESSOR LEYDEN, THE PHRENOLOGIST.

I never recollect of a warmer enthusiast than Professor Leyden. When he spoke, he seemed to forget all other worldly circumstances, all other subjects, save the one engrossing topic on which he was engaged. His eye dilated, saw no object save the imagery created by his fertile brain. His voice was impassioned. His every pulse beat high. The professor, at the time I speak of, was just two and thirty, and ranked himself as the very leader of Gall and Spurzheim's energetic disciples. On the subject of phrenology he was discoursing when I entered the dining-room of Baron Hartmann.

It was a fine summer evening. Strawberries and other fruit decorated the board. The well-iced Johannisberg, the cellar-cooled Lafitte, stood temptingly on a table, around which about a dozen young men sat, with the worthy baron and professor.

It appeared that, in the height of his enthusiasm, Leyden had, to please the company, examined their heads, and, with many wise looks, pressed the bumps, which he declared to be the unerring indications of the human character and passions. Some unfortunate wight in the company, however, had evidently shocked the examiner by a demonstration of wicked propensities, for he strenuously refused, on this occasion, to pronounce upon the several organs, declaring he "might give offence," he "might be wrong," "indeed it might appear invidious;" in short, after making several similar excuses, the professor sat down in meditative silence, nor could he again be brought to speak, save and except upon the general merits of the system, a subject upon which he never failed to enlarge.

It is a curious fact that I never in my life heard the subject of phrenology broached without a laugh being raised at its expense, which very naturally annoys the supporters of the theory, and brings on the warmest argument. It was a discussion of this kind that, probably, had raised the fire which flushed the cheek of Leyden on the evening of which I speak.

The conversation had now taken a new channel. A dreadful murder had been committed in the neighborhood of the Black Forest. A young girl had eloped from her parents some weeks before. The companion of her flight was supposed to be a young man who was staying in the neighborhood. He had disappeared about the same time. She had just been savagely murdered, while the supposed partner of her guilt had re-appeared, and declared he had with difficulty escaped from the hands of a banditti, who had, without any apparent motive, seized and imprisoned him. To prove this, he showed several wounds he had received in a successful struggle with two of the gang, in his endeavor to liberate himself. This story, however, appeared so improbable, that no belief was attached to it, and the young man was hurried to prison, there to abide his trial.

This story had been repeated with painful minuteness by Carl Hoffenon, a handsome young man who had lately arrived at Baden, whose mind and gentlemanly manners had already won for him the golden opinions of all the society assembled there. No one was more pleased with him than the old

Baron. It was even believed that he ranked so high in the good old man's opinion, that it was rumored he had proposed and was actually accepted by Clara Hartmann, with the full sanction of her father.

As a narrator few could excel him. His vivid description lent life to his stories; and when he chose, as on the present occasion, few could excel him in the harrowing up of the nerves of the apathetic, by describing horrors in their most glaring, most appalling colors.

One burst of indignation, as he concluded, bespoke how truly he had interested his auditory. A thousand execrations were heaped upon the unhappy youth, who appeared plainly, incontrovertably, from the details given by Carl, to be the perpetrator of the bloody deed.

"I'll go to see his execution myself. I could enjoy the death-tortures of such a wretch," indignantly exclaimed the Prince of Olsebach, a young Russian, as he took a pinch of snuff, and handed to his next neighbor his splendid box, which dazzled the eye by the richness of the diamonds encircling it. "If such a wretch existed on my estates, I'd have him racked."

"And well would he deserve it—a cold-hearted assassin," chimed in another.

"May he be punished in the world to come!" fervently ejaculated Carl.

"Nay, nay," said the old baron, "that is saying too much. It is true, the man deserves an earthly punishment; but you are allowing your anger against vice, my dear boy, to carry you too far." And the old noble good-naturedly patted Carl on the arm.

Thus various subjects were discussed and argued, but during the whole evening Leyden spoke not a word. At last the hour for breaking up arrived; and, according to etiquette, the Prince moved first. Ere he did so, he requested the return of the snuff-box. The person to whom he handed it, declared that he had passed it to the next, who in his turn denied all knowledge of it, as did the rest of the company.

Every one had seen it, every one had handled it, but none could now produce it. The room was searched; the servants had not even entered the apartment; the door had not even been unclosed; none had stirred from the table. The affair began to wear a serious aspect. The old baron felt his honor wounded, but still hoped it might prove to be an ill-timed pleasantry. Under this impression he rose:

"Gentlemen, some person amongst you has doubtless concealed the box, intending thereby to give our illustrious friend a fright; and, in good faith, he deserves it for thus carelessly forgetting to look after a trinket worth fifty thousand florins; but, as he seems really uneasy about it, I must beg the person who has taken it instantly to return it, and confess the joke."

And the noble affected to laugh. None, however, responded, and Hartmann saw, with increased uneasiness, that he must now take up the matter more seriously.

"My friends, you cannot feel offended when I offer myself as the first person to undergo the ordeal, an ordeal I almost blush to say we must all submit to. We must be searched. None but the guilty can feel annoyance at this proposal."

Professor Leyden started up. "By Heaven, I'd sooner die!"

Another was of the same opinion, and objected to undergoing such an operation, which at the very least implied a doubt.

Poor Hartmann looked like a ghost. He glanced appealingly towards Professor Leyden, who now rose.

"Let the door be locked," he said, in a grave voice; "let it be well secured." This was done. "Now, gentlemen, you must either acknowledge the correctness of the measure I adopt, or I, the disciple of a juggling science, perish!" and he drew from his pocket a small pistol. "Nay, I mean to use this weapon, and that only in case I wrongfully accuse an individual now present. You may remember before dinner I phrenologically examined you all. There was little to say about you generally; but there was one amongst you in whom I could not be mistaken—one whom I wished not to have named, whose presence has ever since made me shudder. I see the gentleman to whom I allude already turn pale. Nay, attempt not to smile. I am either a villain to allow a false theory to mislead me, or you, Carl Hoffenon, are both a robber and a murderer."

A thunderbolt would have caused less consternation. The baron started up in rage and agony. The prince believed the professor had suddenly gone mad; while the others looked with searching glances alternately at Leyden and Carl. The former had coolly resumed his seat. The latter sat pale, unmoveable. What could it mean?

Old Hartmann was about to speak in no gentle terms to the man who had thus insulted his future son-in-law, when, waving his hand, Leyden quietly added, "Search him."

The Baron, in his eagerness to defend his protegee, a once flew to do so. Immediately the snuff-box flew upon the table. The worthy old man sunk overcome in the chair. In the breast-pocket of Carl's blouse he had found the box, which the other had unresistingly allowed him to draw forth.

For a few minutes there was a dreadful, death-like pause. The party seemed petrified, while the trembling Carl seemed to struggle with his feelings. A length, as if suddenly awakening, he started up, and incoherently pronounced,

"The hand of God is on me! I would, but cannot, fly from his judgment. Professor Leyden speaks the truth. I am a robber and a murderer! Under the name of Gratz, I wooed and won the peasant maid of whom we just now spoke. In madness I espoused her. Tired, however, in a few short days, of being tied for life to one uneducated and low-born, hearing that Clara Hartmann possessed unbounded wealth, and knowing that my rustic wife alone presented an obstacle to my wedding the fair heiress, I slew her—aye, cruelly slew her, and caused her lover to be seized, to turn the finger of suspicion towards him. Had he not fled, tomorrow he would have been stabbed. As for robbery, I can only say, I have long headed a bold band, whom now I'll not betray; although they'll laugh at me with scorn, when they first hear how foolishly I fell into the hellish net that Satan laid for me, and call me a fool for not having the power to resist temptation. That cursed box was far too brilliant. Some spell lurked in it, which drew me with a force I could not stand against, and made me rush at once upon my ruin. But why this moralize? Let monks go pray—it is too late for me; let common felons suffer on the block—it is no mean a death for me. Thus I laugh at fate: I am never unprepared."

And, ere a single arm could move to prevent him, he had swallowed the contents of a small phial, which afterwards proved to have been filled with prussic acid.

The unhappy wretch, who confessed himself to be the same who, under the assumed name of Sand, had filled the country with terror, died in tortures too horrible to describe. The accused, but innocent youth, was liberated from the gaol; and in three months Clara Hartmann became the wife of the Professor, whose love of phrenology had thus led to the discovery of guilt, the manifestation of innocence, and the acquisition of the prettiest girl in Germany.

GETTING THE BETTER IN MANNERS.—The most characteristic instance of carrying politeness to an extreme, came off not long since at an Hibernian ball, as related to us by one of the sons of Erin, who keenly appreciated a good thing. It seems that one gay Lothario *pro tempore*, in crossing the room to request Bridget's hand in the next reel, stumbled over the outstretched feet of Mr. Terence O'Grady. Mister O'Grady immediately arose, and in the politest manner imaginable, said—

"I beg your pardon, sir!"

"No offence—no offence, sir, at all," responded the other, "it was my own fault."

"I beg your pardon, sir, it was entirely my fault," was the response, accompanied with a graceful bend of the body and wave of the hand.

"No, sir," answered Mister O'Toole, "yer int'rely in the wrong; sir I tell ye it was altogether yer fault."

"I tell ye it was not, sir!" responded O'Grady, "do ye mean to say I'd be tilling a lie?"

"Bad luck to you, sir, d'ye mane to say I'd be tilling a lie, sir, when I tell ye it wasn't yer fault," responded O'Toole, waxing wroth.

"Bad luck to yer bad brading, ye ignorant lothoom, d'ye think ye'd be getting the better o' ye in manners?" shouted O'Grady, as with a tip and a blow he laid the unfortunate O'Toole on the floor.

O'Toole rallied, and a rough and tumble ensued, which ended in the expulsion of both gentlemen from the ball room.

Why are women so given to exaggeration? Can anybody tell? And then they are so impudent about it. A woman will tell you that she was "frightened to death," a few hours previous, and expect you to believe her declaration, notwithstanding she is alive and well before you. She will also, in describing new bonnet patterns, declare that every one of them "is the loveliest thing she ever saw in her life;" and in speaking of some foppish fellow, who is perhaps your rival, will boldly asseverate that "he is the handsomest man she ever set her eyes on." And she expected you to take her to the opera that very night, too, perhaps! Fanny Fern has truly said that "Woman is mysterious, unfathomable, contradictory, and delightful!"—*New York Ledger.*

Miscellaneous.

THE RETORT COURTEOUS.

When Lord — was Governor General of India, the 117th regiment, (I give the cypher because such a regiment was never seen in Bengal, and I don't choose to give the real number,) was quartered at Fort William.

Lord — was a very good man, probably a very great man; but he was a sad tyrant, and sometimes apt to fancy that, instead of the representative of royalty, he was royalty itself. This was a mistake which occasionally led him into error.

Now, Col. S —, who commanded the 117th, was as good an officer as ever wore a pair of epaulettes; the regiment under his command, one of the most distinguished in His Majesty's service, were proud of him, and loved him dearly; because, although he drilled them daily till they nearly fainted, he never suffered any one to pass a slight, or to do anything against the corps that he commanded. He is now a K. C. B. or a G. C. B.—Few officers have better deserved this ill-bestowed honor. Col. S — is a soldier; as the world expresses it, "a soldier every inch of him."

My Lord —, who, by the by, was a civilian, ordered a grand review. The troops were drawn out on the esplanade. The day was burning hot. The Governor General could see from his regal mansion that they were awaiting him. His Excellency chose to remain longer at "tiffin;" the troops having drooped for nearly two hours beneath the lingering rays of a tropical sun, nearly worn out, when Lord — came prancing out to look at them. It is a great honor to be looked at by a great man; so the troops presented arms, and the officers dropped their swords. In a moment the eagle eye of Lord — beheld a flag, stiff, bolt upright. He instantly despatched an aide-de-camp to command that it should be lowered. Col. S — respectfully declined, on the score that it was the king's color of the 117th regiment, and could only do homage to a member of the royal family.

"Am I not the representative of Majesty?"

"You are, my lord."

"Then I desire that flag may be lowered."

"I extremely regret, your Excellency, that I am compelled to decline complying with your order.—The king's color can be lowered but to royalty itself."

"Sir, I insist—"

"My lord, I will not give an order contrary to the rules of the service, and the directions given me when I had the honor of being placed at the head of this gallant corps."

"You shall repent this disobedience. I shall instantly refer the question home, and if you are wrong, I'll have you dismissed the service."

The enraged Governor General, thwarted for the first time in his life, galloped back to his palace, where his anger considerably impeded his digestion. The 117th regiment marched into Fort William, well knowing that they had made a dire and powerful enemy.

During twelve months which elapsed before an answer from Europe, no officers of the marked corps were invited to His Excellency's banquets. Many petty slights were shown them; in a word, they suffered all the little grievances which a superior authority can, when it chooses, inflict.

At length the answer came. Colonel S — was right. He had acted strictly according to the regulations; but a request was conveyed to him, that in future, as His Excellency seemed to make a point of it, he would lower the king's color to the Governor General.

Each considered he had gained a triumph, and the 117th were marched down to Calcutta again, to prove before the world at large, that Lord — was to receive a bow from a red and blue flag, yclept the king's color.

A review was ordered. The salute was given, and all went off well.

That evening, the Governor gave a grand party. He, as usual, commanded the band of the European regiment in the Fort (the 117th,) to be in attendance; it being the custom in those days to strike up "God save the King" the instant the great man emerged from the drawing-room; occasionally, "See the Conquering hero comes," was thrown in as a delicate compliment, while a flourish of trumpets announced each course in succession, and the military musicians delighted the ladies during the meal with several pretty airs.

On the evening in question, Captain C —, (the aide-de-camp) stepped out of the room, and audibly pronounced "His Excellency." This was a signal that Lord — was handing down the first lady in company, and should have been followed by the opening crash of the national anthem. But alas! not a sound responded to the appearance of the Governor General.