

Stammering : its treatment / by B. Beasley.

Contributors

Beasley, Benjamin.

Publication/Creation

London : Waterlow, 1888.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/kb6h2p54>

License and attribution

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



STAMMERING

ITS TREATMENT

BY

B. BEASLEY.



INSTITUTIONS

FOR THE

CURE OF STAMMERING, STUTTERING, AND ALL DEFECTS IN SPEECH.

LONDON—BARON'S COURT HOUSE, WEST KENSINGTON.

COUNTRY—GREEN BANK COLLEGE, HALL GREEN, near BIRMINGHAM.

ESTABLISHED 1876.

Principals:

MR. B. BEASLEY.

MR. W. J. KETLEY.

MR. B. BEASLEY, JUN.

CONSULTATIONS FREE.

MR. B. BEASLEY (the author of this little book) who for more than thirty years was a most inveterate Stammerer, discovered and perfected a system by which he cured not only himself, but numbers of others similarly afflicted.

GREEN BANK COLLEGE

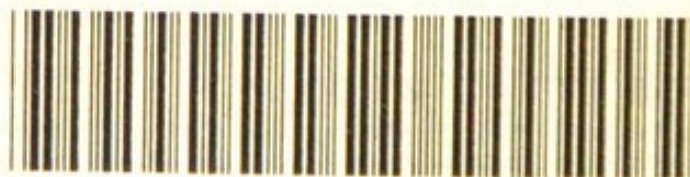
Is delightfully situated in its own Grounds of nearly thirty acres, being bounded on one side by a picturesque Trout Stream. Ample provision is made for all Out-door Sports, including Cricket, Lawn Tennis, Bathing, Fishing, &c., while the Domestic arrangements are such as to meet the requirements of Pupils of all ages, **Special Apartments** being provided for **Ladies and Elderly Gentlemen**, with whom attendance at Daily Classes is entirely optional.

It is erroneous to suppose that cases of long standing cannot be cured. Many Pupils of mature age who, before consulting **Mr. Beasley**, have thought their malady almost hopeless, have in an incredibly short time obtained relief. These eminently satisfactory results can only be traced to the **Extreme Simplicity** of the system, which in itself compels **perfect action of speech**, and makes the Pupil a **Better Speaker** than the majority of those who have never stammered.

The daily opportunities afforded of speaking before a number of listeners form a great feature in the treatment, as by this course Pupils learn their powers, and the nervousness which generally accompanies stammering gradually subsides, and those who before could **scarcely articulate** are thus able to **speak perfectly** before a large audience.

JUVENILE PUPILS.—In continuing the **General Education of Juveniles**, their work (being made principally oral) is carried on in such a manner as to be conducive to the **Cure of their Impediment**, and embraces French, Latin, Euclid, and Arithmetic.

English Literature, comprising History, Biography, and Geography, forms a daily

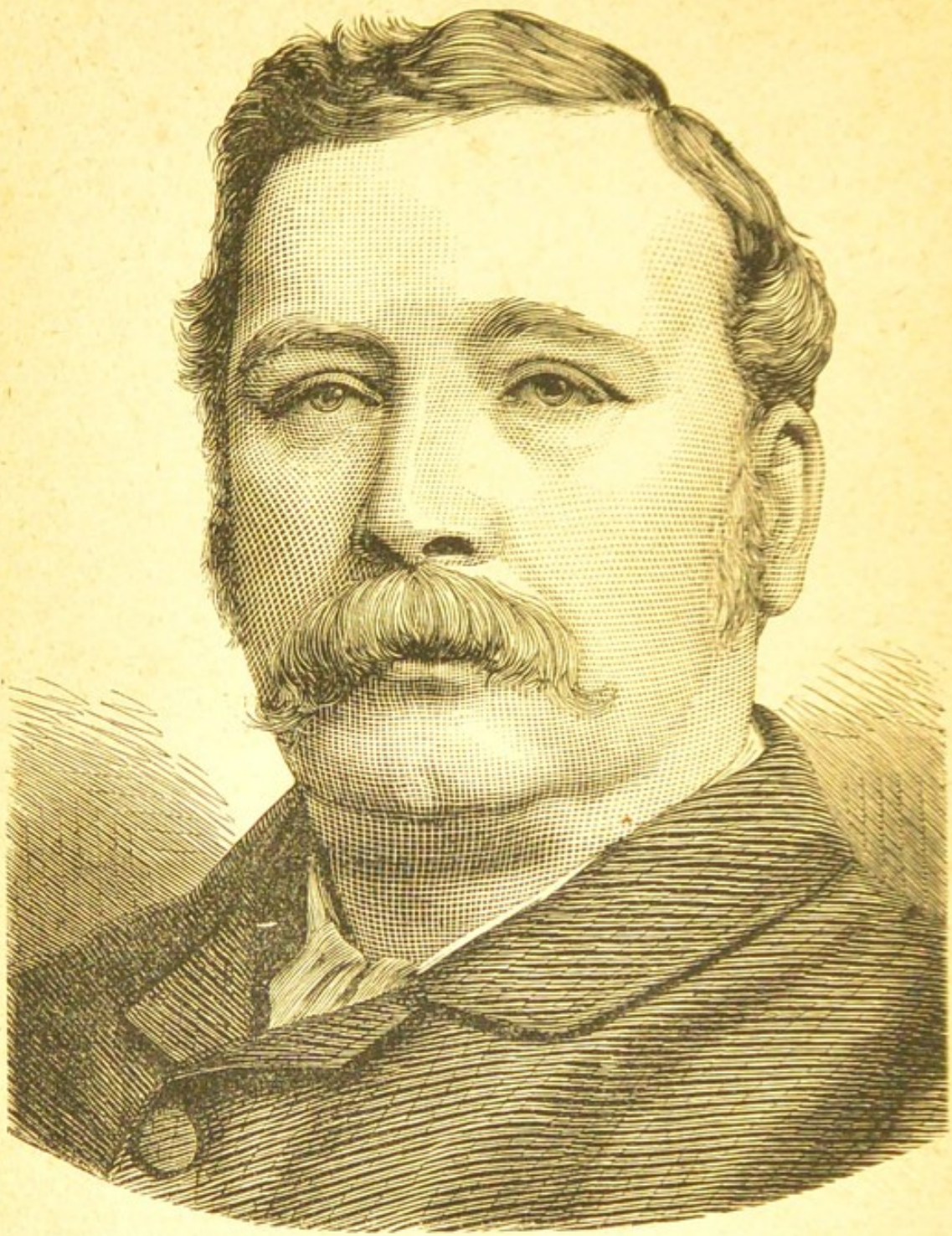


22400030279

on (District Railway),
S.

Pupils are arranged for

Med
K36084



Faithfully yours
B. W. Beasley

STAMMERING: ITS TREATMENT.

BY

B. BEASLEY,

*WHO CURED HIMSELF, AFTER SUFFERING FOR MORE THAN
THIRTY YEARS.*

Tenth Edition.

LONDON :
WATERLOW AND SONS LIMITED, LONDON WALL, E.C.
1888.

119

WELLCOME INSTITUTE LIBRARY	
Coll	welMOMec
Class	
No.	WM
PRESENTATION TO MR. BEASLEY.	

31056088

In addition to the large collection of letters from Pupils, which form an interesting and unique album, the following extract from the report of a presentation made to Mr. BEASLEY is a magnificent token of the success of his system :—

“On Thursday, October 15th, a Dinner was given at the Colonnade Hotel, New Street, to Mr. BENJAMIN BEASLEY, of Green Bank College, Hall Green, by a number of his former Pupils, in recognition of the great benefit they have derived from the successful application, in their respective cases, of his treatment for the cure of the distressing infirmity of stammering.

“The Chair was taken by HENRY HAWKES, Esq., J.P., Coroner, and among the guests present were MAJOR WALFORD, Messrs. MERCER, SIMPSON, T. KEEN, J. M. CHUTE, H. W. HOWE, W. H. PETHICK, SAMUEL BLOORE, W. M. BODDINGTON, etc., etc.

“Mr. JAMES MACREADY CHUTE (of Bristol), an old Pupil of Mr. BEASLEY, in an admirably delivered speech, presented him with a handsome Marble Timepiece and an Illustrated Address, as follows :— ‘We, a few of your old Pupils, desire your acceptance of the accompanying Timepiece, as a token of our grateful appreciation of the success of your system for the cure of Stammering.’ The signatures of a large number of former Pupils were appended.

“Mr. BEASLEY, in responding, said, ‘It was in a measure to the devotion to his profession, and the fact of having been for so many years himself a stammerer, that his success with others was to be attributed.’”



P R E F A C E .

As questions which require answering at considerable length are frequently put to me with respect to stammering, I have been induced to issue this pamphlet, in order to express my views more readily than time permits during a short conversation.

In some instances, those seeking information are merely actuated by an idle curiosity ; others, more thoughtful, by a desire to become acquainted with a subject which has puzzled men of science, philosophers, and physicians ; while many of my intimate friends and acquaintances, having known me for many years, naturally evince an interest to learn how such a wonderful change in my speech has been accomplished.

Believing, as I firmly do, that there is not the slightest reason for supposing it to be a question either for the physician or surgeon, I have not, in treating the subject, chosen to express myself in medical or other scientific methods and terms, but have endeavoured to clothe my opinions in so plain a manner that I may be comprehended by all readers.

THE AUTHOR.

ADDRESS—B. BEASLEY,
Green Bank House, Hall Green,
near Birmingham ;
And Baron's Court House, West Kensington, London.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	7

CHAPTER II.

OPINIONS OF DIFFERENT WRITERS ON STAMMERING . .	12
---	----

CHAPTER III.

THE ORGANS OF SPEECH	16
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

CAUSES OF STAMMERING	20
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

THE CASE OF THE AUTHOR	24
----------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VI.

TREATMENT	26
---------------------	----

CHAPTER VII.

CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR ON STAMMERING . .	39
--	----

CHAPTER VIII.

ADVICE TO MY PUPILS	45
-------------------------------	----

TESTIMONIALS AS TO MR. BEASLEY'S OWN CASE . . .	48
---	----

TESTIMONIALS OF CASES TREATED	51
---	----

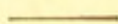
SPEECH DAYS	56
-----------------------	----

STAMMERING:

ITS TREATMENT.



INTRODUCTION.



“Come, I will show thee an affliction unnumbered among this world’s sorrows
Yet real and wearisome and constant, embittering the cup of life.
There be who can think within themselves, and the fire burneth at their heart,
And eloquence waiteth at their lips, yet they speak not with their tongue :
There be whom zeal quickeneth, or slander stirreth to reply,
Or need constraineth to ask, or pity sendeth as her messengers,
But nervous dread and sensitive shame freeze the current of their speech :
The mouth is sealed as with lead, a cold weight presseth on the heart,
The mocking promise of power is once more broken in performance,
And they stand impotent of words, travailing with unborn thoughts.
Courage is cowed at the portal, wisdom is widowed of utterance :
He that went to comfort is pitied, he that should rebuke is silent,
And fools who might listen and learn, stand by to look and laugh :
While friends, with kinder eyes, wound deeper by compassion :
And thought, finding not a vent, smouldereth, gnaweth at the heart,
And the man sinketh in his sphere for lack of empty sounds.
There may be cares and sorrows thou hast not yet considered,
And well may thy soul rejoice in the fair privilege of speech :
For at every turn to want a word—thou canst not guess that want :
It is as lack of breath or bread, life hath no grief more galling.”

M. F. Tupper.

NONE but a stammerer can realise, to the fullest extent, the force of these words. Until I came before the public as a curer of stammering, I had no conception that the

affliction could take such a terrible hold upon any one, or result in such fearful violence to the nervous system, or such dreadful mental depression as I have often witnessed. It is no exaggeration to say that it were better to be dumb entirely, than to suffer the dread, mortification, and disappointment which is the constant lot of the stammerer. The dumb are never subjected to ridicule, or the thoughtless and sometimes cruel impatience with which the stammerer often finds himself treated.

Those who only occasionally listen to imperfect utterance can have no idea of the misery and agony that stammerers feel in their wretched attempts to give utterance to their thoughts. What can be more galling to a highly intelligent young man, of refined culture and extensive knowledge, than to find himself unable to enter into conversation, without causing pain both to himself and to those who listen to him! For nothing is more embarrassing, or gives more pain, than to witness the spasmodic contortions and painful efforts of a stammerer. Besides, should he have to make his way in the world, what occupation can he follow? He is debarred from all the professions requiring fluency of speech, and has to make choice of some calling for which he is possibly unsuited, and for which he has no taste. Thus his prospects are blighted, and he who might have been of use to the community, and an ornament to a profession, finds himself in a few years a sensitively-morbid, melancholy, disappointed, and poor man. What can parents be thinking of, to be so apathetic in the matter as they sometimes are? Could they but see the letters which come into my hands, they would certainly be roused to a sense of their duty, and do all in their power to obtain relief for their stammering son or daughter. It is not my intention to be sensational, by dilating on the subject of the sufferings of stammerers, although I could do so without drawing on my imagination. The facts would be quite sufficient of themselves, and would require no colouring to make the picture a forcible one. But this I

must say, that many an existence which would have been bright and joyous has been rendered sad and gloomy, and sometimes cut short, through dwelling on its wretched infirmity.

It may however be, that many look upon stammering as an incurable complaint, or that they have been swindled by some of those impostors who profess to cure it, but who know nothing whatever of the malady, and who, by their treatment, prove that they are altogether ignorant of the simplest laws relating to voice and speech. These fellows do an incalculable amount of harm, and prevent stammerers who have been duped by them from applying to those who are honest in their profession, and could give them relief. I could give numerous instances where stammerers have placed themselves under some of these impostors, and, as a result, been made worse than they were previously, having, through the ignorance of their instructors, acquired baneful habits in addition to those they had before. It may not be out of place to name one or two instances, which may serve as cautions to others not to be deceived in like manner.

The mother of a pupil of mine wrote to one of these "professors." He replied by sending a prospectus stating that he was a medical man of high standing. He also gave his terms. The lady very wisely went to her own medical man, to enquire if there were such a person on the register. It turned out that there was no such name of a duly qualified person, although the charlatan had the impudence to assume the titles only allowed to practitioners of the highest qualifications. He also had the audacity to describe himself as a physician to many institutions which were nothing but myths. As the lady never replied to him, he from time to time sent circulars, in each of which he reduced his terms. They became so low at last, that the imposition became apparent.

Another case is that of a young man who was called

upon by a doctor who professed to work miracles in the way of curing stammerers. The "professor" prevailed upon his dupe to pay him his fee, when he gave him some ridiculous advice, told him he had great mesmeric influence over him, and that he would call on the following day. He did not come, and the poor fellow, who could ill afford to lose the money he had been swindled of, never saw him again.

Another pupil who had been forced to give up his situation as managing clerk in a large establishment in a provincial town, applied to me. He told me he had been more than twelve months in London and elsewhere, seeking a cure for his impediment. He had seen many professors, and had purchased every book he could hear of which treated on the subject. His experiences were rather varied. He was told by one "curer" that the principal rule to be borne in mind was to always shut the mouth, and draw in breath through the nostrils, and keep his lips tightly drawn over his teeth. Let any one try it, and look at himself in a looking glass—I don't think he will continue the practice. The next told him to speak with his teeth closed, and to pinch himself at every syllable. Another put him through a course of diet and physic, in order to regulate (as he said) the proper amount of saliva for the tongue; while another, professing to be dental surgeon to all the great orators in the kingdom, said he must have his front teeth removed and a lot of new ones in the place of them. Seeing that the poor fellow had a good average set of teeth, I don't wonder at his politely declining the professor's advice. Many other remedies he had tried, even becoming so morbid on his malady as to consult spiritualists. The only bit of good advice he got was from a sensible old gentleman whom he casually met, and who said to him, "Keep your mouth open and read blank verse." The study and practice of elocution will materially help the stammerer; but before he can practise it, he must learn how to use and exercise his vocal organs, otherwise his

study of elocution will benefit him but little ; and he will not know how to “open his mouth and read blank verse.”

I am very glad to say the pupil of whom I have just spoken has, after seeing me some ten or twelve times, returned to his situation, and conducts his business to the satisfaction of his employers and with comfort to himself.

It must be understood that the foregoing remarks are not intended to convey the idea that all who profess to cure stammering are impostors. If I only hinted as much, I should be doing an injustice to many who have given the matter careful and studious thought, and who possess a very extensive knowledge of the subject, and whose advice and teaching cannot but be beneficial. I do not pretend to be the only one possessing the knowledge requisite to cure stammering. The only advantage I can reasonably claim is, that I found out a method and reduced it to a system, by which I cured myself of this dreadful infirmity. I do not know whether I have been more surprised or gratified at the success which has attended my treatment of stammerers. The progress some of them make is truly astonishing, and causes me to come to the conclusion that my own case was one of peculiar obstinacy. I have had pupils who have made as much progress in three months as I made in three years. This I can only account for by supposing that I had to find out for myself with difficulty what I can now easily impart to others. This confirms me in the belief that I do not think it possible for any one to so *thoroughly understand* the treatment of stammering as one who has himself been a stammerer.

CHAPTER II.

OPINIONS OF DIFFERENT WRITERS ON
STAMMERING.

AN enquiry into the cause of Stammering is nothing new. We find stammering mentioned in the Bible. "And the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly."—Isaiah c. xxxii, v. 4. From the time of Herodotus to the present, philosophers and men of science have considered and written about it. The ancient and indeed many modern writers, had very peculiar ideas concerning it. Aristotle, Hippocrates, Plutarch, Galen, and others held, together with correct notions, many absurdities. It is needless to deal with the latter, mixed up as they are with superstition. The former may be considered with profit. Hippocrates is the first who seems to treat the subject rationally, and we deduce from his opinions that the cause of stammering is due, to a certain extent, to an overflow of thoughts, which causes the speaker, before saying that which he has to say, to pass on to other thoughts and expressions. Speaking of Demosthenes, Plutarch says : " He had a weakness and a stammering in his voice, which caused such a distraction in his discourse that it was difficult for the audience to understand him. One day, lamenting to an actor, who was his friend, Demosthenes said that although he was always most careful and exact in his oratorical preparations his efforts were unavailing, and that he made no impression on his audience. His friend gave him

advice, the result of which was, that for months together he would remain in his study, with one side of his head shaved, so that he could not appear in public. Here he practised exercises which cured him of his hesitation and stammering and so enabled him to become the first orator in the world."

During the past three hundred years, speculators on stammering have been very numerous. Many of these held opinions quite as absurd as some of the ancients, both as to its cause and treatment. It would take up too much time, and serve no good purpose, to consider the various opinions on the subject, which are to be met with in the works of Lord Bacon, Joseph Frank, Dr. Lichtinger, Vosin, Hervez de Chegouin, Dr. Schulthess, Dr. M'Cormac, Professor Müller, Dr. Marshall Hall, Serres, and many others. It is, however, somewhat amusing, and at the same time shows what ignorance of the real cause of stammering has prevailed, to know that such remedies as flogging, shaking, rubbing the tongue with salt, charms, and others quite as ridiculous, are recommended.

There are other writers whose opinions are entitled to consideration, and who, although not altogether right, have made valuable observations from which some good may be gleaned. Among them Dr. Arnott may be quoted as having been in the right track. He does not, as many do, suppose that stammering is caused by a difficulty in uttering any special sounds or letters; but that the affection is situated in the glottis, where it may influence all utterances. He to a certain extent is right. But the rules he gives for the regulation of the glottis are calculated to induce another form of stammering, rather than relieve the one already formed.

Rullier, with others, thinks that stammering is caused by an overflow of thought, too rapid for utterance. He doubtless is right; but, on the other hand, when thoughts are not forthcoming, hesitation will be the result; hence another form of stammering.

Joseph Watson, a great authority on the treatment of the deaf and dumb, has also written on stammering in a very scientific manner. His remarks show a thoughtful appreciation of his subject, but his remedies are not altogether practical. His work will be very interesting to those who read thoughtfully on the subject.

Amman, another great authority on the education of the deaf and dumb, also has studied the causes and cure of stammering, and he is right in considering that genuine stammering is not the result of organic defect, but of habit.

The most comprehensive and clear account of stammering which has been expressed in a few words is to be met with in the remarks of Sir Charles Bell, who says : " In a person who stutters, the imperfection is obviously in the power of intonation, and not in the defect of a single part. The stutterer can sing without hesitation or spasm, because, in singing, the adjustment of the glottis and the propulsion of the breath by the elevated chest are accomplished and continue uninterruptedly ; neither does he experience any distress in pronouncing the vowels and liquid consonants, for the same reason ; and if he study to commence his speech with a vowel sound, he can generally add to the vibration already begun, the proper action of the pharynx. Another necessary combination distresses the stutterer, namely, the action of the respiratory muscles and those of the throat. He expels the breath so much in his attempts at utterance, that to produce a sound at all, the ribs must be forcibly compressed. To remove this necessity, if he be made to fill his lungs and elevate his shoulders, the elasticity of the compages will come into play so as to expel the breath without effort, and he will speak with comparative facility and comfort. Accordingly, to commence speaking with the chest fully inflated, to pitch the voice properly, to keep measured time in speaking, and to raise the voice on a liquid letter or vowel, are some of the common means recommended for the cure

of it ; and they are certainly those which tend to overcome the difficulty in combining the organs of speech, when the defect arises from no disorder or malformation of the organs of speaking." SIR CHARLES'S SUGGESTIONS AS TO CURE ARE ONLY PARTIAL. THERE ARE MANY THINGS TO BE CONSIDERED BESIDE REGULATION OF THE BREATH IN THE CURE OF STAMMERING.

Beside authors already mentioned there are others who might be cited. Many are right in their opinions, but their treatment of the subject is generally so very theoretical and impracticable that little benefit is to be gleaned from a study of their writings.

CHAPTER III.

THE ORGANS OF SPEECH.

BEFORE considering the causes of stammering it may be well to explain the action of the organs of speech. In doing so there will be no necessity for entering too minutely into detail. The different positions the organs take during the process of speech are as numerous as the different formation of words ; to endeavour to explain them would not only be an almost endless task, but would serve no useful purpose.

THE ORGANS OF SPEECH are ten in number. They consist of the lungs, glottis, soft palate, tongue, lower lip, lower jaw, hard palate, upper teeth, upper gum, and upper lip. The first six are active, the other four passive.

The lungs may be said to be the most important of all, as without breath vocal sound could not be produced, nor voice moulded into words.

RESPIRATION is principally assisted by the action of the diaphragm (a muscular substance lying between the chest and abdomen) which falls and rises ; and by the sides of the breast, which expand and contract when breath is inspired and expired.

The GLOTTIS is the organ of sound, and is situated in the larynx (or Adam's apple as it is called), above the vocal cords. It is here that the different sounds, acute or grave, are made, depending on the greater or less opening of the aperture.

The SOFT PALATE is an organ which materially assists in forming quality of voice. It is situated behind

the hard palate (or roof of the mouth), and extends to the throat, where the communication with the nasal passages commences. It opens these passages in all nasal sounds.

The other organs it is unnecessary to describe ; they can be seen.

In speaking, the breath is emitted from the lungs, producing sound in the glottis, and afterwards formed into words by the action of the other organs of speech.

Although there are nearly forty different formations, it will be sufficient to speak only of five, and those consonantal, and used at the beginning of words.

I do not mean that these five formations are exactly alike in the different words which I shall group together, but that for all practical purposes they may be *considered* the same. The few examples will, if carefully studied, shew the difference which occurs in the position of the organs of speech during articulation. Words beginning with B, P, or M, are formed by pressure of the lips together, and then abrupt separation at the instant that the voice is made, as in *bar, beg, bit, bother, but, bye ; pack, pen, pig, pot, put, pike ; man, met, mix, mop, mud*. The difference is caused by the various vowels which are used. The same remark will apply to other consonantal formations.

D, T, S, Z, and N, require the tip of the tongue to come into contact with the upper teeth, where the teeth and gums meet, and simultaneously with vocal sound there must be cessation of contact, in order to articulate the required word, as in *dad, deck, differ, doll, duck, dye ; tack, tempt, till, toll, turf, tye ; sack, send, sin, soft, suffer, sign ; zany, zeal, zinc, zodiac, zumic ; name, nell, nib, not, nut*.

C, G, J, K, L, Y, Sh, and Q, in the formation of a word, require the tongue to be placed against the hard palate ; as in the former, quick separation is necessary at the moment voice is made, as in *cab, centre, cid, coffer, cut, cite ; gad, gem, gin, gone, gutter, gyve ; jack, jet,*

jim, jog, just ; kaw, keg, kick ; lame, lend, limb, lost, lust, line ; yacht, yet, yon, yule ; shame, shed, shine, shot, shut ; quab, queen, quick, quoth.

F and V are dento-labials, in which the lower lip comes into contact with the upper teeth, from which it is separated in commencing a word, as in *fact, fed, fin, fog, fuss, fye ; vane, veer, vine, voice.*

R, when trilled, requires the tip of the tongue to be placed very near to the palate, and the voice propelled with sufficient force to cause rapid contact and separation as in "Round the rugged rocks the ragged rascals ran a rural race."

As there are five different sounds of the vowel A ; two of E ; two of I ; three of O ; and two of U ; as heard in the following words, *far, mast, mare, fat, mate ; get, me ; fir, fin ; for, home, move ; must, prude*,—beside their combinations in diphthongal and triphthongal sounds—the manner in which sounds are multiplied will be understood.

Consonants may be divided into three classes. 1st, those which have no initiatory sound whatever, as C, K, P, Q, T. 2nd, those which have but a slight initiatory sound, as B, D, F, G, J, S, V, Z. And 3rd, those which have a palpable initiatory sound, as L, M, N. In fact, L, M, N have sounds quite as plain as the vowels. Stammerers find the most difficulty with words beginning with the first class, less with those of the second class, and least with those of the third class of letters. What I mean by the initiatory sound is that which immediately precedes articulation of any consonantal sound. The initiatory sound of L is produced by the tip of the tongue being placed in contact with the palate, close to the upper teeth, while the sound is allowed to pass over the tongue and out laterally by the teeth. This sound can be made with the nostrils closed. M and N cannot be articulated with the nostrils closed : thus they are called nasal. The initiatory sound in the second class letters is varied in each of them, and may be understood by placing the

articulative organs in their right position for the letter which begins a word, and endeavouring to articulate that word without allowing them to move. In B, D, G, J, a stifled sound will be produced ; and in F, S, V, Z, a kind of hissing sound will be made. While in the first class, when the organs are placed in right contact for a word, no possible sound can be uttered in trying to say that word so long as the organs are not separated.

To make enunciation perfect, a light trippant action of the tongue and lower lip, and a free downward, almost involuntary, action of the lower jaw, are necessary. There must be no hard pressure at the time of contact, but every articulation must be made entirely without effort. Where this is not observed, an impeded articulation will ensue.

DEFECTIVE ARTICULATION is frequently the result of imperfect organization, such as harelip, cleft palate, undeveloped jaws, too large tongue, or defective growth of the teeth. Stammering rarely, if ever, proceeds from such causes, although it may accompany them.

In some of the cases just mentioned the aid of the surgeon may be necessary, but in cases of stammering the knife should never be used. Many unfortunates have had bitterly to deplore the result of a surgical operation for the cure of stammering, when they have found to their cost that their condition has been made infinitely worse than it was before.

Thanks to the intelligence of the present age, few surgeons could now be found who would countenance operations for stammering.

CHAPTER IV.

CAUSES OF STAMMERING.

THERE are five principal *active* causes. First, not opening the glottis so as to produce sound ; second, not allowing the lower jaw to have free play ; third, pressing the lips tightly together ; fourth, pressing the teeth too tightly against the lips ; and, fifth (most difficult to get rid of), pressing the tongue tightly against the teeth or gums. In other words, stammering is caused by trying to speak in an impossible manner. Let any one try to articulate a word beginning with one of the letters B, P, or M without separating the lips ; or one beginning with either C, G, J, K, or Q, without separating the tongue from the palate ; or words beginning with the letters F or V without separating the lower lip from the upper teeth, and he will find his efforts are vain.

In explaining their cause, it may be as well to state what I mean by stammering as distinguished from stuttering. STAMMERING is an inability to articulate sentences, words, or parts of words, and may occur in any part of a sentence, in any part of a word, or at the beginning of a word. STUTTERING is a rapid repetition of the initial or beginning part of a word, and a difficulty or inability to finish it. Stammering is not confined to any letters or words ; but words beginning with consonants present the greatest difficulties, especially with double or treble consonants, such as bl, br, ch, cl, cr, dr, fl, fr, gl, gr, pl, pr, sc, sh, sk, sl, sm, sp, sq, st, sw, th, scr, shr, spr, and str.

As, however, the two forms are so nearly allied to each other (for we seldom meet with a stammerer who does not stutter) when I speak of stammering my remarks will generally apply to stuttering also. Nervousness exercises a very predominant influence over stammerers, but it is not, as many suppose, the cause of stammering. Stammering is the cause of nervousness. If a cure can be effected, all nervousness will disappear. Beside, it cannot be traced in its earlier stages to nervousness, as children are seldom nervous, and it is generally during the period of childhood that the habit is acquired. Even those who have been afflicted with the impediment for many years are often found to be anything but nervous, except in regard to their misfortune.

My own personal experience unquestionably proves to me how fearfully one may be afflicted with the impediment without having reason to attribute it to nervousness. As a child I was very healthy and robust, and at the age of five or six years was remarkable for my fluency of speech and perfect articulation.

At that time I had an attack of low fever, which left me in a delicate state for some months. Before I recovered my usual health, I showed symptoms of stammering. This gave my parents great anxiety, and they consequently left no means untried which were suggested in order to procure me relief. Their efforts however proved fruitless, and in course of time I became a confirmed stammerer. My general health was, however, unimpaired, but I became excessively nervous and sensitive respecting my affliction.

To picture the mortification and misery which such a state caused me is almost impossible—those only who suffer can tell how deeply wretched a stammerer may be. Fortunately, being a strong, healthy lad, I was fond of all athletic sports, and one of the foremost in all games requiring strength and activity ; showing anything rather than a nervous temperament. Yet my impediment made me extremely diffident and shy, even among

those with whom I was on terms of the greatest intimacy. To talk to my *friends* was most painful to me and to converse with *strangers* caused me unutterable distress.

As I grew older, the seriousness of my infirmity forced itself upon me. It materially influenced my business career, and I began to see at what a great disadvantage I was placed in comparison with others not so afflicted, even though their general abilities were inferior to mine. Bitterly have I had to deplore my misfortune when I found it often stand between me and success. Since I have mastered the difficulty, I am amazed how I could have endured such a state of misery.

It is not easy to account for the PRIMARY causes of stammering, nor would it further the object with which this Pamphlet is written if an exhaustive explanation were given : it might be interesting to the physiologist or the physician, but would certainly prove of little or no benefit to those who are afflicted. There can be no doubt that, in most cases, after the primary causes have ceased to exist, the affliction remains ; having become only habit.

There are many causes which first induce stammering ; the diseases incidental to childhood being the principal ; such as measles, scarlatina, whooping-cough, low fever, or anything which lowers the physical condition. Sometimes it is acquired by imitation. As a general rule it commences when children are between the ages of four and twelve years, and usually makes its appearance after recovery from some child-ailment. At first it is only slight, but does not take long to develop itself, and is often accelerated by the injudicious treatment of those having charge of children.

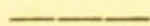
The temperaments of children who acquire this habit are of two kinds—either highly excitable and vivacious, or secretive and ruminative—and the form it will take will be different. As a rule the excitable child will both stutter and stammer, while the other will stammer only.

It is erroneous to suppose that stammering is confined to consonantal formations: no doubt consonants present the greatest difficulties to stammerers, but they will also stammer at vowels. The most easy of all the vowel sounds is *a*, pronounced as it is in *la* of the Italian method of sol-faing in music. This is formed with the whole of the active articulative organs entirely at rest, and requires, when the organs are in the right position, only the propulsion of the breath to cause the vocal chords to vibrate and produce the sound; and yet the stammerer often finds difficulty with this formation, owing entirely to want of control over his glottis.

The absurd notion, which once had a few disciples that stammering is a disease, has nearly become obsolete; although there may be some few who still entertain the idea that it comes within the province of the physician, and will succumb to medical treatment.

To characterise as a disease an improper use of the lips, tongue, breath, and lower jaw, seems quite as ridiculous, as if speaking ungrammatically, or biting one's nails, were so called. Stammering is a habit, and nothing else.

CHAPTER V.



THE CASE OF THE AUTHOR.

I HAVE before stated that I acquired the habit when about five or six years old. For more than thirty years I had to bear that miserable state of existence. The pain and annoyance such a state caused me is beyond description. When at school I have had many a fight with lads who mocked and ridiculed my infirmity. The satisfaction of giving them a thrashing was some consolation, but it did not compensate for neglected oral lessons which to my shame and misfortune I often had remitted.

My impediment was frequently the cause of lessons being excused, the tutor not caring to bear the infliction of listening to a stammerer. No wonder such should be the case, as there is nothing more distressing, except it be to stammer yourself. On leaving school to enter into business and mix with older people, I began to feel the seriousness of my impediment, especially when I saw other lads with inferior education and less opportunity making their way faster than I could. This state of things to one of my temperament would have been unbearable but that I was not thrown among strangers.

Being employed in my father's manufactory and counting-house, I had the opportunity of choosing my occupation, and that, I need hardly say, was one which brought me as little into contact with strangers as possible. At the age of twenty-three, owing to a change in the arrangement of my father's concerns, I had to take to

a branch business on my own account. The sole management of this was consigned to me, and I then began to realise to the fullest extent the terrible difficulty I had to contend with in my affliction.

There are some persons to whom stammerers show their infirmity more than to others, and to such I have often denied myself rather than bear the misery of letting them witness my infirmity. In many cases this has occurred with those who were of great use to me in business, and whose intimate acquaintance it would have been my interest to cultivate.

It must not be supposed that during this time I did not seek a remedy. When I commenced business on my own account, I found it imperative that I should get rid of my nightmare (for such it may be called) and I then began to study causes of impediments in speech. I sought out all that had been written on the subject and strictly observed every other stammerer I met with. If I met with any one who spoke remarkably well, I endeavoured to find out the difference between his manner and my own. In fact, I left nothing untried which I thought would lead to a good result. No doubt this led to some valuable information, and a great knowledge of the subject, but I derived no substantial benefit from my researches. Accident revealed to me what possibly I might not have noticed had I not been for so many years seeking a cure ; but accident it certainly was, that pointed out to me the first grand principle which must positively be inculcated before a stammerer can find relief. I do not mean to say that the discovery I made is such that of itself it will cure stammering, but that it is the basis on which I have built my system ; its application will depend materially upon the nature, intensity, and other contingencies of the case. It frequently appears to those unacquainted with causes of stammering, that a defect is slight, while in reality it may present more obstinate features for treatment than another case which seems inveterate. Those who have suffered know best.

CHAPTER VI.

TREATMENT.

SINCE I came before the public as a curer of stammering, I have often been pleased and astonished to find with what comparative ease some cases of the most intense kind are overcome. It encourages me in offering, with still further confidence, the benefit of my advice and experience to other sufferers. I have treated most successfully cases which have baffled all previous attempts to cure, some of them having succumbed to my treatment in a very short time. I can only attribute this unexampled success to the fact of *having been a most inveterate stammerer myself*, and knowing, and thoroughly feeling, the sensations of a stammerer. This coupled with the fact of *having cured myself*, is a sufficient guarantee of my capability to successfully treat others similarly afflicted.

Experience has taught me that it would be most difficult to impart instruction by writing to meet *all* cases. I might, and could, write a volume on the subject, but as regards its real use I am afraid it would prove about as efficacious in the cure of stammering as a treatise on anatomy without dissection would be in teaching a man operative surgery ; or of as much use as a book on boxing without practical teaching from a professor ; or as a work written on billiards without the instruction of some one who could play. A FEW MONTHS' PRACTICAL TEACHING AND WORK WOULD DO MORE THAN YEARS OF BOOK LEARNING.

The nature of the impediment varies so much with the different temperaments and characters of stammerers, that it necessitates various modes of treatment, and these modes often require changing as the different forms of stammering in process of cure develop a preponderancy over each other. As a rule, stammerers know little of the cause of their infirmity, and are prone to imagine it is influenced by things and circumstances which really have no relation whatever to it : thus they are very bad judges of their own cases, and it cannot be wondered at that they so often accept the advice of those who are even more ignorant of the nature of their defect than they are themselves. A stammerer may have only one or two bad habits, or he may have four or five ; but these can only be clearly understood by one who himself has been a stammerer, and made it his study, No one can possibly understand and enter into the feelings of a stammerer unless he has been one himself.

I should have been pleased to have made my method public by means of this pamphlet could I have seen the chance of a successful result, but, as I have said before, I am convinced it is impossible to impart my system by written instructions, *in a manner thoroughly satisfactory to myself, or so as to afford sufferers the utmost benefit.*

Personal attention and advice are *absolutely necessary to perfectly accomplish this object* : with this view I have, for the convenience of pupils, made arrangements whereby a limited number may become residents in my house : those of mature age, not requiring constant supervision, can in a few interviews receive instruction by which they can readily cure themselves.

If a stammerer could "see himself as others see him," it would be less difficult to treat him. It is a remarkable fact, that when he is first told of his most palpable bad habits, he is often slow to realise their existence ; this makes the difficulty greater for any one to cure himself by written instructions. As a rule, when he has instructions given him how to proceed, he gets the idea

that he is told to do something extraordinarily exaggerated. For instance, he may have the habit of trying to speak with his teeth and lips closed or partially so ; and when made to open his mouth only to the extent of three-eighths of an inch, he will fancy he is opening it wide enough to take in an orange. He cannot at first understand that the total absence of a laborious endeavour to speak must be cultivated before freedom of utterance can be obtained. Another of the great difficulties he has to contend with is, that no written instructions can always convey to him a knowledge of the exercises which he most needs ; thus he may be losing time in applying himself to one while he would be better employed with another.

There are five active (or, if I may use the expression, *mechanical*) causes of stammering, yet the combinations they form are numerous, and, although they may appear to general observation identical, are totally different. Beside the variations in the mechanical actions, there are other multitudinous causes which make the infirmity still more complicated ; such as mental incapacity, temperament, character, education, social influences, constitution, and health ; all these must be considered and treated properly.

An old writer on stammering says that “stuttering arises from a variety of causes, rather psychical than physical, and that a correct diagnosis in regard to their mental and bodily relations requires a sound knowledge of anatomy and psychology, without which all treatment would be a groping in the dark ; and that the existing means of cure must be adapted and correspond to individual cases and their causes.

“This can only be effected in the best and surest manner in institutions devoted to this special object, where the patient passes most of his time under the personal superintendence of his teacher, and where the corresponding means, which must be daily changed according to the diminution of the evil, are daily applied.

“ Only in such establishments, where all the means for investigating the evil, and for ascertaining the bodily and mental disposition of the patient are at hand, can the stutterer, as well as those labouring under other defects of articulation, expect a permanent cure and a cheerful existence.”

In arriving at a conclusion as to whether or no I can undertake a case, I satisfy myself on the following points : Is there any organic defect, or weakness of intellect ; do the parents or any relatives stammer ; has it been brought about in the first by illness, weakness, or imitation ? I then learn whether certain sounds can be made freely and without impediment ; if the patient can sing, or read, or speak without impediment when alone, or read or repeat with a number of others as in reading the psalms or responses in Church. When satisfied on these points I can then determine as to the chances of cure and the means to be adopted. The next and very important question is to learn if the pupil be really anxious and determined to be cured. If the answer shew any apathy in the matter, I never undertake the case. I must have a willingness and an earnest desire on the part of my pupil before I treat him. I never care to have a pupil who only comes because his father or mother wishes him to come : the wish must come from himself.

It is a great advantage for a number of stammerers to be together, as it affords them opportunities of witnessing the different forms which the impediment takes in the varied cases which come under their observation, while at the same time they feel they are among friends, and are, as it were, a band of brothers met for a special object ; and it is pleasant to witness the excellent feeling towards each other, and the mutual help they afford each other. That is what the stammerer requires. An author whose opinions generally coincide with my own says, “ The stutterer requires different treatment from common patients : he is bodily and mentally affected ; a man whose mind, temperament, capacity, and character have

taken the specific character of his infirmity, if treated like a common patient, would leave the institution uncured. The stutterer requires a *family life, a home*, where he feels himself surrounded by persons who look indulgently at his affliction, but at the same time encourage him by word and deed to exert his will to overcome his infirmity.

“Every stutterer is embarrassed, timid, distrustful ; he feels a desire to attach himself to somebody he trusts, but he is also capricious, thoughtless, passionate, and without firmness. This infirmity depresses him, but in such moments when he would express some lively thought, he becomes spasmodically excited. In the bosom of a family, surrounded by the wife, the children, the relations, and friends of his instructor, both his mind and feelings are favourably influenced and restore his equanimity.

“The nature of the stutterer absolutely requires this. Driven from society by his infirmity, there arises in the stutterer, according to his temperament, a cross, dreamy, distrustful disposition ; or perhaps, a thoughtlessness, a flightiness, and indecision, as if the weakness of the organs of speech were allied with weakness of character. The stutterer has always a feeling of degradation, of becoming an object of ridicule. If now the pupil is received in a family of which his teacher is the head, and in which family all the arrangements are made subservient to his cure, he loses his fear of being ridiculed, his mind acquires confidence, and he gradually attains that mental condition which, in my experience, must always precede all treatment, and without which all vocal gymnastics remain useless.”

It is not always easy to determine the length of time a pupil will take before he can be cured, for as I have before observed, a case which seems intense may sometimes be easily treated, while one which seems but slight, may take a considerable time and patient unwearying attention to overcome. For instance, I had a pupil who

visited me daily for about a week only ; he could not possibly remain longer. A month after he returned home he wrote me as follows :—

“One month only has elapsed since I first commenced under your system, and in that short period I have acquired a freedom of speech beyond my most sanguine expectations. I can now speak with mental tranquillity and self control, and at times I feel as if I should never stammer again.” Certainly this, although a most intense case, was that of a gentleman who had great determination and a strong will, and adhered to my instructions with unusual tenacity.

Another remarkable case was that of a boy of nearly eighteen, who was with me not quite a fortnight, but worked so well and got such a grasp of my system that he not only cured himself, but cured also a younger brother who was afflicted in like manner. I could mention numerous instances where a fortnight to six weeks only has been required, but in these cases there has been a good deal of force of character, which is a great help in the cure of stammering.

On the other hand a very much greater length of time is sometimes required. A little fellow of twelve came to me ; a timid, sensitive, almost girl-like boy, with a most painful impediment, often taking the form of hysteria, and so sensitive that the big tears would run down his cheeks in his attempts at utterance. He remained with me for three months, returned home nearly cured, and was sent back to school, where he again fell into his old habits through the well-meant but injudicious treatment of his tutor. He was then sent to me again for twelve months, and for some months before he left he was not heard to stammer at all. Meanwhile he had grown into a fine healthy, bold little fellow, and is now at a public school, and I have no fear that he will ever stammer again. I can record a very pleasing anecdote with respect to that boy. He had to call at the house of a friend of mine, and was asked to stay

luncheon. A very eminent lady vocalist was staying there; she knew nothing whatever of him, but after he had gone she remarked to the lady of the house "how beautifully that boy speaks!" "Yes," replied the lady, "would you believe that little more than a year ago that little fellow was a most inveterate stammerer."

I could mention many similar stories were it necessary; rather than do so, I invite any one interested in the subject to come and see my establishment.

Some of the best and most satisfactory pupils I have had, have been those belonging to the superior working classes or tradesmen, who have through their impediment been brought to feel the terrible drawback and hindrance to success their infirmity places on them. I have had many such cases, and treated them with complete success in from two to four weeks; their desire to rise in the world has proved a great incentive in their efforts to second me in my treatment of their cases—they seldom fail, but work out with a will all I desire them to do. For such pupils I provide lodgings, or they may provide for themselves near me, so that they visit me every day.

In order to give the public some idea of the way in which my establishments are conducted, and also to give information to anyone interested in the cure of stammering, I have, through the kindness of the proprietors, been allowed to reprint an article which appeared in *The Birmingham Daily Gazette*, March 17th, 1881.

"STAMMERING AND ITS CURE."

"It may not be generally known that we have amongst us in Birmingham a gentleman who has given more attention to the cause and cure of stammering, stuttering, and other painful impediments of speech than any other man in England. The notion conveyed by the term 'Professor of Stammering' must naturally suggest quackery to the ordinary reader, perhaps already too

painfully familiar with sham medical trickery and treachery, but our well-known townsman, Mr. Benjamin Beasley, of Green Bank House, Hall Green, near Birmingham, is now firmly established as a professional adviser on all cases of imperfect speech, and his integrity of purpose, and the marked successes which have attended his course of treatment, are alike gratifying and above suspicion. It is well that the existence of so unique and valuable an institution as Mr. Beasley has established should be made known to the public generally, for undoubtedly stammering may be classed as one of the most grievous of the minor afflictions which beset poor humanity. 'Physician, heal thyself,' might well be taken as Mr. Beasley's motto at the outset of his career. A hopeless stammerer for more than thirty years, his first patient was himself, and his treatment of his own case led him to a close study of the causes of stammering generally, the natures and powers of the organ of speech, treatment, method of speaking, the use of the breath, the control of the voice, and other kindred researches. Having thoroughly remedied his own vocal defects, the thought appears to have occurred to him that he might be able to alleviate the sufferings of others, and the result of his close studies on the subject have been given to the public in the shape of a valuable and exhaustive pamphlet on "Stammering and its Treatment," which was issued last year. This brochure is full of sound common sense and practical information on what is at once a novel and intricate subject. The gratitude evinced by relieved patients, as contained in the very large collection of testimonials received by Mr. Beasley, bears ample testimony to the overwhelming sense of relief his patients experience, and the original documents form a most gratifying and interesting album. One young gentleman writes to say he has been able to pass an important military examination. Another says "that he seems to have entered on a new life ;" and the cases and cures of youthful patients are as numerous as they are satisfactory

Mr. Beasley does not at the outset of a case absolutely guarantee a cure (which, by the way, is what the quack would do), but where his patients diligently second his plan of vocal treatment he has not as yet experienced any case of failure, while the changes wrought in very severe cases, after a course of a few months' treatment have been marvellous.

“Attempts have been made to convey instructions for treatment by letter, but the results of this system have not been satisfactory. There is so much for the teacher to learn as to the physical defects of his patient, the causes of his malady, and the manner and method he has of speaking, and other signs of his infirmity, which can only be properly ascertained by a personal dealing with each case. It is to this speciality that Mr. Beasley now particularly devotes himself. As he very justly mentions, the success which has attended his system of treatment and the increasing number of his patients has necessitated a considerable extension of his establishment in order to properly meet the growing demands on his care. The fine old country mansion, known as “Green Bank House,” situated on the Stratford Road, about three miles from Birmingham, appears admirably adapted for the reception of pupils and patients alike. It stands in its own grounds of about thirty acres, and possesses ample lawns for tennis and croquet, fields for archery, cricket, or football, and all other agreeable accompaniments of country recreation. Ample stable accommodation is also provided, for it not unfrequently happens that an adult patient may be also “a hunting man,” and wish to pass some portion of his leisure time in the hunting field. Mr. Beasley's own well-known predilections for all orders of athletic exercises must no doubt imbue his pupils, especially those of a more juvenile age, with a spirit of friendly emulation. For is not Mr. Beasley well known among us as an athlete? In connection with Major Gem he was one of the earliest promoters of the Volunteer movement, and his victories as a marksman at Wimbledon

and elsewhere, where he has carried off many trophies, are well known. Some feats of swimming, too, have been recorded, and his proficiency in most manly exercises has rendered him therein a doughty exponent. A temporary sojourn at 'Green Bank House' can thus be, as we have shown agreeably varied, so that a 'course of treatment' may really assume more the aspect of a pleasant holiday visit to the genial host of a well-appointed country house. Nor are the studies of juvenile patients in any way interrupted or neglected, for under the able fostering care of Mr. B. Beasley, Jun., all their studies are daily continued and kept up. As we have before said, it seems a well-established fact that the stammerer should be under the personal supervision of his mentor ; for, as Mr. Beasley very justly points out, 'a few months' practical teaching and work do more than years of book learning.'

"The writer of this article has some very pleasant memories of an agreeable evening passed at Green Bank House. The idea of making the acquaintance of some dozen gentlemen all woefully afflicted would suggest the notion of a very trying social ordeal, and general conversation of a painfully spasmodic if not hopeless character. The result of a visit to this establishment would agreeably undeceive the visitor who, had he no previous intimation of the purposes of the institution, must come away with no knowledge whatever that he had been to a stammering hospital. So clear is the enunciation of all the present inmates of the house that nothing out of the common way is really perceptible more than that occasionally some of them speak in the measured tones often observed by thoughtful speakers. We are summoned from the cosy dining room to the large and spacious refectory by a bright little fellow of some twelve or thirteen years. He spoke both freely and fluently with very little straining or unnatural effort, yet his case six months ago seemed almost hopeless. So terribly then was he afflicted that he was almost virtually dumb ;

he would enter a shop and be wholly unable to make himself understood, and in private life conversation with him was simply an impossibility. His state of nervous debility consequent upon the terrible infirmity was pitiable in the extreme, and apparently the lad's future prospects in life were entirely blighted. Now his really wonderful cure is well-nigh effected, and with ordinary precautions against relapses into his old weakness, he may pass comfortably through life, talking as glibly as most mortals. The indolent stammerer who *will* not closely carry out the instructions he has received here may relapse, but with ordinary care his permanent cure is thoroughly effected when he leaves Green Bank. The long and comfortable refectory is well filled by a very cheerful and highly talkative party, and at the head of the table appears the genial face and robust frame of Mr. Beasley himself in a dual capacity of host and preceptor, while Mrs. Beasley, at the other end, seems fully equal to the heavy demands made upon her. That this is a gathering of erst shy and nervous stammerers and stutterers is beyond a doubt, that they have been without exception marvellously metamorphosed into free (and easy) speaking mortals is also beyond a doubt: and unless a visitor has been previously enlightened he would detect little unusual in the manner in which any gentleman spoke. There are many adult patients and a good sprinkling of bright and cheerful lads. The substantial meal having been done ample justice to, we adjourn again to the dining room to spend a very pleasant social evening, for Green Bank House is a veritable 'Liberty Hall.' And now we are to subject Mr. Beasley's power as a preceptor to a severe test. The lads get ready for a vocal examination. Our host meanwhile quietly gives us much interesting information as to their 'cases' and the extent of their infirmities. One by one the young gentlemen are called upon to stand up and "speak" on any subject they may have prepared for this purpose. This they do with great readiness, rarely hesitating, save when

memory, rather than voice, fails them, and we have page after page of well-remembered history or other subject rolled off with an ease and fluency which, remembering the circumstances, is simply marvellous. Mr. Beasley's large book of testimonials can contain no more eloquent or satisfactory one than this little vocal display, which speaks as plainly for itself as the regenerated vocalists speak for themselves. In many cases we may also mention the physique of the pupils has greatly improved during their residence, for their preceptor is a great advocate for athletic exercises of all orders, and seems to combine lessons in swimming, boxing, fencing, or running with his other instructions. He is evidently a strong believer in the *mens sana in corpore sano* theory, and to strengthen weak nerves and flaccid muscles when possible is a part of his treatment, and greatly aids his efforts at restoration. These daily speech-makings are a leading feature in the curriculum of study, and all the cases of the juvenile speakers now before us have been very severe and distressing ones. Following this we have some music, both vocal and instrumental.

"All these little glimpses of this pleasant social home life are valuable, as, naturally any parent or guardian may be anxious to know something of the social surroundings of any institution to which he is about to consign a youthful pupil. Green Bank House is a 'home' in every sense of the word, to which the most fastidious of mothers could make no objection. Under the circumstances, the present writer may be pardoned for disclosing 'the secrets of the mahogany,' without thereby committing any breach of social etiquette. Many leading members of the medical profession have expressed their approval of Mr. Beasley's system, nor could the value of such an establishment as he has made be overrated, nor the knowledge of its existence too widely disseminated; for the curse under which the stammerer lies is indeed a heavy one, and the removal of such an infliction an absolute necessity where a cure is practicable. We have

said enough to show that a reasonable hope of such a cure may be held out to even the most extreme cases, and it is only in the interest of the public that this article has been written. With young patients we may safely say that a restoration of the powers of speech is practicable in perhaps 95 cases out of 100 ; and can the value of such relief be too highly estimated ? We may safely venture to say that Mr. Beasley possesses a 'speciality' which is unique, and a fitness for its administration, which leaves him at present without a rival in the country, and heartily do we express the hope that his sphere of usefulness may greatly enlarge as time passes on."

TESTIMONIALS AND REFERENCES

of the highest character, from the Nobility and Clergy, and the Military, Legal and Medical Professions, will be given if required.

CHAPTER VII.

CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR ON
STAMMERING.

I write this Chapter in a conversational form. The questions are similar to those frequently asked of me. My replies will give the necessary information to correspondents, and thus obviate the necessity of writing long letters.

CAN stammering be cured ?

It can : for many years I held a different opinion.

Why so ?

Because for many years I was an inveterate stammerer myself, and now I do not stammer.

Did you cure yourself ?

Certainly.

How did you do so ?

By first learning the cause, and then observing others who spoke well.

What is the cause of stammering ?

The causes are many, but may be summed up as endeavouring to speak in an impossible manner.

Had you any malformation or defect in the organs of speech ?

Certainly not : if I had that would not have caused stammering, but it would certainly have interfered with articulation.

How did you know you had no organic defect ?

Because I could speak words plainly one minute, and the next I should stammer at the same words.

What other reason had you for knowing you had no defect in the organs of speech ?

Because I could always sing without the slightest difficulty ; I have often wished the world were a great opera, so that I could get on better in it.

Can stammerers always sing ?

I never knew one who could not, and I have known many who could sing well.

Is your system one of singing or drawling ?

No, I should think it most absurd. My aim is to teach stammerers to talk better than the majority of people.

Do you think it possible ?

Where I meet with an intelligent, persevering patient who stammers, I think it probable.

Why so ?

Because the system I pursue has for its base the soundest principles of vocalization ; and beside, in curing a person of stammering I endeavour to make him a VERY GOOD speaker. I think it probable he may at least be better than the average.

Like shooting at an object from the bow you aim much higher than the object ?

Exactly so. If I were to tell a man how to cure himself of walking with his toes turned out too much, I should request him to walk one hour per day with his toes turned in. In time he might arrive at a happy medium.

Who are most easy of cure, children or grown up persons ?

Children, if they are intelligent and desirous to be cured.

Why so ?

Because older people, having little faith in the possibility of cure, are often impatient, and their habit has been longer confirmed.

But suppose older people were to persevere, could they become cured as soon as younger ones ?

If they would for one fortnight follow out the necessary rules they would never cease to practise them ; they would derive so much benefit therefrom that they would cure themselves, and in a shorter time than thoughtless children could do.

I have a son who stammers badly. What can I do with him ?

Make a barrister of him.

Make a barrister of him ? You surely jest.

No, I do not. If your son have ability let him follow an occupation where he must talk. Send him to me for three months and I will make him able to stand up and read in his class with any boy of his own age.

But while he is with you will he not be neglecting his education ?

A lad cannot have a better accomplishment than that of speaking well and gracefully. He would lose no time with me. I should take care his reading would be such as would stand him in good stead in whatever profession he might undertake.

You speak very confidently of your powers, and you certainly speak without impediment and very distinctly.

I have every reason to speak confidently when I know the terrible affliction I have mastered, and the ease and comfort with which I can now conduct my business.

You have not made public your remedy. Don't you think it would be well to do so ?

As so much depends on the *proper way of imparting* the elementary principles of my system, I think it would be unwise to disclose them.

I do not quite comprehend you. Will you kindly be more explicit ?

If my remedy be properly imparted the pupil sees at once, and *feels* at once that he gets relief. It would be difficult to explain my first principles in writing ; they depend much on the nature of the impediment.

You said just now that I should bring up my boy for the bar. What is your reason ?

He will then feel the grave necessity there will be that he should cultivate the art of speaking well, and if he have any ambition he will work in earnest to get rid of his defect—and he will succeed.

Is it requisite that a stammerer should have a *desire* to be cured before it can be accomplished ?

If he have no desire he will never be cured.

Cannot *you* cure a stammerer ?

If he be in earnest. I can shew how he may cure himself in a short time ; but if he will not do as I tell him I cannot cure him.

How about very young children, are they easily cured ?

When a child of tender years begins to stammer, the wisest course to pursue is to seem to take no notice of the impediment, but listen quietly and patiently, and set an example of speaking slowly and thoughtfully ; the child in all probability will cease to stammer. Kindness and gentleness, and seemingly to attach no importance to their impediment, is the only treatment in the case of very young children.

You seem to have had a varied experience.

I have. My eldest sister was a terrible stammerer ; it materially affected her health ; that and other troubles brought her to an early grave.

Had you any other relatives who were so afflicted ?

Yes, a daughter of the lady just mentioned ; beside, I have two or three cousins who stammer.

It seems hereditary. What do you think ?

I cannot say, but it does look as though such were the case.

Did you ever receive any instruction from a curer of stammering ?

Yes, from many ; but most of them had recourse to tricks which are almost as objectionable as stammering itself ; they may possibly relieve for a time, but their effect soon wears off.

Could you tell me what they are ?

They are almost too absurd to mention. One recommended beating measured time with your finger at every syllable ; another recommended drawling ; another, to speak always in a monotone ; while one advocated a kind of singing ; and many other equally ridiculous methods.

Then there is no trickery in your method ?

None whatever. I simply endeavour to put right that which has gone wrong.

Would you undertake any case of stammering ?

Certainly, any case of genuine stammering.

What do you mean by *genuine* stammering ?

That which is not attributable to paralysis, St. Vitus' dance, organic disease, any extreme shock to the nervous system, or any great debility. Before undertaking such, those ailments should be removed.

Then you think the state of health has much to do with stammering ?

Certainly ; but, as in the case of nervousness, when a person becomes cured of stammering the health will improve. General debility does not of necessity cause stammering, but stammering will very often cause general debility, particularly in some natures.

What natures are most likely to suffer ?

Those which are extremely sensitive and proud.

Do you think that a quick apprehension or rapid thought has anything to do with stammering ?

Yes. When thoughts come too rapidly, they cannot be spoken in time. Before they are uttered they are forgotten and thus hesitation ensues.

Do you think a slow—or rather I would say, a retarded—manner of thinking causes the same effect ?

Yes ; but, as a rule, this rarely occurs except in those who have stammered for many years. The habit of stammering in speech has induced a habit of stammering in thought.

How came you to know this ?

From personal experience. I have suffered in both ways. When I was young I suffered in the former manner ; afterwards in the latter.

When stammering proceeds from such causes I should think it difficult to cure ?

It certainly is more difficult of cure than where the stammering may be said to be mechanical. The mind is a more subtle thing to be dealt with than the body.

I can scarcely credit yours having been a bad case ; you do not stammer at all ?

I have lived in Birmingham nearly the whole of my life, and I can refer you to many people of position who are my intimate friends, and they will satisfy you as to the terrible nature of *what was my* affliction.

CHAPTER VIII.

ADVICE TO MY PUPILS.

IN conclusion I cannot give better advice to my pupils than that contained in this extract from *Fraser's Magazine*. They already know my system ; let them supplement it by the following advice :—

“ Stammerers need above all men to keep up that *mentem sanam in corpore sano*, which is now-a-days called somewhat offensively muscular Christianity—a term worthy of a puling and enervated generation of thinkers who prove their own unhealthiness by their contemptuous surprise at any praise of that health which ought to be the normal condition of the whole human race.

“ But whosoever can afford an enervated body and an abject character, the stammerer cannot. With him it is a question of life and death. He must make a man of himself, or be liable to his tormentor to the last.

Let him, therefore, eschew all base perturbations of mind ; all cowardice, servility, meanness, vanity, and hankering after admiration ; for these all will make many a man, by a just judgment, stammer on the spot. Let him, for the same reason, eschew all anger, peevishness, haste, or even pardonable eagerness. In a word, let him eschew the root of all evil—selfishness and self-seeking ; for he will surely find that whensoever he begins thinking about himself, then is the dumb devil of stammering at his elbow. Let him eschew, too, all superstition, whether of that abject kind which fancies that it can please God by a starved body and a hang-dog visage,

which pretends to be afraid to look mankind in the face, or of that more openly self-conceited kind which upsets the balance of the reason by hysterical raptures and self-glorifying assumptions. Let him eschew, lastly, all which can weaken either nerves or digestion ; all sexual excesses, all intemperance in drink or in food, whether gross or effeminate, remembering that it is as easy to be unwholesomely gluttonous over hot slops and cold ices as over beef and beer.

“ Let him avoid those same hot slops (to go on with the *corpus sanum*), and all else which will injure his wind and his digestion, and let him betake himself to all manly exercises which will put him into wind, and keep him in it. Let him, if he can, ride, and ride hard, remembering that (so does horse exercise expand the lungs and oxygenate the blood) there has been at least one frightful stammerer ere now who spoke perfectly plain as long as he was in the saddle. Let him play rackets and fives, row, and box ; for all these amusements strengthen those muscles of the chest and abdomen which are certain to be in his case weak. Above all, let him box ; for so will ‘ the noble art of self-defence ’ become to him over and above a healing art. If he doubt this assertion, let him (or, indeed, any narrow-chested porer over desks) hit out right and left for five minutes at a point on the wall as high as his own face (hitting, of course, not from the elbow, like a woman, but from the loin, like a man, and keeping his breath during the exercise as long as he can), and he will soon become aware of his weak point by a severe pain in the epigastric region, in the same spot which pains him after a convulsion of stammering. Then let him try boxing regularly, daily ; and he will find that it teaches him to look a man, not merely in the face, but in the very eye’s core ; to keep his chest expanded, his lungs full of air ; to be calm and steady under excitement ; and lastly, to use all those muscles of the torso on which deep and healthy respiration depends. And let him now, in these very days, join a rifle club, and learn in it to

carry himself with the erect and noble port which is all but peculiar to the soldier, but ought to be the common habit of every man ; let him learn to march ; and more, to trot under arms without losing breath ; and by such means make himself an active, healthy, and valiant man.

“ Meanwhile, let him learn again the art of speaking, and having learned, think before he speaks, and say his say calmly, with self-respect, as a man who does not talk at random and has a right to a courteous answer. Let him fix in his mind that there is nothing on earth to be ashamed of, save doing wrong, and no being to be feared save Almighty God ; and go on making the best of the body and the soul which heaven has given him, and I will warrant that in a few months his old misery of stammering will lie behind him, as an ugly and all but impossible dream when one awakes in the morning.”

TESTIMONIALS

AS TO MR. BEASLEY'S OWN CASE.

From Major GEM, Clerk to the Borough Justices, Birmingham.

Birmingham,

August 9th, 1878.

Dear Beasley,

I have read your work on Stammering, and think you take a common sense and practical view of the infirmity and its treatment. Judging from the great improvement of your own utterance, I have no doubt your advice and treatment will be very valuable.

Yours faithfully,

T. H. GEM.

MR. B. BEASLEY.

From JOHN WALFORD, Esq., Solicitor.

Newhall Street,

Birmingham,

August 12th, 1878.

Dear Sir,

I very well remember that when I first knew you about eighteen years ago, you were then a stammerer of the worst type. I am now very pleased to hear you converse with as much ease and freedom as most people.

I occasionally perceive a slight hesitation in your speech, which reminds me of old times, but which I don't think a stranger would notice.

Yours truly,

JOHN WALFORD.

MR. B. BEASLEY.

From THOMAS KEEN, Esq., *The District Iron and Steel Works,
Smethwick.*

Capethone, Smethwick,
near Birmingham,

August 6th, 1878.

My dear Mr. Beasley,

I am delighted to bear testimony to the wonderful manner in which you have cured yourself of stammering. When first I knew you it was really painful to listen to you in ordinary conversation, and the idea of speaking in public seemed absurd to think of. You do not now only speak with great ease and fluency in ordinary conversation, but I have listened to you with pleasure in public.

I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS KEEN.

B. BEASLEY, Esq.,
Birmingham.

From Lieut.-Col. S. D. WILLIAMS,
Woodgate, Malvern,

August 8th, 1878.

Dear Sir,

I have a few lines from you this morning asking me for a testimonial as to your proficiency in stammering in days gone by.

Few testimonials were ever given with such perfect frankness as I give this.

Throughout the time you were in No. 5 Company of the 1st Warwick Volunteers, you stammered detestably; indeed, it was always very painful to me to have to listen to you.

It would have given me much more pleasure to have borne witness of some of your many good qualities than I can feel in testifying to any of your defects. I console myself, however, by remembering how much easier it is to be honest in speaking of a man's vices than in praising his virtues.

Yours very truly,

Mr. B. BEASLEY.

S. D. WILLIAMS.

From HENRY WADE, Esq., *of the firm of Charles Wade & Co.,
Midland Iron Works, Birmingham.*

Midland Iron Works,
Summer Row, Birmingham,

Dear Beasley, March 9th, 1878.

I cannot refrain from suggesting most strongly the advisability of publishing your opinions with regard to impediment in speech, as you certainly would be conferring a great boon upon others who suffer as you have done. The marvellous fluency with which you speak now must surprise all who knew you during the long period of your affliction.

I am, dear Beasley,
Faithfully yours,
HENRY WADE.

From W. DOWNING, Esq.
Holly Lodge, Smethwick,
near Birmingham,

My dear Beasley, August 8th, 1878.

I duly received your pamphlet on Stammering, and knowing you as I have done for so many years (over thirty-five), I have read it with more than usual interest; and when I consider how very distressing it used to be to hear you talk, it is most gratifying to know that you have not only discovered a method whereby you have cured yourself, but that you are enabled to apply the same to others who are similarly afflicted.

Believe me, my dear Beasley,
Yours very truly,
W. DOWNING.

From Dr. FREER, *Surgeon to Birmingham Orthopædic
Hospital.*

June 12th, 1879.

I testify that I have known Mr. B. BEASLEY for more than twenty years, and that he used to stammer very badly. He has, by careful management, cured himself. And I have pleasure in stating that a patient of mine has much improved under his guidance.

WALTER C. FREER, F.R.C.S.

TESTIMONIALS OF CASES TREATED.

The following will speak of the success of Mr. Beasley's system :—

The Rev. CANON HUTCHINGS, Alderbury Vicarage, Salisbury.

The Rev. CANON CAPEL, Abergavenny.

The Rev. ALFRED PEACHE, The Firs, Hampstead, London.

The Rev. R. BULLOCK, The Chaplain's House, Wakefield.

The Rev. RICHARD JONES, Vicar, Hall Green, near Birmingham.

The Rev. W. W. POLEY, Brandon House, Brandon, Suffolk.

The Rev. RICHARD FORT, Coopersale Vicarage, Epping.

Lord BURTON, 101 Eaton Square, London.

Lady BURTON, 101 Eaton Square, London.

Sir JOHN DON WAUCHOPE, Bart., Edmonstone House, Liberton, Midlothian.

Lady JOHN DON WAUCHOPE, Edmonstone House, Liberton, Midlothian.

Colonel BUIST, 26 Chalmers Street, Edinburgh.

Colonel MALLESON, 27 West Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London.

Lieut.-Colonel WILLIAMS, Woodgate, Malvern.

Captain GREENWOOD, 10th Royal Hussars.

Surgeon-General TOWNSEND.

Dr. DRUMMOND, Gosta Green, Birmingham.

Dr. FREER, Surgeon to the Orthopædic Hospital, Birmingham.

JOHN WALFORD, Esq., Solicitor, Newhall Street, Birmingham.

JOSEPH ROYLE SHORE, Esq., Solicitor, Newhall Street,
Birmingham.

WILLIAM AVERY, Esq., Headless Cross, Redditch.

G. P. BRAUND, Esq., Stancliffe, Barrow-on-Soar.

H. W. BURGESS, Esq., Reigate, Surrey.

DAVID CARGILL, Esq., Cowgate, Dundee.

J. M. CHUTE, Esq., Princes Theatre, Bristol.

J. A. CRAVEN, Esq., Whilton Lodge, Daventry.

EDWIN GRICE, Esq., The Fields, Newport, Monmouthshire.

THOS. KEEN, Esq., The District Iron and Steel Company,
Smethwick.

SAMUEL MAYO, Esq., Manager, National Provincial Bank
of England, Deal.

JAMES PIM, Esq., Bray, near Dublin.

J. L. PORTER, Esq., National Provincial Bank of England,
Birmingham.

J. J. RUNTZ, Esq., 22 Moorgate Street, London, E.C.

H. SCOTT RITCHIE, Esq., 25 Crutched Friars, London.

A. VERNON VINES, Esq., Charburg House, Malvern.

JOHN WALKER, Esq., Dewsbury Mills, Dewsbury.

P. B. HALCOMBE, Esq., B.A., Balsham Rectory, Cambridge.

Miss MARY BOODLE, Lostock, Bournemouth.

From COLONEL MALLESON,
27 West Cromwell Road, South Kensington,
London, June 2nd, 1880.

Dear Sir,

With respect to Cecil, I may tell you that I wrote to Mr. Vines on Monday to tell him that he appeared to me to be perfectly cured. He did not stammer once when with us, and, what struck me most of all, he possessed the confidence that he was able to master the infirmity. It is a most wonderful cure, for he stammered very badly, and it speaks volumes in favour of your system.

G. M. MALLESON.

From J. J. RUNTZ, Esq.

22 Moorgate Street,
London, E.C.

Dear Mr. Beasley,

Since my return home I have had a fair opportunity of quietly observing Stanley, and it is difficult to find words adequately to express my gratitude for what you have done for my boy. His cure is simply marvellous. He has much improved in physique, and I am also very pleased with the progress he has made with his general studies under the excellent tuition of your son. He speaks in very affectionate terms of every member of your family, especially Mrs. Beasley. This speaks volumes, as it shows that under your roof the boy found really a home.

Faithfully yours,

J. J. RUNTZ.

From WILLIAM AVERY, Esq.,

Headless Cross, Redditch,

September 7th, 1881.

My son was so badly affected with stammering that it seriously affected his health. I placed him with a "professor," but the impediment was aggravated. Afterwards he went under the care of Mr. Beasley, when relief was very speedily obtained and the boy is now so free that I believe his school-fellows are not aware of his having been a stammerer. Some of my friends have sent their children to Mr. Beasley, with excellent results, and it gives me the greatest pleasure to recommend his treatment and system to anyone being unfortunate enough to suffer from a difficulty in speech. I would also allude to the kindness of Mrs. Beasley and the excellence of the house arrangements, which are all that can be desired.

WILLIAM AVERY.

From H. SCOTT RITCHIE, Esq.

25 Crutched Friars, London,

October 5th, 1880.

Dear Sir,

I have much pleasure in stating that we are all of opinion that an immense improvement has been effected in my

brother's speech by his residence with you ; the difference is, in fact, literally wonderful, and it is only fair to you to place on record our appreciation of what has been done by your system. I beg to say that I shall be happy to testify to the facts within my knowledge should you wish to refer anyone to me. And thanking you for your letter, and the thoroughly straightforward way in which all our correspondence has been conducted.

H. SCOTT RITCHIE.

From the REV. ALFRED PEACHE.

The Firs, Hampstead Heath.

Dear Mr. Beasley,

I must write a few lines to tell you how very greatly we are pleased at the wonderful progress Alan has made in conquering his impediment. It is delightful to hear him speak now and contrast it with the labour it was to him formerly. We do thank you most sincerely and gratefully for all the kind care and pains which I am sure you must have bestowed upon him in order to accomplish such results.

Very sincerely yours,

A. PEACHE.

From J. A. CRAVEN, Esq.

Whilton Lodge, Daventry,

May 15th, 1883.

Dear Sir,

I am not only pleased but deeply thankful that you have been so successful with my son, whose case I considered hopeless, as after he had been for months with a professor of elocution who had cured bad stammerers the boy was worse than ever. You have given him such confidence in himself that he can now talk on any subject with the greatest ease. His improved health, appearance, and spirits since he has been with you testify alike to the happy life he leads, and to the load which must have been taken off his mind in finding, by attending to your instructions, his infirmity has been removed.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

J. A. CRAVEN.

From the Rev. R. BULLOCK.

The Chaplain's House, Wakefield,

September 11th, 1880.

Dear Sir,

I have the greatest possible pleasure in expressing my delight and thankfulness in the marvellous improvement which my son displays in his speech. It is greater than I had reason to hope for. I feel it a matter of duty to say this at once. He speaks in the highest terms of the kindness he has received from you and your family, for which I am most thankful.

R. BULLOCK.

From the same.

Wakefield,

October 30th, 1880.

Dear Sir,

I am happy to be able to say the improvement in my son's speech is still satisfactory. Wherever I go among my friends the remark is "what a marvellous change has taken place in your son's speech." I think this will be as pleasing a testimony as you can desire as to the improvement he made under your care.

In addition to the foregoing, Mr. Beasley has an unlimited number of other Testimonials, which may be seen on application.

SPEECH DAYS.

JULY 6th, 1883.

From "SOCIETY," July 14th, 1883.

There are few habits which are so vexatious and trying to speaker and listener alike as stammering ; yet this painful infliction is by no means scarce, even among grown-up people. By a judicious course of training, however, under competent guidance, it is almost always possible for a complete cure to be effected, especially if the stammerer be young. This was amply and satisfactorily proved recently on the occasion of the "Speech Day" given by the pupils or patients of Mr. Benjamin Beasley, at his establishment, Hall Green, near Birmingham. Mr. Beasley, whose little work on the subject of stammering is well known, undertakes to cure the young people who are placed under his care, in a very short space of time, by the identical method by which he eradicated the fault in himself some years ago. The result as witnessed on this occasion was most satisfactory. It would have been difficult to detect the slightest hesitation or nervousness on the part of any of the pupils at Hall Green ; indeed, their elocution was far above the average. Mr. Beasley may be heartily congratulated on the success which has attended his efforts.

From "BIRMINGHAM DAILY GAZETTE," July 9th, 1883,

A pleasant party assembled on Friday night at Green Bank House, Hall Green, the residence of Mr. B. Beasley, the occasion being "Speech Day" with the many pupils who are under treatment for stammering or other defects in the organs of speech. Mr. Beasley has devoted his life principally to the study of the causes of defective articulation, and for several years has been known for the success of a system devised by

himself, and which has restored to pupils the pleasures of free speech in many cases hitherto denied them. Ladies and gentlemen whose prospects in life were apparently hopelessly marred by imperfections in their speech, have, by a course of instruction at Green Bank House, been rendered eligible to pass examinations in which had their affliction continued they would have been inevitably "plucked." The best testimony Mr. Beasley can possibly have for the superiority of his course of instruction is the fact that many of his pupils entered Green Bank House a few months ago in an almost hopeless condition with regard to stammering. Now, by a course of treatment in which no part of physical or mental training is sacrificed, these same gentlemen are enabled to converse with ease and fluency. On Friday one lady—Miss Sewell—and a number of gentlemen, including Messrs. P. Brown, Craven, Braund, Bickersteth, Owen, Jordan, Frank, Dearden, W. Brown, and Taylor, made speeches on social, political, and historical subjects, and the delivery in each individual case was such that it was impossible to realise that the pupils had been previously afflicted in the organs of speech. The success of Mr. Beasley's system was thus beyond a doubt practically demonstrated, and as the relief afforded is not temporary, but permanent, many ladies and gentlemen have occasion to remember with gratitude the beneficent course of treatment to which they were subjected at the hands of Mr. Beasley.

AUGUST 1st, 1884.

From "BRISTOL OBSERVER,"

August 6th, 1884.

The annual "Speech Day" at the residence of Mr. B. Beasley, Green Bank House, Hall Green, Worcestershire, which took place on Thursday, was in every sense a success. To the parents and friends of Mr. Beasley's pupils, and still more to the pupils themselves, it must have been highly gratifying. When it is taken into consideration that the majority of the speakers had entered the establishment only a short time ago as painful and inveterate stammerers, it is marvellously surprising that such results in so short a time could be obtained. Stammerers who had been afflicted for years were heard to speak with a fluency and an articulation quite up to, if not above,

the average of most people who have no impediment. The pupils were from all classes; the church, the army, the navy, the middle class, and the working man; and all testified alike to the sound and perfectly natural system adopted by Mr. Beasley, who was himself for many years terribly afflicted with this most distressing drawback to success in life.

From "MIDLAND COUNTIES HERALD,"

August 7th, 1884.

Amongst the annual "Speech Days" which at this time of the year take place at the various scholastic establishments of the district none perhaps present more interesting features than that which occurred last evening at Green Bank House, Hall Green, where Mr. B. Beasley has committed to his charge many pupils who labour under the misfortune of stammering. Rather strange it would appear to most people the idea of holding a "speech day" amongst those who are generally supposed to be the least able to speak with fluency, but to the visitor who last evening had the opportunity of listening to the addresses—and in some cases the eloquent addresses—of those who a short time ago could hardly make themselves understood even to their most intimate friends, the only feeling would be that of surprise at the marvellous change which had been effected. After devoting the greater portion of his life to the study of defective articulation, Mr. Beasley has succeeded in laying down a method by which the most hopeless cases are successfully treated, as was evidenced in an unmistakable way by the clear, deliberate, and distinct utterances of the speakers last night. Indeed, one would have thought, had he not known otherwise, that Green Bank House, instead of being an institution for the cure of stammerers, was an academy for the study of elocution, so well were the speeches delivered, so admirably were the different subjects treated, and so perfect and complete were the pronunciation and inflexion of every word. The visitors arrived shortly after noon, and the greater part of the time until the evening was devoted to lawn tennis and strolling through the extensive grounds. In the evening the party assembled in the drawing room, where several speeches were made, and shortly afterwards the proceedings concluded.

EXTRACT FROM THE "ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS,"

November 20th, 1886.

IT does not often occur that what has been a man's misfortune during the greater part of his life should eventually result in benefits not only to himself but also to his fellow creatures. The life of Mr. Beasley, the eminent authority on defects in speech, more particularly relating to stammering, is an exception to this rule. "Physician, cure thyself," would be a fitting title to a little book written by him on "Stammering: Its Treatment," wherein the author alludes to the fact of having cured himself of that malady after suffering for more than thirty years. This work may be read with great interest by all who seek knowledge of the subject, and will no doubt find its way and be a valuable addition to every library, where it will prove immeasurably useful as a book of reference. As a child, Mr. Beasley was remarkable for his fluency of speech, but an attack of low fever left an impediment which, although only slight at first, gradually developed until, as a youth, he had become a confirmed stammerer of the most inveterate type, his scholastic training having been a painful and laborious task alike to his instructors and himself. In spite of every effort on the part of his parents, who spared no expense in procuring the best advice and treatment which could be obtained, his case was pronounced hopeless and incurable, and in this pitiable condition he commenced life in the counting-house of his father, an ironmaster of South Staffordshire; but the brilliant commercial prospects thus held out to him were never realised, but faded one by one before his inability to make himself intelligible. The spirit of determination and perseverance so heavily discounted in his industrial career enabled him to compete successfully with the first amateur sportsmen and athletes in trials of skill which required no talking, and in all manly sports he was considered one of the best men of his day. He will be well remembered by old Volunteers as one of the earliest promoters of the movement, as one of the champion rifle shots in Lord Bury's first English eight who competed successfully against Captain Ross's Scotch team for the Elcho Challenge Shield at Wimbledon in the year 1862, and the victor in many other competitions and athletic sports too numerous to be recorded here. It will not be supposed that a man of so much ability and force of character would leave anything untried to rid himself of so great a curse as his impediment had long been to him. Accident revealed to him what possibly he might never have noticed but that he had been for many years seeking a cure; but accident it certainly was which pointed out to him the first grand principle that must be inculcated before a stammerer can find relief; but it was only by dint of many years of labour, study, and research that he discovered and perfected the system of treatment for the cure of stammering which has gained him the distinction of being the greatest living authority on the subject. Having completed his own cure, the student became the monitor, at first only as a philanthropist: but so remarkable was the success attained in every individual case that he was led to adopt the cure of stammering as a profession. Mr. Beasley does not claim to be a worker of miracles, or to possess more power than any other minute observer could obtain; he only claims to be the sole founder of a system by which he has cured himself and others of a most distressing affliction. He says:—"It is in a measure to the devotion to his profession and the fact of having been himself a stammerer for so many years, that his success with others is to be attributed;" but we suspect that not a little of this success is due to his genial disposition, for, although past fifty, he still joins in the out-door amusements of his pupils, thereby creating that confidence between instructor and instructed which is so essential in the treatment of this disorder. In addition to his physical qualifications, he possesses other accomplishments not less useful in their nature, and, as a reader, is far from being a mean exponent of Shakespeare or Dickens. Few men could be found, supposing they had his knowledge, so well qualified for the work he is doing. And thus the early misfortunes of the subject of this sketch have proved a boon to the community at large, and led to the establishment of two institutions for the reception of pupils for treatment and instruction: one at Green Bank College, Hall Green, near Birmingham, and one at Baron's Court House, West Kensington, London, where young and old of both sexes who had thought their impediments were absolutely incurable, have had the power of perfect speech restored to them; and many whose lives might otherwise have been aimless and without ambition, have been enabled to enter the Church, the Army, the Navy, and medical professions.

It would be difficult to find a more striking example of the efficacy of Mr. Beasley's system than the founder himself, as will be well remembered by those who have had the privilege of hearing him lecture, or have read the flattering criticisms contained from time to time in the columns of our contemporaries.

