

**A TREATISE ON THE NATURE AND
CAUSES OF STAMMERING, WITH
AN EXPOSITION OF THE BEST
METHODS OF CURE, MEDICAL,
SURGICAL, AND EDUCATIONAL**

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A treatise on the nature and causes of stammering, with an exposition of the best methods of Cure, Medical, Surgical, and educational by Anonymous

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BY A PHYSICIAN.

LONDON:
SAMUEL HIGHLEY, 82, FLEET STREET,
OPPOSITE ST. DUNSTON'S CHURCH.

1843.

to

JAS. YEARSLEY, ESQ., M. R. C. S.

DEAR SIR,

In looking round for a name to which the following pages may, with propriety, be inscribed, none comes more prominently before me, or appears more worthy of the distinction, than your own.

The application of professional minds to the subject of stammering has been of rare occurrence. The treatment of this grievous infirmity has been tacitly consigned to the domain of the empiric. You have led the way to a more just appreciation of its importance, and for this, independent of the valuable results of your investigations, you are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. To you belongs the merit of having

first called in the aid of surgery in the treatment of stammering. The continental surgeons, Dieffenbach, Amussat, Baudens, Phillips, &c. all must yield to you the priority of the idea not less than the amount of success with which the respective operations proposed have been attended. In point of fact, yours are the only operations now performed in this country.

But the important step thus gained in the treatment of stammering is eclipsed by your more recent classification of vocal impediments, which serves as a beacon to the employment of your now modified surgical operations, to the employment of medical treatment, or to the exclusion of both, and a reliance on a judicious educational training alone.

For want of such beacon, your treatment has been blindly and indiscriminately adopted by others, so that, from its many failures, which were inevitable, its value has been questioned,

Time, however, and a more extensive promulgation of your matured views and experience upon the subject, will soon correct such errors in practice.

Neither is the meed of praise the less merited for the temper and judgment with which you have met the attacks of your assailants, the Professors of Elocution, as they choose to call themselves. To make you appear an indiscriminate operator upon all cases which came before you, was a gross mis-representation of facts, as hundreds besides myself, who, by your liberality, have been admitted to see your practice, can testify.

In your recent demonstrations before the profession, for the purpose of proving the truth of your classification, every practitioner must readily bear testimony to the discrimination, judgment, and success with which you have prescribed, individually or in combination,

medical, surgical, and educational treatment. Instead, therefore, of being prejudiced in favor of, or wedded to the particular treatment you yourself originated, I cannot but regard you as having contributed more than any other man, to a just appreciation of the respective value of medical, surgical, and educational processes, and as having pointed out the particular phases and varieties of vocal impediment, to which each or all of these modes of treatment are applicable.

Believe me,

Dear Sir,

Your obedient and humble Servant,

* * * * *

March 7th, 1848.

PREFACE.

I cannot offer as an excuse for writing a book on Stammering, that there is a dearth of publications on the subject. Treatises and essays are abundant, but, if we except the attention recently excited by the performance of surgical operations for the cure of this impediment, medical men had almost relinquished its treatment, and thus, though properly coming within the province of the profession, it has been assumed by teachers of elocution and empirics.

On this account, as far as the Elocutionists are concerned, the literature of the subject, if it deserve the name, manifests, I do not hesitate to say, a greater amount of ignorance than any other allied to the medical profession. The egotism of this class is not less remarkable than their ignorance. Each has promulgated his own views as original discoveries, and all are

in opposition the one to the other,—a pretty sure criterion of their merits individually. Discreditable though it be it is nevertheless true, that many books have been written by such parties with the intention of mystifying and concealing their modes of treatment, instead of elucidating them. Others have recommended a kind of treatment very different to that which they themselves followed. It suited them to have a book on the subject, but not to divulge the secret by which they worked. About the theory of the voice, and the essential nature of Stammering, things of which they knew little or nothing, they were abundantly loquacious, but, concerning their own treatment, certain allusions to fees were the most significant elucidations that could be advanced. Thus much for the Elocutionists, and now of myself.

Probably, with two exceptions, (Mr. Yearsley in this country, and M. Colombat in France,) no man ever possessed the opportunities of investigating the nature and causes of Stammering, to such an extent, as myself, and I