A CASE OF DEFECTIVE ARTICULATION.

BY

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Haislett S—, æt. 8½ years, was admitted under my care into the Evelina Hospital on September 14th, 1890, for imperfection in speaking, and I recognised it as being a similar case to one of Mr. Golding-Bird's cases, which I had previously seen with him.

The boy's father died of phthisis six years ago, and his mother is rather slight and pale, but otherwise healthy.

Mrs. S—'s sister's son was an idiot. He went to Earlswood at six years of age, and died there six weeks afterwards, probably from pulmonary mischief.

Haislett has one sister, ten years old, who is well-formed healthy-looking, and has dark brown hair and blue eyes. She is right-handed and talks quite naturally.

The boy had three fits when he was eight months old ; measles at four years, and scarlet fever after the measles. He walked at ten or eleven months, and had his teeth at the usual time. With the exception of "dad-dad" and "mam-mam" he showed no signs of talking till about two years of age ; and then began to make known his wishes by signs or by an imperfect speech, in which unintelligible words were used. The addition of the

syllables "ida" and "eeda" was noticed when he first began to talk.

On admission he was a ruddy, healthy-looking, well-formed boy with dark-brown hair and blue eyes, and intelligent face.

He presents no obvious physical defect, and is not left-handed. His organs are healthy. There is no fissure in the hard or soft palate, but the palate presents a rather high arch. He understands all that is said to him, but his own speech is almost unintelligible, though his sister, aged ten, can understand him to a certain extent.

His alphabet at this time was as follows:—

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	
ādē	bēder	dēder	dēder	ēyer	arder	dgeeder	
h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o
aidow	aider	diader	dader	aider	em	en	ōēr
p	q	r	s	t	u	v	
bēder	u	arder	aidow	deder	ūer	vēder	
w	x	y	z				
doubbe ouer	aidow	whydēr	diader				

It was always repeated in a low voice indistinctly, and its peculiarities were the imperfect pronunciation of some consonants, and the addition of the syllables "āider" or "ēr" to almost every one of the letters. The imperfection in the consonants will be seen to be largely in the failure of the hard consonants such as p, t, s, which require greater force of articulation than some others; thus, t is given as d, p as b, k, c, s, and z, are either given as d, or shirked altogether as consonants, and supplemented by the familiar addition "dēr," and q was only a vowel sound.

The nurses and the residents attempted to improve his articulation by making him speak to dictation, and on September 25th it was reported that there was very great improvement in the child's speech. He could now say the alphabet fairly intelligibly, but still had great difficulty about k, and did not distinguish between p and b.

October 10th.—He was still improving, but was difficult to understand.

He was re-admitted on October 28th, having lost any improvement he had previously gained, and he left again on November 9th saying his alphabet fairly well.

Hearing that Mr. Golding-Bird and Dr. Hale White were going to bring their cases before this Society, I was reminded of Haislett S—, and got him to come to the hospital on December 20th, and as a record I requested him to say the Lord's Prayer to my dictation. It ran as follows :

Our	Father	which	art	in	heaven,		
Ouarda	Fararda	id	arda	a	ha āida.		
Hallowed	be	Thy	name.	Thy	kingdom		
Howada	bedā	adāāda	dene	aidā	dēdā		
come,	Thy	will	be	done	on	earth	as
dum	Thy	will	be	done	on	eardā	as
it	is	in	heaven.	Give	us	this	day
id	is	in	aidā	Dedā	ud	dud	ou
daily	bread,	and	forgive	us	our	trespasses	
daily	bread	an	fudēdā		ou	tredpadēdā	
as	we	forgive	them	that		tresspass	
ad	we	fordēda	um	dad		tredpada	
against us,	and	lead	not	into	temptation,		
āda	and	eda	nod	eda	ida ada		
but	deliver	us	from	evil.	For		
ba	lēvēr	a	evo-ulva		For		
Thine is the kingdom,		the	power	and	the		
di-de dum		the	pour	an	de		
glory,	for	ever	and	ever.	Amen.		
dorēdā	for	edda	ad		Amen.		

It was obvious on this occasion that he could with an effort speak better than this ; at any rate, if a word were repeated to him several times, his later attempts were nearer and nearer to the correct pronunciation.

On February 3rd he came into the hospital again, and on February 4th I got the following from him :

Alphabet.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	
ā	bee	sedă	deedă	eeă	ef	dgēe	esst	
i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q
ai	dā	dā	ell	enm	enn	ōh	bee ¹	tchu
r	s	t	u	v	w	x		
arr	ess	dee ²	yu	vee	dubber-yu	ess		
y	z							
wy	zed							

The Lord's Prayer.

Our	Father	which	art	in	heaven,	hallowed		
Ouer	Faerdē	we	ad	ā	evven	alloēedă		
be	Thy	name.	Thy	kingdom	come,	Thy		
bee	Thy	name	Thy	deedum	tum	Thy		
will	be	done	on	earth	as	it	is	in
wēe	be	done	on	earss	ad	it	is	in
heaven.	Give	us	this	day	our	daily		
evven	Di	udde	sēr	day	our	daerda		
bread,	and	forgive	us	our	trespasses	as		
bread	an	fordive	uddē	our	trepār eeda	adde		
we	forgive	them	that	trespass	against	us,		
wee	fordive	tem	deddē	trepuss	adu	āaidă		
and	lead	us	not	into	temptation,			
a	lead	ūddē	nod	intoo ā	temdā ā aidă			
but	deliver	us	from	evil.	For	Thine		
but	deliver	āidă	from	eevool	For	dine		

¹ Between p and b.

² Between t and d.

is	the	kingdom,	the	power	and	the
is	a	deedum	the	power	an	de
glory,	for	ever	and	ever.	Amen.	
dorbēēā	for	evver	an	evver.	Amennā.	

He has been to school ; he can read little words, and can write in a child's round hand to dictation, and can copy words from a book.

Here, again, it was clear that he was amenable to instruction ; often by repeating a sound he would try to imitate, and each later attempt would be more successful. It was chiefly when he repeated a string of words or a phrase after me that he became unintelligible, and the apparently involuntary affix " eeda " or " ida " was pronounced.

While I was sketching out this communication, Dr. Hadden kindly sent me a copy of his article in the ' Journal of Mental Science ' for January, 1891, upon certain defects of articulation ; and it is obvious that his two cases, the cases of Dr. White and Mr. Golding-Bird's, and my own, are practically the same form of defect, and to my mind they are certainly defects of articulation and not a new language. In my own case it seems so easy to recognise that most of the mispronunciation comes from a shirking of the more difficult sounds, especially the substitution of soft sounds for hard ones, or the omission of a consonant entirely in some cases. The improvement, also, with a very imperfectly organised attempt at treatment, bears in the same direction. When I first saw one of Mr. Golding-Bird's cases I was inclined to think that defective education was the cause of it almost entirely, and that there was no necessity to believe in a congenital defect. I am, however, prepared to admit that there is most likely some defect in the central articulating processes, which incapacitates the subject of this disorder for the perfect co-ordination or transmission of impulses to the articulating muscles. There is one feature in my case which is something more perhaps than defective

articulation and that is the addition of "ida" or "eeda" to so many words—a fault which was much more prominent a few months ago than now. It reminds me of a childish trick amongst school-boys, of trying to disguise their speech by adding some simple syllables to the end of each word spoken, by which the words are partly concealed in an almost continuous monotone. But even with this resemblance to a sham language, I think the affix in this case must be otherwise explained. It is not exactly a defect, because there is something added; and there are two ways in which it might come about.

The hearing of these patients is said to be normal; but it has occurred to me as not impossible that their auditory organs may interpret all simple sounds with a terminal buzzing or other sound, which their speech organs transmit as "ida" or "eeda." But I am not inclined to hold this view; the rapidity with which my patient has diminished this peculiarity is opposed to it. Another explanation is that the central organs have a defective control over the movements of the tongue, when once it has started on an order, and that thus this dental sound is produced.

As to naming, I hope we shall not be too hasty. I must confess I do not like "idioglossia." Firstly, because I would, if possible, restrict the word "*γλῶσσα*" in medicine and surgery to the organ, the tongue, and would not use it for language. Secondly, because I do not think this defect is a language in the more usual sense of the term, as for instance, the French language distinguished from the English. Thirdly, because I do not think the performance is peculiar in the sense used by Dr. White and Mr. Golding-Bird; that is, that the child always uses the same sound in his speech for the same words in ours. Dr. Hadden speaks of variations within certain limits, and I can say the same of my case, and yet I do not think any one can doubt the cases belong to the same group.

If, however, *ἰδιος* in the sense of peculiar or curious is

retained, I should be more inclined to speak of "idioarthria," peculiar articulation—or "idiophasia," in the most general way, peculiar speech. I only throw these out as suggestions, and would willingly leave it to a committee to say what the name should be.

As to treatment, Dr. Hadden has no doubt rightly laid it down; and Dr. White and Mr. Golding-Bird speak in the same sense. What attempts I have made in this boy's case have been in the same direction, that is of careful oral instruction; but I have not seen my way to isolation in this instance. His temporary improvement has been so far good, and I am so far encouraged by hearing the results in Dr. Hadden's case, that I shall again make efforts to better his condition.

(For report of the discussion on this paper, see 'Proceedings of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society,' Third Series, vol. iii, p. 95.)