

Aphasia—Meaning One Thing and Saying Another.

A curious and very elaborate book has been written by an English physician, Dr. Bateman, of Norwich, on the remarkable disease which doctors call Aphasia. Aphasia is the general name for a disease, usually, but not invariably, connected with some serious affection of the brain, which causes those who suffer from it frequently to articulate sounds or words very different from the sounds or words they are aiming at. An aphasia lady has been known, for instance, to come forward to meet a guest with a cordial smile and outstretched hand, and then articulate "Pig, Brute, Stupid fool!" in place of the words of welcome really expressing the thought in her mind, while in other cases the words articulated when the patient was intending to read aloud, turned out simply gibberish. Thus of one patient it is recorded:

"In order to ascertain and place on record the peculiar imperfection of language which he exhibited, Dr. Osborne selected the following sentence from the by-laws of the College of Physicians, viz.: 'It shall be in the power of the college to examine or not to examine any licentiate previous to his admission to a Fellowship, as they shall think fit.' Having requested him to read this aloud, he read as follows: 'And the be what in the temother of the trothotodoo to majorum or that emidrate ein einkras trai mestreit to ketra totombreitdito as that kekristest.'"

Where, as the physician remarked, the patient, though unable to articulate the words and letters before him, did yet articulate combinations of letters and words much more difficult.

Again, there is a case registered where a man with this affection lost his way, as one may say, only in relation to a single letter—always substituting z for f, so that asking in German for kaffee (coffee), he appeared to ask for kazzee (sounded like katze, cat.) (Dr. Bateman, p. 53). Again another case is given (p. 100) of a gentleman who after a blow on the head, lost his knowledge of Greek, and did not appear to have lost anything else.

In some cases the mind seems to go in search of the right sound or word, and to seize the wrong one, through some confusion in the action of the proper nerves or muscles; in some cases not to know even at what sound to aim at all. Now, what is the proper mental interpretation of such facts as these? How is it to be explained that, without any loss of intelligence, the great "instrument of thought," as language has been called, should so completely defy the power which produced it and defined its exact sphere of duty?

The case of the patient who, by a blow on his head, lost completely the knowledge of Greek, without appearing to suffer any other loss whatever, would to many suggest, as the physician who attended him (Dr. Soreby Jackson) remarked, that the Greek knowledge was all "deposited" in a particular square inch of brain, the injury of which just destroyed this knowledge without invading any other sphere of the intellect. But this kind of fact does not stand alone. A French priest, attended by M. Piorry, after an attack of paralysis lost entirely the power of employing substantives, while retaining in general the full command of all other parts of speech. Thus, when he wanted to ask for his hat, he said, "Donnez-moi ce qui se met sur la . . . but he could not remember the word for "head" any better than the word for "hat," and his physician adds, "mais le mot 'tete' ne lui venait pas," and goes on to say that he sought to express the same thing twenty times, but that he always got to an insurmountable difficulty whenever he came to a noun substantive.

Again, a Dublin physician, Dr. Graves, had a case in which a patient could not recall any noun substantive, (common or proper), but could always recall its initial letter. He, therefore, made himself a pocket dictionary of the words in the most general use, including the proper names of his children and servants and friends, and in conversation would always refer to this dictionary, and run his eye down the initial letter he recalled till he reached the name of which he was in search, "keeping his finger and eye fixed on the word till he had finished his sentence; but the moment he had closed the book he again forgot the name, though he never forgot the initial letter, and could always again recover it by means of his dictionary. Now, take these three cases together, and we observe that in one case the whole net-

work of associations contained in a single language was lost through the agency of the disease; in the next case, only all the examples of a single part of speech, (noun substantive,) in one language, in the last case not even this, but all the examples of the same part of speech, minus the initial letter, which was uniformly retained.

There is a case of a patient in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, under Dr. Gairdner, whose loss of language was so complete that he could communicate with other people only by signs. After a time, Dr. Gairdner observed that the other patients in the infirmary thought this man was shamming, and the reason they gave was, that though he could not speak in any other way he could swear freely. Yet this patient soon after died suddenly, and his brain was found to be much eaten away by cancer.

The Ruler of New York.

George Alfred Townsend, in the Washington Capital, writes as follows of "the boss":

I have known Tweed for many years. He is a man without shame, and very nearly without fear. A newspaper attack will make Dick Connolly think that a vigilance committee is going to hang him straight away, and he will cringe and writhe in pitiable terror, for he is really nothing but a "Fence" like Dickens' Fagin, and when he dies, even if he dies in bed, he will go through the same contortions. Sweeney feels a newspaper attack like a man of education and worldly wisdom, who has lived long enough to feel that the good opinion of the world is the highest felicity; but, unwilling to give up his bad power, he can only sit and mope and have a mental spell of sickness every time he is admonished that no one respects him. But Bill Tweed, or "Tweedy," as they call him; is perfectly callous; nothing impresses him; he has fits of good nature, spells of licentiousness, a good deal of gluttony, and most of the lower tastes well kept in his cheek; but for all he is a powerful business man, always at work, never wearied out, ever thoughtful, stirring from morn till midnight, doing a good part of his work himself, a fair judge of agents, a big brutal nature, equal to the most brutal work and animated with the same spirit which drives a mill or runs Stewart's dry goods house—confidence, economy, energy, enterprise. He is a man of big build, brown complexion, square shoulders, big limbs and feet, grey eyes, and a quick, prompt manner, without a particle of sauvity or sentimentality in him. If you were to go over and see him now, and say: "I have come here to write a sketch of you exactly as you are, and I want the points," Tweed would reply: "I would give them, my son, to you, if it could be done in a minute, but there is a thousand things just now on my hands. I am on the make; you put that down sure. I keep my eyes wide open for whatever comes along; stick my arm down as far as it will go, and pull my hand out as full as I can. Stick to my friends, that's me! If that will do you any good, you go and print it. The audacity of this man takes well with the lower classes, whom he occasionally descends to. It fills Connolly with terror and admiration; and it makes the more logical Sweeney acknowledge Tweed's superior abilities. Tweed used to be a chairmaker with business habits, and getting into politics out of a naturally bustling, busy rowdyism, he read law a little, learned to make a rude sort of speech, and has gone from grade to grade until he rules New York.

REMEMBER THIS.—The Dixon Telegraph of a late date contained the following, which, if true, is worth remembering:

Now that the much dreaded disease, Catarrh, is so prevalent through the country, we deem the following a safe remedy, and from personal knowledge of its efficiency unhesitatingly recommend it to our readers:—

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Persons frequently die from catarrh, the disease becoming so bad the mucus falls down the throat, lodges on the lungs, terminating fatally, the cause not being suspected.

ESTRAY!

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