

Foreign Bodies in the Auditory Canal.

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It is quite a common occurrence for medical men to be called upon to remove foreign substances from the auditory canal, which have come there either by accident, or were introduced by the patient knowingly.

These substances may occasion all sorts of reflex mischief, not to speak of the deafness resulting from their presence, as two cases in my practice will illustrate :

Case 1.—Mrs. B——, aged 60, consulted me regarding her hearing, which was almost entirely gone. The deafness had been of eleven years' standing, and her doctor in England had informed her it was nerve deafness, due to taking too much quinine, and advised her not to spend any money in treatment, as it would be useless. She informed me, however, that the doctor did not examine her ears in any way, which seems hard to credit.

Having unlimited confidence in the gentleman, Mrs. B—— came to Canada, and tried to bear her burden as philosophically as possible.

Upon looking at her I thought I had a hopeless case, the marked alteration in her voice and features being such as are met with in cases of incurable deafness.

I found the watch could only be heard upon contact on each side. She carried a long tubular ear-trumpet, but could scarcely hear me speak even with its use.

Prior to six months since she had been able to hear, though with difficulty by the aid of this instrument, great dizziness was complained of, as well as a hard, irritating cough which had lasted for several years.

On closer examination I found the external auditory meatus of each ear completely occluded by a mass of impacted wax nearly as hard as bone, and about as hard to remove, and before the operation was completed I was a firm believer in "the parable of the loaves and fishes," for in addition to the wax there were splinters of toothpicks and matches which had been used to pick the ears—sufficient, one would imagine, to fill a dozen ordinary ears.

I was only removing the wax in order to inspect the membrana tympani, not expecting any improvement in hearing, being of the preconceived opinion that I had a case of middle ear sclerosis to deal with from the history of the case. I was greatly surprised, however, to