

meshes of the net. In any event in a new country like Canada with its superabundance of opportunities that call for initiative and the exercise of a full measure of mental and physical energy, we can ill afford to have any of our people handicapped, no matter to what station of life they may belong. No! Look at it from any standpoint, and you will be forced to admit that the loss of the power to do things, because of deafness, by any individual citizen, is a loss to the community as a whole, just as is the loss by death of an important citizen.

Now this is my premise No. 1 which, put into a few words, is that **Deafness of the individual citizen always results in a greater or less economic loss to the whole community.**

My second contention is that deafness is to a very considerable extent preventable. Again many of you will be surprised, and will no doubt say that had deafness been preventable it would not have been allowed to have assumed such widespread proportions. In this matter, while I cannot of myself speak with authority, I can at least repeat what I have read, what I have heard on platforms, and what I have been told by medical men of wide experience and of generally acknowledged skill.

There are two kinds of deafness, viz., *Congenital* (those born deaf) and *acquired*. The former are frequently incorrectly called "deaf and dumb." They are dumb simply because they are unable to hear sufficiently to imitate those who speak, but they can usually be taught to speak with greater or less efficiency. But I am dealing to-day only with those who suffer from *acquired* deafness, viz., those who have learned the art of speech before losing the ability to hear.

From the Otologists we learn four things regarding acquired deafness.

1. **That in the majority of cases the primary seeds of ear trouble are sown in early childhood, frequently in infancy.**
2. **That the particular disease that causes the deafness has to develop to quite a considerable degree before it will affect the hearing sufficiently to cause the impairment to be noticed by parents and others.**
3. **That if treated promptly, i.e., in the earliest stages of the trouble, a cure in most cases can be effected.**
4. **That, if allowed to reach the stage when the inability to hear has become apparent, it is then too late as a rule to apply a remedy, and the deafness will keep on growing, from month to month and year to year, until it becomes a very serious handicap to the afflicted person.**

There are of course many cases in which loss of hearing results from ailments such as scarlet fever, typhoid and measles, also from accidents and occupational noises, and, while prompt attention by a specialist is of the utmost importance in all these cases, there apparently is not with them the same assurance of a cure as with adenoids, catarrh, colds, tonsil troubles, ear suppuration and other weaknesses of early childhood.

It is not for a layman to say to what extent assistance can be given, but this I can say that, at the Convention held in Cleveland, Ohio, in June 1929, of the American Federation of Organizations for the Hard of Hearing, I heard it stated publicly by distinguished Otologists, and the same was confirmed to me in private conversation, that in their opinion no less than 85% of cases of