The present executive is willing, and doubtless any other executive will be willing to listen to proper and reasonable recommendations, and I intimate in the appointment of professional boards every executive will, in nine cases out of ten, select as members the persons recommended by the profession affected. Inasmuch as the executive will doubtless assume that the profession affected is more interested and better informed than any other persons or citizens possibly be.

Geo. W. Webster,
President State Board of Health.

Maternal Impressions.

To the Editor:—In The Journal of April 4, Dr. E. T. Shelly relegates the maternal-impression theory to the medical lumber-room, a very comfortable, if not a very satisfactory, way of disposing of all abstruse theories which are not clearly understood. The difficulty, however, we meet at the very threshold of such a happy disposal of the subject, makes it a herculean task, for are there not on every hand too many and too conspicuous cases to satisfactorily dispose of them with a wave of our wand? When Dr. Shelly declares there is no anatomic or physiologic connection between the mother and child he assumes a conclusion not thoroughly established, and which may be a mistake of the fancy. If, however, there is no such connection, it does not follow that there is an absence of psychologic connection. Surely we witness the too often painful effect of environment during the gestation period. The mother may not be wholly blameless if the environment is tainted in an atmosphere reeking with all that is base and degrading, is born a pitiable object. True, the child born in a den of vice and infamy may, by inherent qualities or central impetus, burst the restraints of infamy and burn a star of light over a sea of corruption. Too often, alas, the reverse is true.

There is a subtle and possibly a reciprocal connection between the mother and the fetus during the entire embryonic life. Nor is she blameless if, during gestation, she be so rudely shaken from the poise of harmony by some sudden shock that the brunt is borne by the offspring ever after. I have witnessed too many well authenticated cases to doubt it for a moment. The mother should have the most harmonious, beautiful and elevating surroundings during gestation. The restraints of toil and care should irk her not. She should not be stewed with worry or spattered with starvation. She should be placed on a well-guarded pedestal, canopied with comfort and gently basted with sweet-scented bouquets. Her make-up is intricate. She is a problem, to be solved by no simple rule of mathematics. On her comfort and health hangs the future welfare of posterity. Her mental impressions may wonderfully impress the embryo, may mark it, ay, may destroy its harmony, its usefulness, its life.

F. Anson Evans.

Preserved in Wax.


To the Editor:—The following case illustrates the remarkable preservative properties of cerumen: J. W. S., age 63; white; Civil War veteran. A beetle of the species Tenebrio molitor entered right ear one evening in August, 1881, while patient was in Camp Good Hope, near Navy Yards, Washington, D. C. Patient immediately applied to regimental surgeon, who, failing in efforts to remove insect, applied olive oil to ear and instructed patient to return to tent and lie on right side, and suggested that the bug would probably be found on blanket in the morning. Pain in ear kept patient awake until nearly morning and when awakened ear felt much better, and patient forgot to look on blanket for insect, which he supposed had escaped from the ear. Since insect entered ear, patient has been able to hear but faintly with right ear.

Patient applied to me for relief from deafness May 8, 1903. On examination, I found external canal filled with cerumen. Applied solvent, and advice and consent of professional board for forty-four hours. After syringing the ear the following day, I found the beetle, which was % inch in length and slightly greater in width than the normal caliber of the canal and with ear teneaculum, removed it, not without some difficulty. The head of insect lay within one line of tympanum.