"We must start with the child at birth and care for him until he reaches manhood, if we would save him from many of the ills of life, since it is at a comparatively early period that causes for oral sepsis begin.

"When a child is born the enamel of the temporary incisors and cuspids is nearly complete, and that of the deciduous molars is a little less than half finished, and is fully completed seven months after birth. Owing to this early development of the protective portion of the deciduous teeth, their structure is not influenced by diseases of childhood, and therefore are usually perfect in formation and rarely irregularly placed in the jaws. With the exception of the first molars, the deposition of lime salts forming the second set of teeth does not commence until about 12 months after birth. The first molar has usually begun at birth. About this time the incisal edge of the central incisors and the cusps of the occlusal surfaces of the first molars are laid down. The enamel of the incisors and first molars is completed between the fifth and sixth years, that of the cuspids, bicuspids and second molars between the eighth and ninth years, and the third molars about the twelfth year. It is during the period of enamel formation of the second set that disease and malnutrition injuriously affect the shape and quality of these teeth, causing defects in the enamel, which definitely correspond to the stage of development of the teeth at that period. The health of the first three years of life, so often modified by illness arising from faulty nutrition, contagious disease and other infections, frequently determines that the child whose heredity would entitle him to a perfect mouth, may have to go through life a sufferer from dental caries or deformed unsightly teeth.

"Observation leads me to believe that scarlet fever, measles and other eruptive febrile diseases of childhood produce more profound defects in the teeth than do other even more depressing diseases, such as rickets or congenital syphilis.

Dental Decay in Children

"Children rarely have dental decay until they are approaching their second birthday. This seems to indicate that the change from infant diet to a mixed diet is a factor in the production of decay in children's teeth. The studies of D. J. Davis Jackson, Moore and others have definitely proved that improper diet has a positive injurious influence on the gums and underlying bony structure. Scurvy which is supposed to be due to dietetic causes, profoundly affects the same tissues. With these facts in mind, we may suppose that improper feeding changes as well the secretions of the mouth, so that certain constituents which normally inhibit the growth of acid-forming fungi are lacking, or that others are supplied, which is combination with food remaining about the teeth, give the best possible medium for bacterial growth.

"If this is true, we may believe that since dental decay begins with the change of diet, that error in properly balancing the diet may have much to do with decay of teeth. May we not raise the question as to the probability of im-