

bristles of unequal length, the centre bristles in each tuft transversely being slightly longer than the rest, giving a serrated face to the brush. The bristles should be no longer than half an inch, and of medium stiffness for the average adult. Where the gums are inflamed, softer bristles are indicated for a time, until the tissues become normal and healthy.

Young children, or those wearing orthodontia appliances, should use a brush with but one row of six or seven tufts, the bristles being shorter than those in the adult's brush.

For those persons who may prefer a slightly larger brush than the one described as the ideal for adults, one of three rows of about eight or nine tufts would be the extreme size to do the work properly.

The head as well as the handle of the brush should be slightly curved, the head a little more than the handle, with the concavity on the side containing the bristles. This curve in the head should

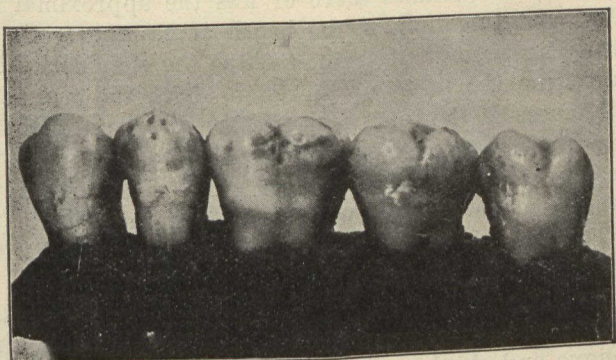


Fig. 25.

be just sufficient that the ends of the bristles will nicely fit against the front teeth. The handle should be somewhat flat so that it can be held comfortably without slipping in the hand, and be easily controlled. All edges of the head and handle should be rounded and the bristles set within one sixteenth of an inch of the end and sides of the head. The whole brush—head and handle—should not be longer than five to six inches, and should not have a long tuft at the end.

There is a right and a wrong way to use a tooth brush, and most people employ the latter method. The old see-saw manner of using the brush is a very poor one, as only the high spots are brushed. The motion should be a *vertical* one, placing the brush high (or low, if for the lower teeth) upon the gums and then