

There is still another error which I must note. It is the use of the end of a penknife as a tooth-pick. By that process a few blades of the enamel are exposed to be cut off, and unfortunately those occurrences take place and caries acts in that place. Next, are you always sure that the blade of your knife is clean? This is again a very delicate matter, because while cleaning your teeth with that instrument you can wound the gums and bring on an inflammation. The best tooth-picks are not made from gold, silver or steel, but those which are manufactured from quills.

Formerly sponge and cotton plugs were used for cleaning the teeth—this habit was far from being suitable for keeping the mouth clean—they had the same disadvantages as the linen of which I have already said a few words. Independently of the hygienic care required by the teeth, there some other precautions to be taken in order to preserve the beauty and soundness of those organs, and those precautions consist in avoiding carefully all that is injurious or may become so. As there are many I shall select the most remarkable, and I will be as short as possible.

1st. You must avoid washing your head in water too cold or too warm, using those astringent and caustic remedies to remove freckles, or dying the hair.

2d. Not to break with your teeth too hard objects, or cutting threads or any other thing with the *incisive teeth*, for they become notched and decayed.

3d. Never leave particles of food in these organs, nor use too hard dentifrice powders, or elixirs, tinctures too much acidulated.

4th. While eating, avoid taking food or beverages too warm or too cold, because the sudden transition between those two extremes is always injurious to the teeth. *Frigidus inimicum dentibus*, said Hippocrates with reason. When we smoke a pipe or cigar, the mouth is warmed, the larynx becomes dry, and then you drink—and even sometimes very cold water that may cause a slight inflammation of the dental pulp.

5th. Be very careful when drinking mineral waters, for they can irritate them, render them painful, make them turn yellow, and give them a dark covering.

Abstain from sweet things: a proof that they are injurious is that I have met in my practice confectioners, still young, whose teeth were nearly all *carious*. Druggists come under the same heading, because frequently they are obliged to taste their preparations, acid or sweet.

A thing that is very often done and about which we are careless, is drinking in the same glass as another, or smoking from the same pipe—