

"Well, I certainly cannot answer that question at once. What do you think is the cause of it?"

By the way, my dear Editor, if to any feature of what may be called management I attribute a share of my professional success, it is to the habit of asking the patients what they themselves think is the matter with them; what they themselves think was the cause of their ailment, and what they think would cure them. In this way one often gets more distinct views of the entire case in all its relations than his own examinations without such aid could possibly give him. The patient is less scientific but much more deeply interested than the physician.

But to the case of my lady friend. She said:

"I will tell you what I think was the cause of the loss of my teeth. Nearly a year ago I began to lose my health, and my physician advised me to go to the country. So I went to visit my uncle, a farmer. There I learned to eat tomatoes, and was told that they were the healthiest thing I could eat, and that I could not eat too many of them. I soon learned to like them even when raw, and not unfrequently picked them from the vines and ate them in the garden. Almost immediately my mouth began to be sore; but I was told it was the disease working out of my stomach into my mouth, and that it would pass off in that way. I continued the tomatoes. Soon my teeth were tender and "on edge," and soon after they became so loose that I began to take them out with my fingers, and they are all gone now except one, which if you would like I can now remove with my fingers."

I told her she need not do it; that I had so often seen the operation performed it would be no gratification to me, but that I had no doubt she was correct in her opinion; that I had already seen several persons whose mouths had been made tender and their teeth loose by the excessive use of tomatoes.

I gave her a bit of advice which I undertake to repeat to your readers. If you use tomatoes at all, use them moderately; say from one teaspoonful to two teaspoonfuls of cooked tomatoes, simply as a relish. I have several intelligent medical friends who entertain the same opinion about the influence of tomatoes that I have here expressed.

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