

ornament the corners of our streets, and are used as mile-posts on country roads. Remember well, the action of those patented drugs is magic—it is exactly there where lies the evil, because the only dentifrices which can give quickly a shining white ivory-looking appearance to the teeth are acid. One could not be too cautious in using them, since they determine on those organs the same effect produced on marble by a few drops of diluted acid. The calcareous phosphate, which is the base of the enamel, is dissolved, causing its polish to be removed, and the teeth thereafter are more liable to retain that kind of mucus which previously had a tendency to accumulate on them. They assume an indelible yellow tint, and if you continue to use those compounds, if the acids constituting their bases are too concentrated, they will soon uncover the gelatinous substance of the teeth, which will cause aching, caries, and their extraction will become unavoidable.

Yes, gentlemen, the first quality of a dentifrice is to clean the teeth thoroughly and without injury.

1st. "Whatever may be the mode of preparation of those tooth powders," says Dr. Maury, "we must exclude from their composition all substances liable to alter the enamel of the teeth, since those sorts of preparations are to be used only to maintain their whiteness by removing the tartar which gathers on them.

2d. "You must note their action on the gums." Are those conditions observed in the patent dentifrices offered to the public with the most pompous names? I entertain great doubts about that. It is a mere speculation now-a-days, and the voice of interest stifles very often that of humanity.

This induces me to say a few words on an article which each of you, I am sure, possess—tooth brushes. Each hair of them may be considered as a tooth-pick, the daily use of the brush cleans the teeth and the gums, and saves them from many diseases. Brushes vary a great deal in their form, that is why you must choose them. For children they must be straight and very soft, for adults they must be so much the less hard as the gums are softer. For instance, if you select a hard brush you erase thus the enamel in some ways, you lacerate and bleed the gums, you uncover the non-enameled substance of the teeth, they will totter, sensibility will ensue, and afterwards the toothache.

An article everybody should possess is a tooth-pick. It must be used only when a few particles of food are driven between the teeth, which they annoy when they cannot be taken off in spite of the efforts of the tongue. That is the only circumstance when we can rationally recommend the use of a tooth-pick. The teeth and gums should be tormented the least possible with that instrument or any similar object.