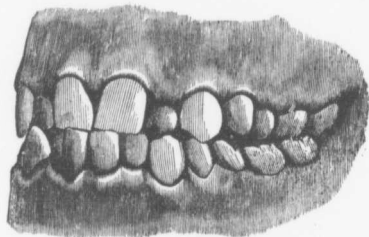


IRREGULARITY OF TEETH AND DECAY.

Irregularities of the teeth have a marked effect on the frequency with which caries occurs in the mouth. All teeth are naturally so shaped that they touch the adjoining teeth at but one point. If the teeth are irregular and in contact over a considerable area of their surface, a large portion is beyond the reach of a tooth brush, food lodges there, disintegrates and forms an excellent location for the development of bacteria. The cause of these irregularities cannot be considered in detail here, but it is well to emphasize the fact that the premature loss of the temporary teeth is responsible for many irregularities of the permanent ones. This is not the only cause, as thumb-sucking, mouth-breathing, etc., also produce their irregularities, and it is necessary to check these bad habits; but it is more important to properly care for the temporary teeth of the child. Consider the consequences of neglect. The teeth decay, the pulp becomes involved and exposed, causing the child pain and discomfort. It is afraid



Irregularity of Teeth.

to masticate its food, and consequently bolts it, its stomach is overworked, then follows indigestion, intestinal trouble, ending very possibly in undermining the health of the child. In addition to this the jaws and teeth are not being used. As a result, the jaws do not develop, the gums become inflamed and spongy, the teeth more susceptible to decay, with consequent tooth-destruction and death of the pulp, abscesses are formed from which pus exudes into the mouth, and altogether there is a generally unhealthy condition of the mouth which can only act detrimentally to the child.

Realizing the immense benefit which simple food and hygienic methods will bring about, mindful of the truth that mastication will polish the teeth and stimulate healthy nutrition, appreciating the fact that inherited tendencies may be overcome, or their effects minimized by careful attention to the laws of health, still it is recognized that such developments take time, and the fruition of our ambitions cannot be reached in a day. In the meantime, teeth decay, yet how few are willing to give up fifteen minutes of each day to the care of their own or their children's teeth,