

*GREATER CARE OF THE TEETH OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.*

S. W. BROWN, L.D.S., DUNNVILLE.

It would not be to my purpose to read a lengthy or scientific paper at this time, even if I were able to do so, but I should like to say a few words to you as to the care of children's teeth, and the instruction given along these lines in our Public schools. The instruction in our Public schools in matters pertaining to the teeth is extremely faulty, and the instructor as a rule extremely ignorant in this particular branch of education. No attempt has been made in the text-book on Physiology and Temperance now in use in the Public schools to do more than familiarize the pupils with the fact that they have teeth.

In the past few years the dental profession has made remarkable progress and advancement, particularly in successful methods of treating and preserving the natural teeth, but has the public estimate of the profession kept pace with this progress? Most certainly not. Dentistry of to-day with the laity is too much what it was twenty or thirty years ago. It is surprising to note the number of intelligent people who have almost no knowledge pertaining to the teeth, and a deplorable ignorance as to their care. Especially is this the case with children's teeth. Think how much could be avoided if parents appreciated the value of temporary teeth and understood the important part they play in the regular healthy development of the child. It is a recognized principle in the rearing of an animal that the hygiene and food of the first months of life qualify its future development in a manner which no future management can correct. In the human economy this period is a more extended one, and continues through the whole stage or period of retention of the deciduous teeth. This being the case the necessity for careful attention to the preservation of these teeth becomes of extreme importance.

In these things and in many others along the same lines, the public needs education, but how to attain this end is the question. The opportunity is presented in our Public schools through the medium of the text-book on Physiology and Hygiene. Why not a little hygiene of the mouth and care of the teeth? True, the aver-