

If during the growth of the teeth the food is deficient in animal, vegetable, or mineral elements, such as gluten, albumen, and the different combinations which enter largely into their substance; or if the food, rich in the above elements, be not appropriated to the proper nourishment of these organs, they will be more or less defective in their structure; hence they are predisposed to rapid decomposition. Such teeth may be considerably improved by judicious local treatment; and by filling, be rendered serviceable for many years. In many cases this kind of decay might be prevented by the mother taking proper nourishing food while nursing the child, and above all by seeing that her own teeth are in a healthy condition; for if the mother's teeth are in a bad condition, the gases which arise from the decaying of these teeth is of a very unhealthy nature, and as a great portion of this noxious gas is taken into the lungs it deranges the system, also the food that is taken into the stomach; and as the child's nourishment is derived from the food the mother has taken, it must be unhealthy, and as the child does not receive healthy nourishment it cannot give it to its growing organs, thus the child's teeth are predisposed to rapid decay, and the cause is simply hereditary.

*Chemical decomposition* may arise from vitiated secretions of the mouth, from chemical disintegrations of food remaining on or between the teeth after eating, or from chemical actions of strong medicine taken into the system without restriction, or caution. The destructive, chemical action may be arrested