

if you take the trouble of splitting it up with a pair of cutting pliers, you will find that the whole canal is filled up by a swelling, which expands like a mushroom. These swellings often increase in size; they fill up the remainder of the crown of the tooth, and sometimes form a connection with the spongy gums. In other cases the swelling commences at the gum, by the side of the decayed tooth, it gradually increases in size, and perhaps involves the gums of the adjoining teeth. Some of these swellings are as hard as the gum; some are soft and pulpy, and bleed on a slight touch; and some again, though very seldom, assume a malignant character. These tumors are generally of a benign nature, they are firm in their consistence, and, if thoroughly extirpated, are not reproduced, but if any portion is left, they return. If the socket of the tooth, in which the disease commenced, is not taken away, and indeed the whole gum, the disease is sure to come back in a few months, following the analogy of tumors in other parts. I have told you that, however benign in its nature a fibrous or fatty tumor may be, if any portion of it be left, it will be reproduced; but take away the whole, and there is little chance of the patient being again troubled with it.

These tumors sometimes are of a bad character; but even in those of a contrary nature, where the operation is imperfectly performed, there is a return of the disease. The patient, much annoyed of course, again recurs to his surgeon; caustic is perhaps applied from day to day; becoming alarmed, he at last places himself under a person of more experience; the whole is then taken away, and there is no further trouble. Here are some drawings from preparations belonging to Mr. Nasmyth, of Edinburgh, showing tumors of the gums. One represents a tumor occupying the posterior part of the upper jaw, with all the stumps stuck in the middle of it. The teeth are all in a bad state. Those persons who are foolish enough to allow useless portions of the teeth to remain, may lay their account to suffer from this disease. The pain has gone off, the nerve is destroyed, and they think there is no occasion for interfering with the teeth or having them taken out. They do not care about the fætor of their breath; they have perhaps arrived at a time of life when they think nothing of it; but there is always a deal of mischief if these stumps in the jaws or gums are not taken out. They keep up the swelling and the tumors in the gums. Here is another drawing, showing a tumor of the gum, where the swelling has gone up from the interior of the tooth, and has spread over in a mushroom-like form, and becoming adherent to the spongy gums, has formed a large swelling.

In order to get rid of these tumors effectually, you must take away