

do not succeed in building upon this some political issue which will relegate into insignificance even the mighty, all-absorbing topic, the Manitoba School question.

There is another point I mean to raise and discuss at once whilst I have a fair opportunity of doing so. I have often heard dentists speak of anæsthetics and boast of their operations performed without pain, as if these things were discoveries of the present day.

Gentlemen, I contest the claim ; I deny the assertion that these are the result of modern discoveries. Why, I saw those painless operations performed when I was but a mere urchin in the country village in which I was brought up. Permit me to give you a short description of how the operation was performed.

In my native place (I speak without intending any disparagement to the learned profession of dentistry) the acknowledged dentist of the locality, at least for all the children below ten years of age, was the village blacksmith, a good-humored, cheerful, strong-armed, brawny fellow, whose smith's shop was next to my mother's house. Methinks I still hear the joyful sound of his hammer falling in rhythmical cadences upon the anvil and waking me up in the early morn at the strains of its cheerful music.

When a boy's tooth had become shaky in its socket, upon the blacksmith devolved the task of pulling it out.

The operation, though rather primitive in its character, was effective and quite painless, as you will notice. One end of a strong piece of hempen thread was first tied around the doomed tooth, whilst the other end was securely fastened to the heavy, immovable vice close to the anvil. The boy was then told to stay perfectly quiet for a minute or two, as the tooth by some magic spell would soon fall out of itself. The good blacksmith had this fault in common with other more worthy members of the profession, that he frequently prevaricated, at least whilst acting in his capacity of dentist, and the old French proverb, "Menteur comme un arracheur de dents," was quite applicable to him.

Whilst his patient victim would remain standing, waiting for the mysterious action of the expected spell, the blacksmith would put in the fire a piece of iron, which he kept there until it had reached a white burning heat. Then grasping his heavy pinchers, he would pull it out and make a sudden swoop, with a wild scream, towards the innocent boy, who in his fright would dash away, leaving behind him the little tooth dangling from the thread. No pain was felt, no disagreeable impression was experienced other than the little fright, which soon gave way to a feeling of hearty merriment. The boy would soon return for the little tiny pearly tooth, which he would carry with a triumphant look to his mother.

Clever and efficient as this old style was, I am fain to admit,