

the third molars or dens sapientie? If this does not suffice, but evidences of decay begin to show themselves on the approximal surfaces, then the judicious, careful application of Dr. Arthur's suggestions are wise and prudent, and the day I believe is not distant when the profession, rising above prejudice and self-interest, will acknowledge the efficacy of such a course of operating; present it to their patients, explain its utility, and firmly and respectfully urge its adoption.

I am well aware what a handle is given the unscrupulous operator in advancing these sentiments. I am well aware of the prejudice existing in the minds of a large class of our patients against the use of the file (as they all understand a separation); but my impression is, that he who has honestly and skillfully practiced our profession for a number of years, must have obtained a sufficient control over his patients to be able easily to convince them that his advice is for their permanent good, and gain their consent to submit to his experience and skill.

A case came under my observation several years ago bearing upon this point of separating the teeth, which I will relate:

A gentleman for whom I was operating asked my opinion of his front teeth. My answer was, "They have been pretty severely filed." "Yes," he replied, "and I did it myself. Twenty-two years ago my front teeth were very badly decayed. I went to one of the most celebrated dentists in Philadelphia to have them filled. To my horror and disgust, he said, 'They are too far gone to fill and save. I would advise you to let them alone, and when they commence paining have them extracted and artificial ones substituted.' I went down into Market Street, and purchasing a broad, flat file, I went home, placed myself in front of a glass, and, though it hurt almost beyond expression or bearing, filed a broad space between each of my front teeth.

The spaces were enormous, but every tooth was in its place, and likely to remain; the decayed portions yet remained by slight cavities, and others by discolored but not entirely decomposed bone.

Who among us cannot look over the mouths of many of his patients and find many, many elegant teeth that have been saved, and still presenting the beautiful polished surface of a separation and crasure, and that done years ago?

The utmost *skill* and *judgment* are demanded in adopting this mode of operating. The countenance of the *best*, the *wisest*, the *most*