

AN OLD ERROR ABOUT DENTITION.

By B.

A common mistake, even among some physicians, is to classify the coincident disorders of teething as pathological. Teething is a normal physiological development, as much as child-birth. It takes place at an age which, for many reasons, is subject to a large number of diseases. The first dentition generally occupies the first two years of early infantile life, a period in which the child is peculiarly liable to numerous diseases, some of them of a dangerous character. Mothers and nurses were in the habit of anticipating pathological results every time a child was erupting a tooth. Pale and anæmic children were brought to the physician, with the belief that they were anæmic "because of their teeth," when there was clear clinical evidence that a slight catarrh of the intestines had been overlooked, and had degenerated into incurable ulceration of their follicles. To teething it was not uncommon to attribute inflammations of all the external and internal organs, the brain and its membranes, the air-passages and the lungs, etc., as also vomiting, diarrhœa and dysentery, emission of urine, etc. It was very common to find in the mortality records the report of many deaths "from teething." Children five years old, with both maxillaries full of teeth, were said to "die of teething." As well might we assert that the normal physiological process of menstruation or pregnancy are the direct causes of death. A child never died "from teething" any more than a woman ever died "from menstruation." While it is true that teething is frequently associated with pathological effects, and that serious symptoms may be present, it is still true that teething is a purely physiological process, and not in any sense the expected and natural cause of fever, diarrhœa, etc. Thousands of children erupt their teeth without any bad symptoms whatever. Even physicians regarded this as the exception to the rule. The causes of infantile disorders cannot be traced to the consequences of a natural physiological process.

Proceedings of Dental Societies.

THE DENTISTS' OPENING NIGHT.

Toronto Dental Society held its inaugural meeting on Tuesday evening, Nov. 9th. The following officers were installed: Hon. Pres., Dr. Eaton; Pres., D. A. J. McDonagh; 1st Vice-Pres., Dr. Ziegler 2nd Vice-Pres., Dr. Swann; Sec., Dr. T. W. Trotter; Treas., Dr. Wunder. Dr. Swann read a paper on "Anæsthetics," followed by a discussion.