

the profession of dentistry realize this fact, and are putting forth their best efforts to take advantage of the opportunity, which is theirs, as guardians of the mouths and teeth of the public, to not only prevent destruction of the teeth by caries, but also to control, in a large degree, many other forms of disease.

It is confidently anticipated that by the intelligent practice of oral hygiene more will be accomplished to prevent decay of the teeth during the next twenty years than in all the ages that have gone before.

FUNCTIONS OF THE TEETH.

The teeth have, among others, three most distinct functions, viz., mastication of food, assistance in articulation of words, and that of giving beauty and expression to the face.

MASTICATION.—This is the chief function of the teeth. The crushing of the food is not the only end accomplished in mastication, but during the process the glands situated in the mouth are stimulated to secrete large quantities of saliva; these fluids become incorporated with the food and perform the first step in digestion. If the teeth and other tissues of the mouth are in an unhealthy

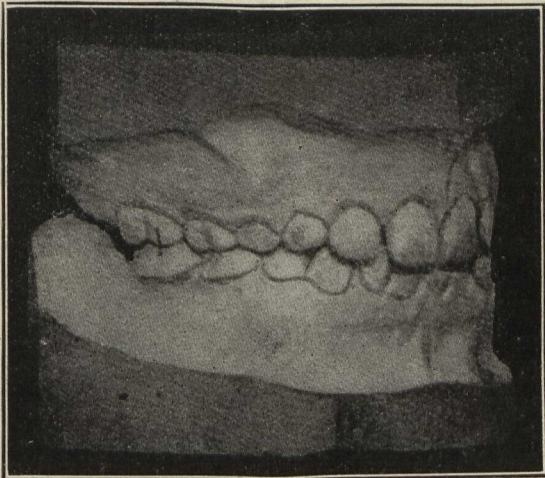


Fig. 2.—A normally arranged set of teeth.

state, their use is avoided, and the soft, pulpy articles of diet are chosen—those which will *slip down* with little or no mastication. In such cases the food is taken into the stomach without the normal quantity of saliva which is required in digestion. The food should be masticated until it is ground to the very finest consistency.