

which should be the more particularly attended to, as decay, in many instances, originates *notwithstanding* the utmost attention to cleanliness; this can be easily accounted for from the shape of teeth, their pressure laterally against one another, and irregularity, which I regard as primary causes of decay.

Though the use of the brush will ever protract incipient decay, I am of opinion that once the enamel is decomposed and the dentine reached, no amount of cleanliness will arrest it until the patient comes under the hands of the dental surgeon; for though the dentine be affected through the *minute*st cavity in the enamel, the resistance of the latter being greater than the former, the decay of dentine spreads laterally beneath the shell of enamel, and none of the ordinary means resorted to for cleanliness can stay its progress; the saliva ever finding the entrance no matter how minute, and acting in a similar manner in connection with the disorganized dentine as it did with the alimentary deposits, the substance of the tooth becoming a devourer in its turn of its more healthy remains. Arrived at this stage the time required for the total destruction of a tooth depends on its constitutional character, for some teeth will decay as much in a month as others during a year.

At this point in the decay of teeth, when ordinary means have failed, the unfailing pathological means of treatment, the specialty of the dental surgeon is or at least should be resorted to. As with scaler he removes all salivary deposits, and by aid of excavating hatchets and hoes, he, like a careful husbandman who lops off the decaying branches of his valuable trees, covering the wound made by the knife with some substance to exclude air and moisture; so he cuts from every organ the decay attacking it, replacing by some dental material (of which I shall speak further on) which shall effectually exclude air and moisture from the healthy remains, and moreover resist the effects of the corroding acids. That this manner of treatment is an efficient means of prevention we have ample proof, for teeth that have been filled in this way are known to last in their imperfect state for years, while others more perfect, but left to their fate had long before been reduced to corroding fang merely.

I have stated that shape, lateral pressure, and irregularity of teeth were primary causes of decay, and will proceed to give reasons for such a conclusion. Bicuspid and molars are the teeth most affected from this cause. Incisors commence to ossify from one point, bicuspid from two, and molars from four, the latter presenting much the