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PLUCCING TEETH.

THERE is no operation the Dentist can perform of more lasting and real benefit to his patient than filling carious or decayed teeth. A tooth that is well filled before its nerve is exposed, is as durable and as serviceable as a sound one. Its preservation, in most cases, is perfect and complete. It is necessary, in the performance of this operation, to remove very carefully all carious and foreign matter lodged in the cavity — to make the cavity of a dovetail form, so as to retain the filling — to wipe it perfectly dry, and to press the gold in so as to be perfectly air and water tight. A tooth filled in this manner may be preserved many years, and, in most cases, during life. When a caries has progressed so far as to expose the nerve and render the tooth painful, the nerve, in all cases, should be destroyed previous to filling, otherwise there may be soreness and often times extreme pain, making extraction of the tooth absolutely necessary. A tooth filled after the nerve is destroyed is not as good as if filled before the nerve was exposed; the walls of the cavity are thinner and weaker, and consequently are more liable to break and crumble away when brought in contact with hard substances, and the filling will be more likely to be loosened. There is likewise some danger of ulceration and absorption at the root of the tooth, when filled in this condition.—which makes it very important that the teeth should, if at all, be early filled. After a caries has commenced a tooth should be immediately filled, both for the good of the patient and the reputation of the dentist.

It is a very common fault with those who have decayed or decaying teeth, to neglect them too long. As they experience no inconvenience or pain from them, they apprehend no danger, whereas they cannot be attended to too soon. And in order to prevent the caries from progressing too far, it is very important that the mouth should be frequently examined by a skilful dentist, that the first appearance of decay may be detected and a remedy be applied either then or at some subsequent

time, as his judgment may dictate. Call in your dentist as you do your other medical attendants, to prevent disease when it first makes its appearance.

Gold foil is preferable to all other substances for filling teeth. If it is properly pressed and polished it will remain in the mouth for many years without any sensible loss of its substance from oxidization.

Tin foil is less durable than gold, as it corrodes slightly on its exposed surface. Teeth which are not expected to be very durable may be filled with it to some advantage. The oxide of it does not blacken the teeth, and is not attended with bad consequences.

Amalgam, or Silver filling, if used at all, should never be employed in stopping the front teeth, as it is more or less liable to turn them black. There are thousands of teeth annually destroyed by those who know nothing of the science, yet pretend that they can "stuff teeth." We shall have more to say upon the subject of filling teeth, ere long.

CLEANSING THE TEETH.

THE most important rule to be observed in the preservation of the teeth, is to keep them perfectly clean, and never to allow any foreign substance to remain upon or about them. A carious tooth should never be suffered to remain in the mouth in a decaying state, as it causes others to decay. When decayed too much to be filled, it should be extracted.

When tartar has been allowed to accumulate, it should be immediately removed. The teeth should be carefully and thoroughly brushed daily, with warm water and the occasional use of dentrifice that is impalpably fine, and that contains no acid.

A *Brush* has no bad effect upon the teeth, as some suppose, for the parts of the teeth most exposed to the friction of the brush, are never the first to begin to decay. The decay commences soonest in the depressed surfaces of the teeth, and where there is a favorable chance for the lodgment of foreign substances. A soft brush is better for the teeth than a stiff one, because the latter is apt to fret the gums, and cause them to recede, which gives them a lengthened appearance.

Teeth in a crowded condition should never be filed unless they begin to decay. *Tooth-picks* made of quill or wood (never of metal) should always be used after meals, and all particles of food lodged

between them, be removed. In sickness the rules for cleanliness of the teeth should be more rigidly enforced than at any other time, as then they are more exposed to destructive agents, and are very liable to participate in the general debility and disease of the system.

Should the teeth have early, judicious, and preserving care and attention, their loss is unnecessary. They may be preserved sound and beautiful, and their efficiency and strength will only decline with the other organs of the same system.

DECIDUOUS, OR TEMPORARY TEETH.

It is an imperative duty of parents to see that their children's teeth have early and careful attention. The health and durability of the permanent teeth depend materially on the healthy condition, regularity, and durability of the temporary. It may seem strange that diseases of the first set of teeth should influence the set which is to succeed; but, when we consider that the rudiments of the second set already exist when the first is cut, and the sympathetic influence of diseased organs bearing so intimate a relation one to the other, we may reasonably suppose that their development may be imperfect, and that they may imbibe a morbid principle, which may in time cause their destruction; while, on the contrary, if the temporary teeth are naturally healthy, and all necessary care is taken to keep them so, the permanent teeth bid much fairer to be more perfect in their organization, less predisposed to disease, more durable, and more even and equal in their position.

Dr. E. Parnaly, of New York, says: "This is a subject which demands the attention of parents and those who are entrusted with the care of children. It should be the first object of every person so situated, to habituate children to clean their teeth at least twice a day, and when this practice has once been adopted, it will be continued as a matter of course. Beside this, from the age of six to twelve in particular, a dentist should be consulted from three to four times a year, and at a later period once or twice, for the purpose of examining the teeth, and counteracting, by the timely removal of such causes as may produce disease." Mr. Murphy says:—"It is a duty incumbent on parents and those who have the care of children, while they do justice to their minds, not to overlook their personal advantages."