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## ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

### NOTES ON OPERATIVE DENTISTRY.

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In fulfilment of my promise to contribute an article to the journal upon some practical subject in Operative Dentistry, I must premise that I am not attempting to advance anything new, but simply to describe my mode of procedure in some of the cases which are daily presented to me for treatment.

There are many points of interest to the young practitioner in operative dentistry, which I would prefer to demonstrate rather than attempt to describe. In the one which I now purpose discussing, my practice will doubtless be viewed by many as questionable, by some, possibly, as extreme and impracticable. By many of our leading practitioners the preservation of the natural teeth is made a specialty, which implies a conscious responsibility. Now, to what extent may this "specialty" be carried? When should a tooth be drawn? Can we in justice gratify the whim of every one who comes in with an aching tooth to have it extracted? Have we a right to do a permanent injury to a patient in order to relieve temporary suffering? I answer, no. The teeth which ought to be extracted or drawn can be only those which may be removed without sacrifice to the possessor, such as necrosed teeth, for instance, teeth that have become a source of irritation from elongation, having lost their antagonists, or from receding of the gum and alveolus, and roots that are of no value. I know it is the custom with many dentists to remove all roots, but how often do we find roots that have antagonising teeth, which are of more value than any artificial ones can possibly be, and which are in no way injurious to the remaining teeth, which a plate always is to some extent, besides the necessary injury and loss by their removal, from the absorption of the alveolus and receding of the gum, denuding the necks of the teeth.