

The observations on all other teeth are a mere repetition of these directions, and will not therefore require quotation. It would, indeed be well, if in the regulation of the teeth, the directions of nature were attended to, instead of those based on the pecuniary interest of the Dentist, (as is too frequently the practice). In this, as well as in all other cases, where medical treatment is required, it should not be forgotten, that the legitimate object of the surgeon is confined to the adoption of remedies for diseases, or the proper direction of the natural functions, when deranged; and can it for a moment be doubted, that nature has exercised her wonted aid in providing for organs of such paramount importance to that main source of health, strength, and comfort—digestion? Can it, I say, for a moment be supposed, that she has been so negligent in the structure of the human teeth exclusively—that they should be constantly in need of such harsh and unnatural interference? I have seen instances where six or eight teeth have been brutally lugged out, and I will venture to assert, without the necessity of removing one. I do not dare to venture words in expression of the indignation I feel at such infamous quackery, such barbarous brutality; besides the unnecessary infliction of such a fearful amount of pain—the shock to the whole nervous system is probably never forgotten by the poor little sufferer, and causes a lasting dread of the very thought even of having necessary operations performed however simple; and when we consider that all this is inflicted on pretence of preventing an evil, which, in most cases, there is not the slightest reason to apprehend, (and in those few instances wherein it might occur, it can be detected in time to prevent any permanent malformation)—it is certainly enough to excite just reproach. I hope at least it will stimulate the attention of medical gentlemen attendant upon families, and cause suitable precautions to be taken by the credulous parent or other guardians. But there are other equally important reasons why the first teeth should not be too early removed; it should always be borne in mind, that the connexion between the temporary tooth and the succeeding permanent one, continue to exist by means of a fibrous or ligamentous cord, extending from the sack of the latter to the neck of the former, which of course must be broken if the deciduous tooth be removed before the sack is absorbed. Until, therefore, the secretions of the enamel are perfected, (which is not the case until a very short time before the edge of the permanent tooth passes through the gum), the premature extraction of the temporary teeth must unquestionably interfere with the health and uniformity of this substance.\*

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\* Allowing children to bite hard substances before the completion of the second dentition, is equally injurious to the future appearance and durability of the permanent teeth, in so much that if the fibrous cord is not dissevered, it becomes compressed and deformed, which must obstruct the secretions of the enamel, and thus either deprive the teeth of that substance altogether, or cause it to be deposited irregularly, forming what is usually called Honeycomb teeth.