

Medical Department.

Edited by A. H. BEERS, M.D., C.M., D.D.S., L.D.S., Cookshire, Que.

TIC DOULOUREUX.—This complaint is often attributed to decayed teeth, and not infrequently these are extracted one after another without any improvement resulting, for the simple reason that the neuralgia is not dependent upon this cause at all.—Roberts' "Practice of Medicine," page 862.

LOCKJAW CAUSED BY A TOOTH.—An unusual case of lockjaw which persisted for four years and baffled the skill of several physicians is reported by Sachse, who upon examination found that the right upper wisdom tooth projected externally in a horizontal direction and so pressed against the internal pterygoid muscle that it was impossible for the patient to open his mouth. The removal of the tooth improved the condition at once, and in eight weeks the jaw could be opened normally.—*American Medical-Surgical Bulletin*.

JOHN W. TEALE, M.A.Oxon., F.R.C.S., in a presidential address entitled "A few practical hints to medical men on the preservation of their own health," *British Medical Journal*, December 19th, 1896, says, "No medical man should ever have a bad tooth in his head. He is courting disaster if he does so. To avoid this I would suggest that he be regularly inspected by his dentist before going for his holiday. It is a simple matter to brush the teeth after every meal, and by rinsing with cold water you get an early intimation of danger."

HEREDITY AND TOOTH EXTRACTION.—The question whether the extraction of teeth through many generations has an effect upon present-day teeth is one which is open to argument. On one side it may be said that a tooth is not part of an organ—like the tip of a finger—but is a separate organ produced in a special manner, and if that whole organ is destroyed through several generations it will have the effect of mortifying the type and affecting its integrity. On the other hand in comparing mutilations such as continuous docking of horses, dehorning of cattle, and circumcision, we find no appreciable difference in the type, though of course these are instances of removal of a part, not the whole. But, as Sir James Crichton Browne once remarked, when nature removes an organ it is because that organ is no longer wanted, and the removal takes place by a kindly gradual suppression, not by a foul and painful disease like dental caries or pyorrhœa alveolaris.—*British Journal of Dental Science*.