

returning to you my most earnest and sincere thanks for the honor you have seen fit to place upon me by permitting me to occupy that important distinction, trusting that the Society will continue to prosper and extend its sphere of usefulness, by adding to its numbers and attractions, until it fulfils its richest destiny and becomes the rallying point of advanced thought and professional lore for the Dominion and a shining light in the dental world.

First Dentition.*

By W. A. LEGGO, D.D.S., L.D.S., Ottawa, Ont.

The subject of first dentition contains so many points of importance to us as dentists that we cannot always hand the treatment to the physician.

I intend bringing forward only a few of the most important points, omitting histology, time and order of eruption, and not going minutely into the many complications of difficult dentition, with which it is not our province to deal.

As usual, authorities differ somewhat, so I think my object will be best attained by quoting or using some ideas gleaned from our journals and other authorities.

Infancy and childhood are important periods of life, for in them we meet many diseases rarely found in other periods of life, of which difficult dentition is one, and which causes at times much trouble and anxiety.

Normal dentition is a physiological process which may be completed without any apparent discomfort to the infant, while difficult dentition is often directly or indirectly the cause of many infantile diseases; wherefore difficult dentition may be considered a pathological process.

The development and advance of the teeth are accompanied by more or less swelling around the dental follicles, being greater with some teeth than with others. The large blunt molars are apt to cause more than the small sharp incisors. Within certain limits this swelling or congestion is physiological and not a disease, but when there is an unusual amount of swelling, and the gums become tender, painful, and redder than in ordinary dentition, and when the saliva is increased and accompanied by the usual signs of discomfort, we have a pathological condition—inflammation of the gums or gingivitis. Sometimes the inflammation over the tooth is so great that an abscess forms, which must be lanced. These symptoms are easily detected, and are not dangerous. They are caused by the rapid growth and increased sensibility of the dental follicle.

* Read before the Ontario Dental Association, July 21st.