

and do most heartily abominate the filthy habit, and if I should say anything that might seem to favor the use of tobacco, it cannot be said that self-indulgence in a nasty habit induces me to seek excuses for the use of it in others.

Although multitudes assert that they use tobacco, through a long lifetime, without injurious consequences to their systems, and many of our highest medical authorities assert that the ordinary use of tobacco does not have any deleterious effect upon the system, yet I think that any candid person who will look at the subject from an unbiassed stand-point, will admit that any agent that exerts so powerful an influence upon the nervous system and through that, upon the circulation and assimilation, must be productive of mischief when exerted continually. The constant strain upon the system, by its depressing influence, must inevitably result in derangement of function, and a corresponding influence upon the general health. And in so far as it does thus affect the general health, it does undoubtedly have an indirect deleterious effect upon the teeth. But I think the greatest evil is in the transmission of impaired constitutions to their offspring, which naturally and inevitably results from an enervated condition of the parents. I think the fearful tendency to decay in the teeth of the rising generation may be ascribed more to this than to any, and I had almost said, than to all other causes. And now for the direct effects.

Your first objection, "the wear upon the cusps of the teeth," is well taken, and cannot be disputed. But your second point, "the action upon the gums, and indirectly upon the vital structure of the teeth," we will examine a little.

That poisonous substances are used to some extent in the manufacture of tobacco, I suppose is doubted by no one; and our finely drawn theories would naturally lead us to conclude that even if tobacco itself were inert, these substances must be injurious, especially to the delicate structure of the gums and other mucous membranes of the mouth, and must be discarded, if we wish to maintain a healthy condition of these parts. But experience has amply demonstrated that theories are of value only, so far as they are sustained by the facts in the case. And the question at once arises, are those who habitually use tobacco more subject to diseases of the teeth and gums than are those who do not? My opportunities for observation have