

in many cases the oxygen, that goes to nourish and build up the body.

There are few outside the medical and dental professions who know what a complex network of nerves and blood vessels run out from the teeth and jaws. These nerves which are intimately related to the brain act and react upon the whole nervous system. It must follow that any disturbances or derangements of the nerves of the teeth produce a sympathetic derangement in the higher nerve centres, and so not only the physical organs, such as the kidneys, liver and stomach suffer, but the intellectual faculties as well. The common idea that a violent toothache is the ultimate penalty nature will exact for neglected and decayed teeth is one of those delusions which recent research has swept completely away. Holding, as they do, such a strategic position at the entrance to the alimentary canal and respiratory apparatus, and so intimately connected with the nervous system, the teeth truly dominate the whole organism of man.

The functions of the teeth may be considered as three-fold: to give contour and expression to the face, to assist in articulation, and to masticate the food. It is with the function of mastication that we are particularly interested at this time. This is the first step, and in the case of some of our food, the important step in the process of digestion. Food to be properly masticated and prepared for the fluids of the stomach must not only be crushed and ground into small particles by the teeth, but what is just as important, should be held and worked in the mouth long enough to be thoroughly mixed with the saliva. Especially is this so with such common every-day foods as bread and potatoes, which contain a considerable amount of starch. Now, starch is an element of food that requires saliva in abundance for its proper digestion. Saliva has the property of converting it into glucose or sugar, and as such it forms a large part of our nourishment. Now, the point is this: if in the mouth this first important step in digestion is to be properly performed, so that the stomach be not unduly burdened, how urgent it is that the teeth be in good, sound condition, free from any soreness, and properly articulated. Bolted food, or food not properly prepared by the teeth and saliva, is looked upon to-day by the medical profession as the direct cause of a large percentage of stomach troubles. Dr. William R. Woodbury, of Boston, Mass., is the authority for the statement that eighty per cent. of the cancers of the stomach are due to bolted food. If day after day and week after week a quantity of food, not properly prepared, be taken into the stomach, that organ will, no doubt, in time rebel, and we