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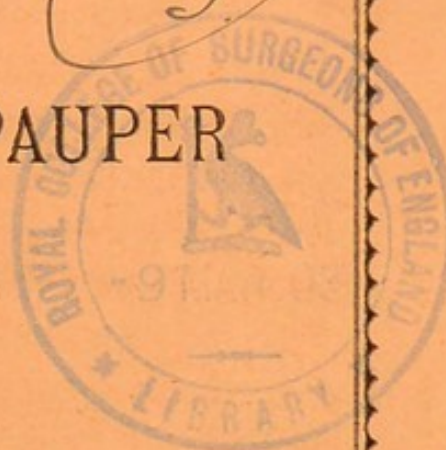
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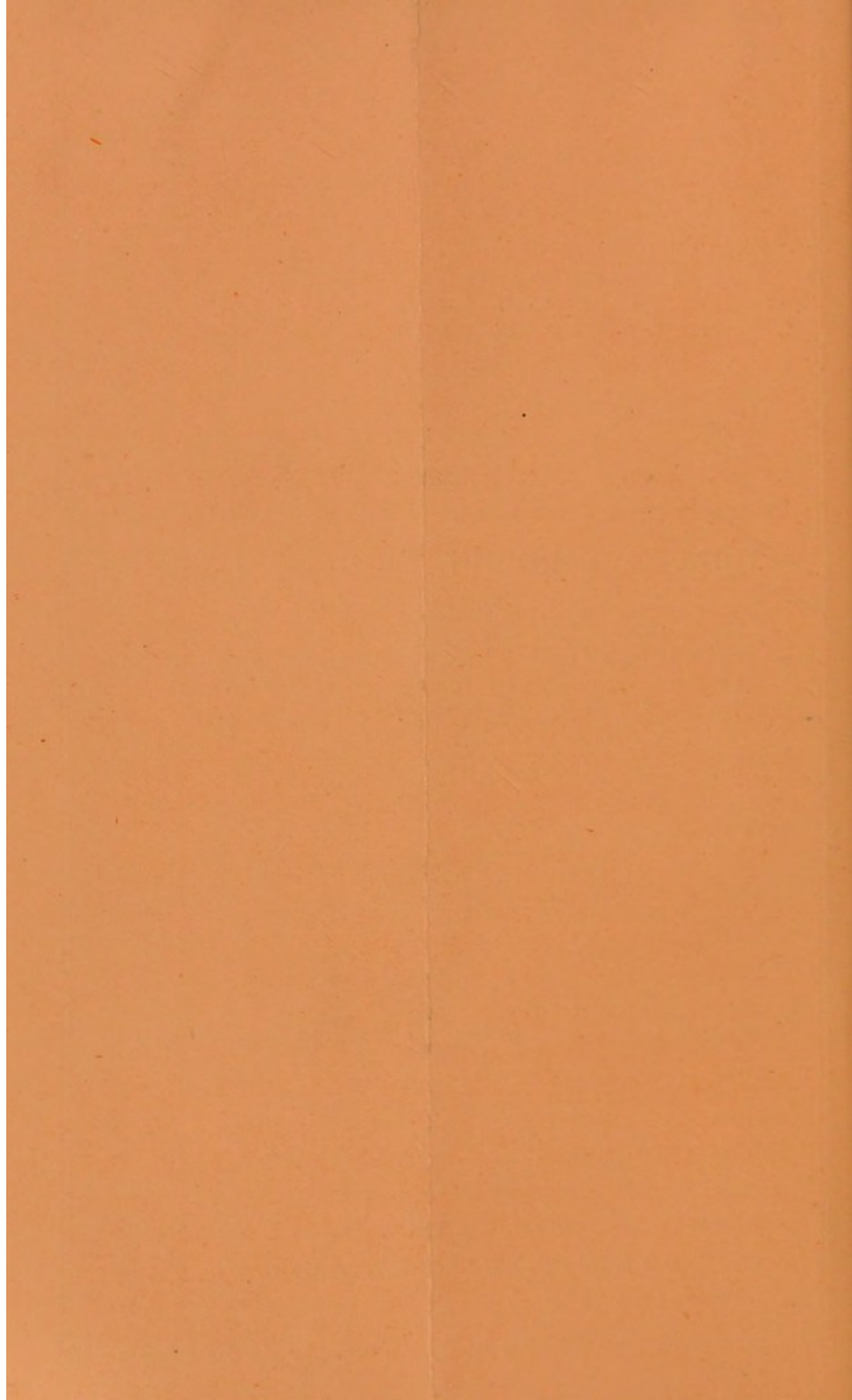
BY

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THE TEETH OF PAUPER CHILDREN.

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I propose to place before the readers of *The British Journal of Dental Science*, a few facts concerning the Pauper children of London, (of whom so little is known), with some of the results of a recent investigation into the condition of their teeth.

There are some 10,000 children in our Metropolitan and District Schools. The schools, 18 in number, are for the most part situated in the suburbs of London, surrounded by extensive grounds, where the children have all the advantages of good air and healthy exercise.

The children, who are gathered from the various parishes, range from three years to sixteen years; they are clothed, housed, fed, and educated, at the public expense. In connection with each school is a large staff of teachers, with band and drilling masters, and the children are all under medical supervision. There are workshops, gymnasia, swimming baths, band-rooms, and laundries. In some schools, museums and libraries are to be found. In others, a Post Office Savings

Bank has been opened to encourage the children in thrift.

Cricket and football for the boys, and Swedish and musical drill for the girls, are the favourite out-door amusements.

There is a training ship, H.M.S. "Exmouth," off Gray's, Essex, with a certified accommodation of 600, into which boys are drafted for the Navy.

The boys in the schools are taught various trades; many enter the Army and Navy. The girls are trained for domestic service.

During the year 1891, of the 735 boys placed out, 72 entered the Royal Navy, 77 entered the Mercantile Marine, 144 entered the Army and Navy bands, 44 were placed out as shoemakers, 64 as bakers, 33 as tailors, &c., &c. Of the girls 469 were placed out; 458 entered domestic service, and the demand is greater than the supply.

While speaking of the Army, I am reminded of the fact that according to the last Report of the Army Medical Department for 1890, (published 1892), five hundred and six recruits were rejected on account of "Loss or decay of many teeth," and although the rejections are not by any means so numerous as from other diseases, yet this is an interesting fact, and points to the prevalence of bad teeth among the working classes.

The Managers of these schools stand *in loco parentis*, and are, for the most part, intelligent bodies of men, anxious to do their duty, to train the minds and bodies of the children in order that these may be fairly started in life, and become intelligent and *independent* citizens of this vast empire.

To give any idea as to the expenses in connection with the schools is difficult, but, taking four large schools at random, containing 600 to 1,000 children, the expenditure for one year exceeds respectively the sums of £30,000, £20,000, £15,000, £22,000.

During the past 18 months, with a colleague, I have

sought and obtained permission to examine the mouths of the children in three schools, viz.:—Southall, Hanwell, and Sutton. Valuable statistics have been obtained which have been permanently recorded in the books of the British Dental Association for future use. 3145 children were carefully examined, and, as the condition of every tooth in each child's mouth was recorded, the investigation deals with something like 70,000 teeth.

The managers of the schools asked that a brief report should be presented to them, so a special printed report was sent in as each school was examined.

It is proposed to give, briefly, an account of the results of the examination, as follows:—

A. Table showing figures bearing upon those points which are of the greatest importance. (See next page.)

B. A few remarks based upon table A.

C. General observations and suggestions as to remedial measures considered necessary.

B.—REMARKS.

1. With regard to the *Temporary Dentition*.—It is popularly believed that these teeth are not deserving of any particular attention, as in the natural course of events they must disappear, to give place to others of the permanent set. Whilst there may be some ground for this view, it is nevertheless true that much misery to children, as well as detriment to health, is avoided by intelligent watching and treating of temporary teeth. And when we recollect how rapid is the growth of the body during the first years of life it is obvious that sound teeth capable of proper mastication of food are as essential then as at any other period of a child's existence. It is therefore desirable to call attention to the fact that 3,360 temporary teeth required stopping; whilst 1,954 or the remains of them, either from being too badly decayed, or from being unduly retained (to the detriment of

Age	Number	Temporary Teeth requiring Filling	Temporary Teeth requiring Extracting	Permanent Teeth requiring Filling	Permanent Teeth requiring Extracting	Temporary Total	Permanent Total	Unsound Teeth.	Sound Dentition
3	37	57	...	...	...	57	...	57	20
4	110	290	5	...	...	295	...	295	41
5	160	411	35	18	...	446	18	464	44
6	222	561	114	57	...	675	57	732	27
7	282	633	202	175	...	835	175	1010	41
8	201	366	221	163	2	587	165	752	28
9	340	468	302	365	8	770	373	1143	46
10	423	401	313	420	58	714	478	1192	77
11	379	163	252	405	90	415	495	910	95
12	393	10	291	433	243	301	676	977	112
13	314	...	140	333	178	140	511	651	107
14	185	...	58	253	194	58	447	505	45
15	85	...	16	121	87	16	208	224	20
16	11	..	5	29	11	5	40	45	2
17	3	..	...	5	1	...	6	6	2
	3145	3360	1954	2777	872	5314	3649	8963	707

their successors) beyond the normal period, required removal. The total number of temporary teeth needing attention was 5,314.

2. *Permanent Dentition*.—Between 6 and 7 years of age the first teeth of the permanent set may be expected to make their appearance. From their presence in the mouth along with the temporary teeth, they are, unfortunately, too often regarded as belonging to the first set, and thus their decay, and loss, are ignored, to the great injury of a complete dentition. It should be borne in mind that instead of being the last teeth of the temporary set, the 6-year-old molars are the first of the permanent set, most important teeth, not only for size and masticating functions, but also on account of the position they hold in the jaws, and in the series of teeth making up a full set. It is worth while, then, to pay the greatest attention to these individual teeth. After the eruption of the first permanent molars the temporary teeth are gradually replaced by the corresponding members of the permanent set, and at 12 years, and not until then, the second permanent molars may be expected. It is, therefore, important that at all events up to that age or period, the 6-year-old molars should be kept in good working order, as presenting the only constant masticating surfaces during the change which is taking place between the temporary and permanent teeth.

Referring to the table, it will be seen that between the ages of six and twelve, inclusive, there are 2,018 permanent teeth which can and should be saved, whilst 401 require extraction. By far the greatest number of these are 6-year-old (or first permanent) molars.

3. Under the heading *Sound Dentitions* are enumerated those cases in which there was an absence of diseased teeth. Many of these were passing through the transition period between the first and second dentitions.

Some children required merely the easy extraction of tem-

porary teeth to place them in a satisfactory state, but it is nevertheless a fact which merits careful consideration that out of 3145 children's mouths inspected, there were only 707 which required neither fillings nor extractions. Even this number 707 would have been much less, had not 148 children between the ages of 9 and 17 in one school had 256 permanent teeth removed by the Medical Officer. This treatment was beneficial under the circumstances ; but had these teeth been carefully stopped in the early stages of decay, extraction in nearly every case would have been unnecessary.

C.—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.

There is an increasing recognition of the importance of a systematic care of the teeth, apart from æsthetic consideration. In the case of children, who, during the growth of the body, have not merely to maintain nutrition, it is surely a matter of urgency that all the organs of digestion should be kept in a state of functional integrity, and if, as seems to be the case, disease of the digestive tract is increasing, it is evident that any departure from the normal dentition places the child, and the future adult, at a disadvantage. Instead of waiting until a child suffers pain, and thus directs attention to a decayed tooth, it is far better for both patient and operator, that the earliest appearance of caries should be noted, and the progress prevented by a regulated system of inspection and prompt treatment. Under such circumstances, dental disease and the necessity for painful operations, become reduced to a minimum, and at the same time, the function of mastication is retained in accordance with what is now recognized as the most beneficial practice. Referring once again to the figures, it will be seen that 2,438 children have among them 8,963 unsound teeth, 2,777 of which are permanent teeth, requiring filling. Taking these facts into consideration, I have no hesitation in stating that a duly qualified Dental Surgeon should be appointed to every School.

Dentists have been appointed to three or four schools—and although in each case the salary given is too small for efficient work to be done on a large number of children—such appointments are gratifying. Before very long, all bodies charged with the care and welfare of children, will recognize the benefit of skilled attention being paid to the teeth, but at present it is a lamentable fact that the vast majority of the children in pauper schools in the Metropolis and throughout the country, have no dental supervision at all.

It is easy to see how this tells on one class alone. 458 girls entered domestic service from Pauper schools of the Metropolis last year. Five-sixths of this number had never even known the use of a tooth-brush. The troubles of a domestic servant suffering from neglected teeth, need but little imagination to picture ; but disordered digestion, irritability of temper, and inability to perform the allotted duties are some of the most obvious results.

How to deal with the teeth of children in this and other departments of the State is a difficult question ; but it is one which will to some extent be solved when our Legislators, School Board Managers, and Poor Law Guardians recognize more clearly the fact that one of the most essential parts of a child's education is a knowledge of its own body, and how to treat it well. The tooth-brush drill is as needful as any other gymnastic exercise, and for success in life, "to be a good animal" is the first requisite. Energy is of far more importance than information.

(*Vide* Spencer on Education.)

SCHOOL CHILDREN'S TEETH.

[*Editorial in the "British Journal of Dental Science,"*
Feb. 1st, 1893.]

AMONG the Original Communications which are published in the present issue will be found a statement of some facts with regard to the teeth of certain School Children, and we recommend a careful study of Mr. DENISON PEDLEY's paper to our readers, many of whom have doubtless noted the references to the general subject of children's teeth, now becoming so frequent. The matter is one of growing importance and is destined before long to be still more commented upon. We are all aware of the good results which must accrue if early attention is paid to children's teeth, and the paper in question does not put the case too strongly. Mr. PEDLEY is one of a band of workers who, commencing with Mr. FISHER, of Dundee, have within the last few years put on record the tabulated results of a series of careful investigations based upon an actual inspection and examination of children's mouths. That such a systematic aggregation of statistics would furnish results interesting from a scientific and professional aspect must be apparent ; but there is also a public point of view from which the figures themselves must be regarded, and it is for this reason that we now draw attention to the subject. Mr. PEDLEY's statement of facts is apparently plainly worded, without many technical terms ; and apart from the many strictly detailed points of interest to be evoked from such an extensive and comprehensive examination, we find in this table much matter for serious reflection. The danger of building up statistics on insufficient numbers is of course to be remembered, but in this case such an objection does not seem valid. Further, it appears reasonable to think that the difference between pauper children and those in Board Schools is not so great as to prevent deductions being drawn as to what may be expected should

these latter ever come under supervision. Indeed there would seem reason to believe that the higher we go in the social scale the worse is the dental condition unless proper treatment is provided.

Those interested in such matters may no doubt be induced to make other calculations than are alluded to in the observations upon the table of figures. For ourselves, we should be disposed to lay especial stress upon the column recording the number of unsound permanent teeth, and we have taken the opportunity of noting the ratio of such, per hundred children at various ages. Thus in every hundred children at the age of six years we may expect to find that there are twenty-five permanent teeth unsound, and, at this early age, requiring filling. As the age rises the ratio increases until at fourteen it reaches 241, at which period a large number are condemned for extraction. It is difficult to describe in terms what such a state of things really means, but we believe that when once the public understand it, the remedy, which is at hand, will be demanded. We hope that such of our subscribers as have the opportunity will take care that these statistics are brought under the notice of Boards of Guardians and other public officials. The difficulty of educating the ordinary public on professional matters is only slowly disappearing, although it is true that a more intelligent view is being taken of dental requirements. The natural and gradual elimination of doubtful practitioners is being accompanied by the evolution of one whose word will be more readily accepted with credence when it is disassociated from the ordinary trammels of commerce and regarded as the disinterested expression of opinion, conscientiously given by a scientifically-trained professional man.

One of the most important points in the future will be with regard to the appointment of dental surgeons to schools. Hitherto, the reports, when furnished in connection with such posts, have generally consisted of a ghastly return of the number of teeth extracted. We feel very strongly that when the *proper* treatment is carried out,

there will be no danger of opposition on the part of medical officers, which is occasionally hinted at. They will be the first to recognise, when ruthless extraction is shown to be not the sole, nor indeed the proper method of treatment, that the advent of a dentist is to be welcomed. We are prepared to endorse Mr. FISHER's remarks :—" Whatever may be the class of dental appointments in the future, I would have them all well remunerated, according to the amount and value of the service rendered, so that no operator might refrain from the faithful performance of his duty, which will bestow the benefits of our education on humanity at large." A good equipment should be provided, and an accurate record kept of all operations performed. All the children in the school should pass through the dentist's hands twice during the year ; and a monthly summary, and an annual report should be submitted to the school authorities. In order to promote such a consummation, it may be thought necessary, later, to approach the Local Government Board, not merely to support the hands of Guardians who may be willing to make such appointments, but also in order that such Boards as have taken no action, may be advised as to the necessity of doing so. Finally, we hope before long to hear of an Association of School Dentists who may thus be enabled to keep in touch with, and take advice from, one another.

A NEW DENTAL APPOINTMENT.—In connection with our remarks upon School Children's teeth and the necessity for skilled supervision, we are glad to be able to announce that the Kensington and Chelsea School District, following the example set at Hanwell by the Central London District, have appointed a dental surgeon. We believe that the figures and recommendations recently published have had much to do with this new departure, and that all the other School Districts will feel obliged to follow suit. Mr. LOUIS MAITLAND, L.D.S., has been selected for the post. He will attend at

Banstead once a week, and is at first to be allowed the services of an assistant in order to reduce the amount of caries which may be expected. This way of coping with an overwhelming amount of work at the outset is much to be recommended. We understand that systematic inspection, recording of all operations, and periodic reports, are to be features of the new appointment. There are about 700 children, and the remuneration is to be £75.

