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Better Teeth Better Health Stories



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A SAD STORY OF MARY-SUCK-HER-THUMB

PERHAPS you remember that one of the children from the Land of Somewhere had a very queer name. Everybody called her Mary Suck-her-Thumb. That wasn't her real name. At home her mother called her just plain Mary Jackson, but her playmates called her Mary Suck-her-Thumb, and in Health Land the Healthy-O's were so astonished to see a child with her thumb in her mouth nearly all the time that they too began to call her Mary Suck-her-Thumb. After a time they forgot her real name.

At home the children had not thought so much about Mary's sucking her thumb, but when they all got to Health Land, where everybody was healthy or trying to be, they began to be ashamed of her.

When Mary walked down the streets of Health Land her thumb was in her mouth. If a pleasant little Healthy-O said "Good morning," Mary had to wait to take her thumb out of her mouth before she could answer. Even at play she would suck her thumb every time she got a chance, no matter how dirty her hands were.

One day the children thought of a plan which they believed would make Mary very much ashamed. They wrote a little card and hung it in her room at the foot of her bed. This is what it said:

Mary had a little thumb,
She sucked it all the day,
She couldn't laugh, she couldn't sing,
Her thumb was in the way.

Mary didn't like to read what was written on the little card, and she threw it into the fireplace. That night when she went to bed she said, "I will not suck my thumb tonight."

She put her thumb way down under the covers and went to sleep, but the next morning when she awoke, there was her thumb in her mouth.

Even the King of Health Land called upon her one day and said: "Mary, do you know it is one of the rules of our country never to put anything into your mouth but food and drink and your toothbrush. You will never be a pretty child unless you stop sucking your thumb."

But Mary still loved her thumb so much that she couldn't or wouldn't stop sucking it.

One day the Healthy-O's gave the children a party out under the trees. They played all sorts of games and had great fun, but there was one thing the children liked particularly well. That was the fortune-telling tent. It cost five cents for a ticket. Arthur Fortune, a handsome Healthy-O in a blue suit with brass buttons, sold the tickets at a little stand. When a child entered this big tent he found many, many mirrors, one after the other. By looking into these mirrors he could find his future told with pictures.

Mary stood in front of the big white tent for a long time, busily sucking her thumb. The boys and girls went in one after the other, and they usually came out smiling. Some came out looking very angry, and some even shed tears.

At last Mary thought she would go in, too. She paid her five cents and, still sucking her thumb, walked into the big tent. She stepped in front of the first mirror and looked. There she saw herself sucking her thumb and looking very foolish. Underneath were the words, "Mary Suck-her-Thumb just as she is now, nine years old."

"What will be in the next?" sighed Mary.

In that she saw a picture of several of the nicest girls from Somewhere. They wore their best dresses and walked by, one by one, smiling. How beautiful they looked! Mary was so interested in looking at them that she forgot about herself

until she appeared in the mirror grinning and bowing, but still sucking her thumb. At the bottom of the glass were the words, "Mary sees herself as others see her."

"Oh, dear," said Mary, "I thought this was to tell us about our fortune."

That story began with the next mirror.

There was a picture of Mary sick in bed with a very bad cold, but still sucking her thumb. Down below she read: "Sickness often comes from dirt. Mary gets her hands very dirty and then puts her thumb into her mouth. Poor Mary, will she never learn?"

Mary felt almost afraid to look farther. When she did stop in front of the next mirror these words were flashed before her, "What a sad sight Mary was when she was thirteen years old."

As she looked into the glass she saw a girl who looked something like herself. She too was sucking her thumb. When she took it from her mouth Mary saw that she looked very tired and ugly. Her lips and teeth were all drawn forward and her face was out of shape.

"Ugh, how ugly!" said poor Mary, bursting into tears. "I will not see any more," and she ran toward the door of the big tent.

"What's the matter, little girl?" said a very cheery voice, just as she reached the door.

Mary stopped crying "Boo-oo-oo" long enough to see that it was the King of Health Land himself.

"I hate it. I hate it," cried Mary, loudly. "Oh, please, sir, I do not want my fortune told," and she began to cry "Boo-oo-oo" more loudly than ever.

"Don't cry, don't cry, little girl," said the King, "you do not need to be everything you have seen in the mirrors."

"Oh, oh, what can I do?" asked Mary, stopping for just a moment to catch her breath. "I do not want to be sick in bed. I do not want to be ugly. I do want to be beautiful."

"Well, you may be if you will only stop sucking your thumb."

"Then I won't do it again," sobbed Mary.

I do not know just what happened that night, but I half suspect Mary put some red pepper on her thumb. Anyway, she awoke in the morning for the first time without her thumb in her mouth. For several weeks afterwards she went around looking sadly at a huge bandage on her thumb.

Mary said to her friends: "My thumb did not behave itself, so I have sent it to the hospital."

One day she took the bandage off, but she was never seen to put her thumb in her mouth again. Every day she grew more and more beautiful. Her friends began to call her by her old name, Mary Jackson. Mary Suck-her-Thumb was no more.

The King of Health Land says:

I hope there is no Mary Suck-her-Thumb in your class.

Boys and girls in Health Land put nothing in their mouths but clean food and drink and their toothbrushes.

Sucking your thumb makes you look silly and ugly.

Putting your pencils and fingers in your mouth may make you sick.

Keep your hands away from your face; then they will never get into your mouth.

—By J. Mace Andress in "*A Journey to Health Land*." Ginn and Company, Publishers. Permission of Publishers.

A VISIT TO LOLLIPOP TOWN

One day the King asked the children if they would like to go on a journey to another land. You know how happy they were to go on such a trip.

They started in the early morning as soon as the dew was off the grass. The Healthy-O's had put up the ladders to the high walls, and up scrambled the children.

As soon as they were outside of Health Land they began to make their way through the forest. The King, with his Bugler, took the lead. Often the Bugler played beautiful music on his bugle.

Once they stopped to get a drink of cold water from a spring that bubbled out of a great stone. Then they marched on. The bugle sang out:

"March! March! March!
We're soldiers of the King.
We belong to Health Land,
And all its praises sing!"

At last they came to a hill from which they could see a town in the distance. "Perhaps you would like to see what kind of a town it is," said the King, picking up his field glasses. "Would anybody like to look?"

"I would, Your Majesty," said Olive Green.

And when she looked everything seemed to be quite near.

"Tell us what you see," cried the children.

"It's a queer-looking town," said Olive. "It makes me think of the witch's house in the story of Hansel and Gretel. It looks as if the gate of the town were made of candy. The houses are made of candy. Even the trees have candy growing on them. I see people. They all seem to be sucking lollipops."

"Oh, what a queer town," said the children. "Let us hurry on and find out more about it."

The Bugler blew a blast on his bugle. On they marched, singing:

"March! March! March!
We're soldiers of the King.
We belong to Health Land,
And all its praises sing!"

As they came nearer to the town the King said, "This is Lollipop Town."

It was just as Olive had said. The town seemed to be made of candy. Not only the gate but even the walls of the city were made of candy. The pumpkin vines grew lollipops instead of pumpkins.

At the big gate the bugle again sounded:

"Good morning to you,
Good morning to you,
We're over from Health Land.
Oh, may we see you?"

A little figure at once appeared above the gate. He had a lollipop in his mouth. He took it out of his mouth only long enough to blow on his bugle:

"Enter those who will,
Of lollipops eat your fill."

The King of Health Land and the children walked on to the gate of the town. There was the King of Lollipop Town with a big red lollipop in his mouth. He took it out of his mouth long enough to say, "Welcome to Lollipop Town."

He beckoned to several soldiers at the gate, who came forward with several baskets of brightly colored lollipops. "Help yourselves to lollipops," he said, putting his own lollipop back into his mouth.

"Thank you," said the King of Health Land. He turned to the children. "What shall we tell His Majesty, the King of Lollipop Town?"

"Thank you," said the children, "but we eat very little candy, and then only at the end of meals."

The King of Lollipop Town looked surprised. "How strange," he muttered. "I never heard of such a thing. We eat lollipops here any time we want them. Usually that is most of the time. We have more lollipops for food than anything else. Tell me, what kind of a land do you come from?"

"From Health Land," said the children. "We are trying to be strong and healthy."

The children were now inside Lollipop Town. Every child in that town was sucking a lollipop. They, too, offered lollipops to the children from Health Land and were surprised when they did not take any. All the children from Lollipop Town seemed to be pale, weak, and thin.

"I see," said the King of Lollipop Town, taking his lollipop from his mouth, "that your children all seem to have rosy cheeks and to be much better looking than our children. I wonder why."

"I will tell you," said the King of Health Land. "We do not eat much candy, but we drink plenty of milk, eat vegetables and fruits, get many hours of sleep, and do everything we should to make us healthy."

"I think we do very little of that here," said the King of Lollipop Town. "Our interest is in lollipops. After eating lollipops our children do not seem to like milk and the kind of food your children eat. We do not like to go to bed early. We would rather stay up and suck lollipops."

The children went through all of Lollipop Town and wondered at the strange houses built of candy and the trees and vines that were covered with lollipops.

"I think I like our own country best," said Julia Smith.

"Do you see what bad teeth the children have here?" asked Mary Jones. "Perhaps it's because they eat so many lollipops."

"Have you seen enough?" asked the King of Health Land.

"Yes, yes; let's go home," replied the children.

Slowly the group of children walked past the King of Lollipop Town. They bowed to him and said, "We thank you very much for letting us see Lollipop Town."

"Here is a basket of lollipops," said the King of Lollipop Town.

To say this he had to take a big lollipop out of his mouth so that he could talk.

"Thank you," said the children; "Each of us will take just one to eat after our luncheon."

Tramp, tramp, the children filed out through the big gate, along the path to Health Land.

As they looked back they saw the King of Lollipop Town standing near the gate sucking a lollipop. Perhaps he is still standing there.

As for the children they marched on through the woods toward home.

Hear the bugle and the merry voices of the children:

"March! March! March!
We're soldiers of the King.
We belong to Health Land,
And all its praises sing."

The King of Health Land says:

A love of lollipops sends many a child to the dentist's chair and spoils many a good meal.

—By J. Mace Andress in "A Journey to Health Land." Ginn and Company, Publishers. Permission of Publishers.

TAILS AND PEARLS

I wonder how many of you boys and girls know any Mother Goose rhymes. Oh! yes, I knew you did, and we all love to hear them and say them. Well, I have a new one for you today that you have never heard before:

Way off yonder—not very far off
A polly-wog jumped up
And his tail fell off.
Way off yonder—not very far off
Jimmy forgot his brush
And his teeth fell off.

I wonder if you know how this little polly-wog lost his tail and how Jimmy lost his teeth. Well, we are going to talk about polly-wogs and little Jimmy for a while. How many have seen a polly-wog? You know a polly-wog baby lives in the mud and water and is just a black spot with a little wiggly tail no bigger than a thread and then it grows bigger and fatter and longer and it gets to be brown and gray spotted and is very pretty with its long glassy tail. Bye-and-bye little feet come out of the body so the polly-wog can jump about in the mud and water. Then it is not long until the polly-wog loses its tail and it becomes a froggie. I wonder how many ever saw a frog. Well, every time you see a frog you can know that it was a polly-wog first, a polly-wog with a little wiggly tail squirming around in the mud and water. After it grew bigger and got feet its tail was of no more use because it became a frog.

Way off yonder
Not very far off
A polly-wog jumped up
And his tail fell off.

When this little polly-wog was born Mamma Frog named him "Woggie" and she was very proud of little Woggie because as he grew bigger he had the most beautiful tail of all the Polly-wogs in the neighborhood.

Now Mamma Frog tried hard to tell Woggie how to take care of his beautiful body, but all she could say was "Croak, Croak," and Woggie could not understand what she meant.

When Woggie began to hop about for himself he began to think he was very smart and he loved to sit among all the Polly-wogs on a high flat stone so that he might show his beauty and make them all wish they looked like him. He even thought he knew more than his Mamma Frog did and did not listen to her "Croak, Croak" as she tried to tell him to be careful of his body so he did not lose his tail before it was time for him to part with it.

Well, one bright sunny morning Woggie decided he would make a journey around the world, and he hoped some day, when he knew all the frogs in the kingdom of Frogland, that they would make him their king.

Now Woggie had not gone very far on his journey when he became very tired. He sat down to rest on a large flat stone. He looked all about him and in a short time he saw all the frogs of Fairy Pond come out croaking their merry songs and telling how mighty their king was.

Foolish Woggie thought, "Ah, here is my chance. When the king comes along with all his kingdom of frogs, I shall show them all that I am the most beautiful and most mighty of all. They they will choose me for their king."

Very soon the king came and sat sunning himself on a beautiful water lily in the middle of the fairy pond. His people hopped happily about him croaking their merry songs of praise. They had not been singing long when Woggie decided he would jump across the wide pond in one big jump and show them all how much

more beautiful his tail was than the king's, and how much higher he could jump than all the other frogs. So Woggie croaked one loud croak and made one big jump into the air. The king and all his people looked and all was very still for a moment.

But poor foolish Woggie. As soon as he jumped, Oh! off came his tail, and he fell with a splash in the middle of the pond. And this is how a silly little Polly-wog lost his tail just because he would not mind Mamma Frog.

Now Frogs and Polly-wogs are not the only ones that lost important parts of their bodies just because they do not take care of them.

Let me tell you about a little boy I knew once. This boy was named Jimmy. When Jimmy was very, very young his mother taught him to brush his teeth three times a day and to help him do so she used to say:

"Brush, Brush, Brush!
Brush, Brush, Brush!
Brush your teeth and start the day
In a clean and healthful way.
After breakfast and dinner too—
This keeps them clean and white for school.
Before you go to bed at night,
Just brush those teeth with all your might.
Then on your pillow your head may rest,
And mother'll be proud,
You've done your best."

Now Jimmy had beautiful teeth. They were so white and looked so pretty when he smiled that the people called them "pearls." This made Jimmy very happy, and he used to smile most all the time so everyone might see his pretty teeth.

As Jim grew older he began to think it was not necessary to brush his teeth three times a day. And when bed time came he used to slip away into dreamland and forget all about his toothbrush.

It was not long until Jimmy thought brushing his teeth two times a day was too much trouble and took away some of his play time, so he would run off to school with the boys after his noon meal never thinking to shine up his pretty "pearls."

When vacation time came Jimmy was so busy having good times and playing games with the boys that his toothbrush was forgotten altogether. Poor, poor toothbrush.

The people never asked Jimmy to smile any more because his "Pearls" were all gone, and in their place were rusted brown broken teeth. These teeth were rusted and broken and brown because the candies and sweet foods which he ate were never brushed away. Just because he did not brush his teeth after he ate, the food he left around them made little rusty spots and began to make big brown holes in his once pretty white "Pearls."

One night when Jimmy was tucked away in his clean white bed and dreaming of big juicy apples, a sharp pain woke him up. He screamed and pressed his hand tightly against his cheek, but the pain would not stop. His mother came in and saw him crying. She felt very sorry for him and tried to stop the pain but she could do nothing and poor Jimmy had to cry himself to sleep.

Next morning Jimmy climbed out of bed and ran to look in the mirror to see where the horrible pain in his cheek came from. When he opened his mouth what do you think he saw? Instead of his pretty "Pearls" that he was so proud of he saw rusty, brown, brokendown teeth.

And this is how a silly boy lost his teeth because he was too lazy to mind his mother.

Now all of us want to make people happy by smiling at them. So I am going to show you how to keep your teeth like "pearls" by brushing them. This is the way to do it.

Toothbrush drill.

—By Charlotte Greenwood.

JOHN SPECKLED-TOOTH'S LOSS

It was the third week of the month. The Wide-Awake Health Club was checking up its losses and its gains over the previous month.

"We are now five points behind our record of last month," said Herbert Think-Well. "Many of the boys and girls have been absent this month. John Speckled-Tooth has been absent most. He was out all last week. If we do not do better for the remainder of the month, Cherry Hill School may beat us; and if we are beaten this month, we have lost everything, for this is the fourth month. We need to win every month from now on to come in ahead on June 1."

"Perhaps John would tell us just how he happened to be absent so much," said Nellie Thoughtful.

John arose in the back part of the room. He looked rather ashamed, as if he wished somebody else might talk. He started once, stuttered, blushed, and sat down.

"Please tell us all about it, John," said Miss Content, kindly.

Again John got up. "I-I-I-I am really ashamed of myself," he said at last. "I have had a great loss. I have missed a whole week of school, so I am now way behind, and I missed Jenny Mill's party last Thursday afternoon. Then, too, my being absent so long makes it doubtful whether we can beat the Cherry Hill School this month.

"The worst part of it is this," he went on. "It was all so unnecessary. I had an awful toothache. The dentist said it was an ulcerated tooth. My chin was swollen, and my jaw ached so badly that I could not sleep at night."

"I do not see why you need to be ashamed about that," said Paul Grimyjo. "Anybody may have the toothache. I have had it many times, myself, and my mother has had it, too."

"I am certain," said John, "it's our own fault if we have the toothache. It served me right to have the toothache. I am ashamed to say so, but I know it's true. I knew better. If I had kept my teeth clean and gone to see the dentist regularly, I should not have missed a whole week of school. Both Dr. Wise and Miss Brown warned me that I would have a toothache if I did not take care of my teeth. I promise you I will not have the toothache again. Hereafter I shall clean my teeth at least twice every day."

"How many did not clean their teeth this morning?" asked the president.

About twenty-five hands went up.

"How many have not seen a dentist for over a year?"

Nearly every hand in the room went up.

"This looks as if we had something to do," said Billy True. "I have several questions I should like to ask about the care of the teeth. Perhaps some of the other children have questions, too."

Several of the children raised their hands. Miss Content also raised her hand.

"Mr. President," said Billy True, "wouldn't it be a good plan to write these questions on the blackboard?"

"Yes," said Herbert, "Mary is the best writer. I think she will be glad to help."

Mary stepped to the blackboard and wrote the questions one by one as they were asked. These were the questions she wrote:

1. Why should we clean our teeth?
2. What is the best way to clean them?
3. How often do we need to go to a dentist?
4. Do we need to take care of our baby teeth? Why?
5. What is the best way to take care of a toothbrush?
6. What kind of food is good for the teeth?
7. Why do some children have crooked teeth?

"These are all good questions," said Herbert. "We do not have time to answer them today, but I hope every boy and girl in the Wide-Awake Health Club will come prepared next time to answer every one of these questions."

Wide-Awake Boys and Girls say:

"Good teeth are a constant joy.

"Toothache is not necessary if you keep your teeth clean and go to see the dentist regularly. Boys and girls with dirty teeth are not good looking even if they wear fine clothes.

"We are just as proud of clean mouths as we are of clean hands.

"We haven't lost any of our second teeth.

"Uncle Sam doesn't want men who have poor teeth for soldiers and sailors."

—By J. Mace Andress—"Boys and Girls of Wake-up Town." Ginn and Company, Publishers. Permission of Publishers.

GOOD QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEETH ANSWERED

"I have in my hand," said Herbert Think-Well, glancing at a paper, "a statement from Dr. Wise about the teeth of the children in this room. Dr. Wise says that there are only three children in this school who have no decayed teeth. Many of us have two or three bad teeth, and some as many as seven or eight. He finds only about half a dozen whose teeth are as clean as they ought to be. Just think of that! To be strong and healthy we need to take care of our teeth."

"Today we are to try to answer these good questions on the teeth," Herbert continued, pointing at the blackboard. "Who is ready for the first question?"

"Mr. President," said Mary O'Right, "the answer to the first question, Why should we clean our teeth? is very easy. John Speckled-Tooth has given us some very good reasons. He did not take care of his teeth, and he missed a party and was so sick for a week that he had to stay indoors. His tooth ached so badly that he couldn't sleep at night. If we clean our teeth they will be less likely to decay. Every time we are absent from school because of toothache we lose points."

"I think we also need to clean our teeth so that they will be ready to chew our food," said Rose Plumpkins. "If they decay, our food cannot be chewed well. Birds can swallow their food whole because they have a gizzard, where the food is ground up. We need to chew our food."

"There is still another reason that nobody has mentioned," remarked Dorothy Hollbrook. "Clean teeth make one better looking. A boy or girl, no matter how well dressed, cannot look well with dirty teeth. My uncle is a merchant, and he says he would never hire a clerk who has dirty teeth. Customers do not like to buy goods from clerks who do not keep their teeth clean."

"I agree with what Dorothy says, but I think we ought add that when teeth are pulled one's face looks funny and very ugly," said Mary O'Right. "I have an uncle who has lost most of his teeth. I do not like to look at him when he laughs."

"The second question," said Herbert Think-Well, "is What is the best way to clean them?" Why-Listen went to the door and opened it. A gentleman with a brown bag stepped inside.

"Oh, it's our dentist, Dr. Sharp," said the president, stepping forward to shake hands. "The question of how to brush the teeth is so important that I asked him if he would come in and tell us about it."

Dr. Sharp smiled, showing his beautiful white teeth. "I am a citizen of this town," he said, "and I like the boys and girls of this town and of this school. I want to do all I can to make you happy and healthy. Then I know you will be at school every day and learn very fast. You may also be expected to play better baseball in June. We need good teeth to be happy."

"The way you brush your teeth is very important. Drawing your brush across your teeth is a poor way, because it does not brush out the particles of food between the teeth and also because it pulls away the gums from the teeth and causes them to decay around their roots. It is a good plan to get a toothbrush with a notched edge like a saw to fit the spaces between the teeth." Dr. Sharp then took a brush out of his bag. "It is quite necessary to draw the brush so that the bristles will come in between the teeth. Use the up-and-down stroke."

"Let me show you how to do it," he said, raising his toothbrush. "First, I put my toothbrush between my teeth and the upper gum on the left side of my mouth. I put the brush well up on the gums. Then I push it downward to the lower gums and then forward and upward. I do this several times and work around to the front teeth. Then I clean the right side of my mouth in the same way. This cleans the outside of my teeth and the spaces between my teeth."

"Do you need to brush the teeth inside?" asked Nellie Thoughtful. "Yes, indeed, especially the back teeth. The front ones are pretty well cleaned by the rubbing of the food against them, but the back ones get dirty. You take the end of your brush, pointing it the same way as the teeth, and draw it against the tooth, in and out. Do the same with your upper and lower teeth. The biting surfaces are cleaned by drawing the brush in and out across the teeth. After cleaning your teeth it is a good plan to take dental floss or silk thread and pull it between the teeth. Do not press so hard that you cut the gums."

"Does it make any difference what kind of toothpaste or powder is used?" asked Charlie Slouch.

"Nearly all the toothpaste and powder on the market is good. Remember that it is the brushing that counts most. If you cannot afford to buy powder or paste, use water with a little salt in it, but brush your teeth well. Even with the best of care the teeth cannot be kept perfectly clean without getting them cleaned from time to time by a dentist. But I see there are other questions which you are discussing," said the doctor, glancing toward the blackboard, "Please go on. I would like to listen."

"Mr. President."

"Yes, Anne Gray."

"I think it would be a good idea for us to brush our teeth before breakfast and before we go to bed at night. And after every meal, whether we use a toothbrush or not, we should try to rinse out our mouths with clean water. This can be done by filling the mouth with water and forcing the water through the teeth. I got all these points from a little book on the teeth," said Anne.

"That is very good advice," remarked Dr. Sharp.

"Perhaps Dr. Sharp would answer the next question for us," said Herbert Think-Well, turning again to Dr. Sharp.

"With pleasure," returned Dr. Sharp; "although you answer your own questions so well, I am not needed. However, this seems to be a kind of question I ought to answer,—'How often do we need to see a dentist?' I should say about every six months. If you go as often as that, the dentist will see the decay when it starts, and the filling will be small and cause you little or no pain."

"Thank you, Dr. Sharp," said Herbert. "I have just had my teeth looked over, and I have marked the day on the calendar. Before six months have passed I shall see the dentist again."

"The next questions are 'Do we need to take care of our baby teeth? Why?' Who will try to answer them?"

"What is the use of taking care of our baby teeth?" said Paul Grimyjoe. "We have to lose them, anyway. Isn't it time and money spent for nothing?"

"What does the club think about that?"

"I don't think Paul is right," replied Oliver Straight.

"Why not?"

"Well, we need to have teeth to chew our food. Even if our baby teeth do not last forever, we need them until the others are ready to come in. If they are not kept clean, they will look bad and our breath will not be sweet."

"Oliver is quite right," said Dr. Sharp. "There is another reason also. You know what happens when a rotten apple touches a good apple, don't you?" "It makes the good apple decay, too, doesn't it?" asked John Speckled-Tooth.

"Yes," said Dr. Sharp. "In the same way, a decayed baby tooth by the side of a good tooth of the second set makes it decay."

"I think I can answer the next question, Mr. President," said Peter Stout.

"Very well, Peter."

"After using a toothbrush it should be thoroughly washed in warm water, and then hung in a sunny place, if possible. The sun is a good cleanser."

"Thank you, Peter," said Herbert. "Would you add anything, Dr. Sharp?"

"Only this," said Dr. Sharp. "It is advisable to sprinkle a little salt over the brush if convenient. That keeps the brush clean and helps to make the bristles stiff."

William Tower arose.

"Yes, William."

"I have found something very interesting about the kind of food that is good for the teeth."

"Please tell us all about it."

"I have just read a story about the Indians. They had excellent teeth, although they never used a toothbrush. But they did something that we seldom do. They ate hard, coarse food. An Indian would go off on a long journey with almost nothing but parched corn in his wallet. Such coarse foods scrape the teeth and keep them clean. It also keeps them healthy because they need to work to grind the food. It seems to me that we eat too much soft food. Much of it needs no chewing. I think we should eat hard toast and coarse food for the sake of our teeth."

Herbert looked toward Dr. Sharp.

"Excellent," said Dr. Sharp. "I would also like to say that milk is a good food for the teeth. Drink plenty of it."

"We have just one more question that I know we all want answered, 'Why do some children have crooked teeth?'"

"Mr. President."

"Yes, William Jones."

"Mother says that one reason why teeth grow out of place is because little children suck their thumbs. I am trying to teach my baby brother to stop sucking his thumb."

"Another reason, Mr. President," said Dick Wells, "is because the first teeth are lost too early. This allows the teeth on both sides to grow over into the vacant space. When the new tooth appears it does not find room enough, so it grows crooked. Keeping your teeth clean and going to the dentist regularly ought to make them clean and straight."

"Have you anything to add, Dr. Sharp?" asked Herbert.

"No, nothing," replied the doctor, "except to tell you what a fine time I have had here. You are certainly doing some hard thinking on this whole idea of health. May I ask how many of you brushed your teeth this morning?"

Every hand in the room went up.

"Good," said the doctor, "You are just bound to grow up to be healthy boys and girls."

"Before you go, Dr. Sharp, I wish you might hear some of the health rhymes on the teeth that some of the boys and girls have written. Miss Content says they are excellent."

"Thank you, I shall be glad to stay a little longer."

"Nellie Thoughtful, have you one?"

"Yes, Mr. President.

"'Jack,' said Jill, 'I think you will
Agree with what I say sir.
We'll have to get our teeth fixed up,
Or we shall rue the day, sir.'
'Jill,' said Jack, 'you're on the track
That leads to health and beauty.
To see a dentist, I should say,
Was our immediate duty.'"

"I have another one," said Nancy Fair.

"Jack Spratt
Is now quite fat,
His wife is far from lean;
I'll tell you why they're round and plump,
Their teeth are white and clean."

"And I have one, Mr. President," said Helen Smiley. "It makes me laugh every time I read it."

"I am certain we all want to hear it," said Herbert.

"This is the way it goes," said Helen.

"There was a crooked tooth
That was allowed to grow;
It pressed against the other teeth
And formed a crooked row.

They made a crooked smile
That twisted out of place
All of which together
Made a homely, crooked face."

A smile still played over Dr. Sharp's face as he waved his hand to the children and turned his automobile toward home.

Wide-Awake Boys and Girls say:

We all cleaned our teeth this morning.

We all clean our teeth before we go to bed,

We use dental floss before we go to bed.

We see the dentist about every six months.

Lazy teeth decay.

We keep our teeth healthy by eating hard food, such as hard toast.

Clean teeth make you beautiful.

Clean teeth put money in your pocket.

Draw your toothbrush so that the bristles will come between the teeth.

Brushing is worth more than toothpaste or powder.

Take good care of your first teeth or you may have poor second teeth.

—By J. Mace *Address in "Boys and Girls of Wake-up Town."* Ginn and Company, Publishers. Permission of Publishers.