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The King's Soldiers

(For the Primary Grades)



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Bureau of Public Relations
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THE KING'S SOLDIERS*

(For the Primary Grades)

TWO rows of soldiers dressed in white uniforms stood on guard for the king. One day when they were in rest position one of the soldiers said: "The king makes a much better appearance because we are here."

"He has much more pleasure in eating his meals," said another.

"I really do not see how he would be able to eat anything without our help, and besides that his stomach would turn in revolt if we were not here to prepare his food. We aid him in drinking as well as eating," said a third.

"We safeguard the king's very life," shouted a fourth.

Then the Captain, Mr. Six-Year Molar, said: "I have rendered good service in keeping you other soldiers in line, but there are a number of things the king should be asked to do for us. When I came here there was a rent in my uniform, and the king would not have it mended. Now I have taken cold, and oh, how I ache!"

You see, boys and girls, the king in this story is any one of you, and the two rows of white soldiers are your teeth.

Then another soldier boldly spoke up: "Because the king did not get that old fellow out of the road who was here when I came, I am not able to stand up straight. I think something should be done for me."

"If the king would only keep our uniforms clean," shouted another soldier. "Mine has not been cleaned for so long that it is moldy, and the only excuse the king uses is that he has no toothpaste. A teaspoon of salt in a glass of water would serve just as well or even better, if he would only use it to dampen his new little toothbrush that has never been used. If he gave us a thorough brushing before breakfast, after breakfast, after dinner and before going to bed every day, we should all be in a cleaner, healthier condition."

"Ho, ho, ho!" scornfully laughed a big tooth in the back of the king's mouth. "Talk about a clean salt water bath four times a day, with a nice clean toothbrush that has been dried in the sun. Ho, ho, ho! That indeed would be new to me. I have been packed full of candy and cake almost every day of my life, which is the very worst thing for me. No wonder I am decaying in my tracks."

"I wish someone would tell the king how important it is to drink milk, eat plenty of green vegetables, fresh fruit and cereals and to let that candy and cake alone. I am sure the king would learn to like the vegetables, fruit, cereals and milk, and they would help to keep me in healthy condition. I'd like some one also to tell him that chewing bread crusts and hard toasts would be good exercise for us and help to keep us clean. And he should be told to use a hammer to crack nuts instead of trying to crack them with his teeth."

"Wouldn't the king have a miserable time of it if we were not here?" proudly boasted another.

"I do wish some one would come and tell him how to take care of us," said Mr. Six-Year Molar. "I am sure the king would be very sorry to lose us, especially since it will never be possible for him to get other soldiers to take our places, never, never, even though he spends a million dollars."

You see, boys and girls, this is what your teeth would say if they could talk to you. So I have come to tell you what to do to take care of your two rows of lovely white soldiers. They not only make you much better looking, but they guard your health faithfully, by chewing every bit of food that you eat so that it is well prepared for your stomachs. If your food is not well chewed, your stomach will become weakened; and when your stomach is weakened, your whole body is weakened. Isn't it?

First, I am going to tell you which teeth are your six-year molars, because these teeth are often lost and they are your largest and most important permanent teeth.

Sometimes the enamel is not well united in the little fissures in these teeth when they first come to you, and they start to decay almost as soon as you get them. A little filling would save them. That is what the Captain, Mr. Six-Year Molar, meant when he said that there was a rent in his uniform when he came here, and the king had not had it mended.

Look in the looking-glass and count your teeth, beginning with the ones in front. The sixth tooth back on each side, both above and below, is a six-year molar. There are four of them. If there is a cavity in any of these teeth in your mouth, hurry off to the dentist to have it filled. These teeth come at just a time in your life and in such a place in your mouth that they make your other teeth stand up straight.

How many of you know what a cavity is? Yes, a cavity is a hole in your teeth which gets larger and larger unless you have it filled. If you do not have the cavities in your teeth filled, after a while you get the toothache. You may even have to have the tooth pulled out, which is a terrible thing, because you need all of your teeth every day to chew your food.

Oh, yes, you lose your baby teeth, but not until it is time for your permanent teeth to come and take their places. You always know when this is because your baby teeth get loose, and sometimes your second teeth peep through so that you can see them; then the baby teeth must be helped out of the way.

There is someone who is your friend who can keep you from having toothache if you go to him in time. How many of you can tell me who he is? The dentist.

You should go to the dentist every three or four months to have your teeth examined. He takes his little mouth mirror and looks all over your teeth. He may find tiny cavities in your teeth that you would not know were there until your tooth began to ache. If he finds a cavity you can have it filled before it gets large.

Will it cost as much money to have the cavities filled while they are small? Will it take as long to have the work done? It won't hurt if you have your teeth filled when the cavities are small, and it is much better for your teeth. It is hard for the dentist to do a good job of filling your teeth if you wait until your teeth are aching before you have them filled.

If any one of you does not have a toothbrush, ask your mother to get you a nice little brush like this. (Show the kind of brush children should use.) Of course, you all want to keep your teeth clean. I'd rather have my mouth clean than any other part of my body, wouldn't you? You wouldn't like to eat your breakfast off a dirty plate, would you? Well, it is just as bad to eat with dirty teeth.

It makes you better looking to have nice clean white teeth, and it helps to keep cavities from coming in your teeth if you keep them clean, and you will grow up to be healthier men and women if you keep your teeth clean and do not get cavities in them.

Who can tell me how to use a toothbrush? Brush your upper teeth straight down and the lower ones straight up. Yes, that is right, and always brush your gums as well as your teeth, because it stimulates them and makes them healthy. If you brush your teeth with salt water, it helps to harden your gums. Use a teaspoonful of salt in a glass of water. It is even better for your teeth than toothpaste.

We are going to have a toothbrush drill to teach you how to use your brush. (Have on hand some wooden tongue depressors and pass them around the room so that each child has one.)

Now, boys and girls, we are going to pretend that these wooden sticks are toothbrushes, and we are going to go through the same motions with the sticks we would with our brush, only, of course, we won't put the sticks in our mouth.

*This paper is one of a series issued by the Public Service Committee of the Chicago Dental Society in connection with the Mouth Hygiene Campaign being carried on by the Chicago Dental Society and the Illinois State Dental Society. Copies may be had at five cents each by addressing the Chicago Dental Society, 30 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago.

Attention!

Outside surfaces of lower teeth sweeping upward.

Upper left—Place (Count 1-8).

Upper right—Place (Count 1-8).

Front—Place (Count 1-8).

Outside surfaces of lower teeth sweeping upward.

Lower left—Place (Count 1-8).

Lower right—Place (Count 1-8).

Front—Place (Count 1-8).

Inside surfaces of upper teeth sweeping downward.

Upper left—Place (Count 1-8).

Upper right—Place (Count 1-8).

Front—Place (Count 1-8).

Inside surfaces of lower teeth sweeping upward.

Lower left—Place (Count 1-8).

Lower right—Place (Count 1-8).

Front—Place (Count 1-8).

Brush teeth with an in and out stroke where you chew.

Upper teeth—

Upper left—Place (Count 1-8).

Upper right—Place (Count 1-8).

Lower teeth—

Lower left—Place (Count 1-8).

Lower right—Place (Count 1-8).

You remember what we said about brushing your teeth before breakfast, after breakfast, after dinner and before going to bed? After brushing your teeth, brush the roof of your mouth, the inside of your cheeks and your tongue lightly but thoroughly. This will be hard to do at first, but you will soon get used to doing it and your mouth will feel nice and clean when you are done.

Some people do not do the things that we have said they should do to take care of their teeth, and sometimes they get heart trouble, rheumatism, kidney trouble and nervous trouble. Sometimes they die because they have not taken care of their teeth.

Please remember, if you want your two rows of soldiers to guard your health and to make you good looking, you will have to take care of them. If you do not take care of them, you will lose them, and they can cause you lots of pain and trouble before they go.