



A CASE OF THIRD DENTITION.

BY EDWARD J. FORSTER, M. D.,
Surgeon to the Charlestown Free Dispensary and Hospital.

THE history of the case from which the cast represented in the annexed wood-cut was taken is as follows:—

Henry L., an Englishman, seventy-seven years old last December (1876), twenty years ago had the teeth then remaining in his upper jaw removed on account of "neuralgia." About ten years ago two teeth appeared where the upper right central and lateral incisors had been. The new-comers were smooth, thin, and transparent; they became loose and were removed with the fingers,—the last one two years after its appearance. The position they occupied is shown on the cast by the roughened line to the left of the tooth now present.



C. A. Harris, in his *Dental Surgery*, quotes from Good's *Study of Medicine*, as follows:—

"For the most part, the teeth in this case (third dentition) shoot forth irregularly, few in number, and without proper fangs, and even where fangs are produced without a renewal of sockets. Hence, they are often loose, and frequently more injurious than useful by interfering with the uniform line of indurated and callous gums, which, for many years perhaps, had been employed as a substitute for the teeth."¹

The tooth shown in the wood-cut made its appearance four years ago, and is serviceable, although the owner thinks it is "beginning to rot" and is afraid he will soon lose it.

In regard to the possibility of a third dentition, Harris says:—

¹ *The Principles and Practice of Dental Surgery.* By C. A. Harris, M. D., D. D. S., etc. Eighth edition, page 176.

“That nature makes an effort to produce a third set of teeth is a fact which, however much it may be disputed, is now so well established that no room is left for cavil or doubt.”

Wedl,¹ in his Pathology of the Teeth, gives the names of eleven writers of recent times who have either seen or reported cases, but expresses no opinion as to his own belief, saying, “The possibility of the occurrence of a third dentition is doubted, and even openly denied by many.” The cast, which was kindly made for me by Edward Page, D. M. D., has been deposited in the Warren Museum of Harvard University.

¹ Translation from German, by W. E. Boardman, M. D., Philadelphia, 1872, page 87.

Box 59.

Case of 3rd dentition.

Forster (1801, p. 1)