

KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT.

[George Catlin, the friend and historian of the Red Races, produced lately a curious volume, published by Trübner & Co., entitled 'Shut your Mouth and Save your Life,' with illustrations. Mr Catlin here brings us a message from his Red friends, and an announcement that, with all our boasted civilisation, the unhealthy state of our population, and in particular, the high death-rate among our children and young persons, arise mainly from our disregard of a habit which universally prevails among the American Indians with the best results. The remedy for all our ailments, according to Mr Catlin, is simply that, waking and sleeping, but particularly when sleeping, we should, as much as possible, keep our mouth shut and breathe through our nostrils. This habit is early enforced by the Indian mother upon her children; and to this precaution is to be ascribed, as Mr Catlin alleges, the exemption of the Red race from those diseases which carry off so vast a proportion of our youthful population, and make so many of the rest of us the victims of lengthened bad health. By breathing through the mouth, he tells us, we pour in upon the lungs the unmodified and impure air of the ordinary atmosphere, to the destruction both of our breathing tubes and of the digestive apparatus of the mouth; while if we breathed through our nostrils, the air, in its progress through that passage, would be regulated in its temperature, and would be deprived of those deleterious particles which are diffused through it, and which are the great vehicles of infection. The nostrils, from their peculiar formation, are a natural respirator, better and safer than any artificial contrivance of that kind. In particular, Mr Catlin ascribes the epidemic decay of the dental organs which prevails nowadays so extensively among white men, to the action upon those parts of the improper mode of respiration in use. We attempt a versification of his theory.]

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A RED INDIAN RECIPE.

HURRAH! Old George Catlin has found out the
cause

Why we've ailments, and aches, and bad teeth in our
jaws :

No end of disorders will into you creep,

If you leave a door open while lying asleep :

But of most of life's ills you may make a clean cut,

If you breathe through your nostrils and keep your
mouth shut.

His friends the Red tribes, men and squaws, boys and
girls,

All have strong limbs and lungs, all have teeth pure as
pearls ;

While We children of Europe are sickly and dying,

And have only good teeth of the dentist's supplying ;

And the reason is this : In the Red Indian's hut,

They all breathe through their nostrils and keep their
mouths shut.

The atmosphere's laden with Dust and Disease,
Coughs, Colds, and Consumptions, and worse, too, than
these ;

And if atoms so noxious you swallow wholesale,
With the self-same result you might poison inhale :
But the nostrils, like filters, such ills will rebut ;
So make use of that passage and keep your mouth shut.

To renew life and strength, your night's sleep must be
sound,

And your system well rested till morning comes round :
So old Catlin explains, what we all would explore,
How to sleep free from nightmare, with never a snore :
Let your head on a neat little pillow abut ;
Then breathe through your nostrils and keep your
mouth shut.

A great gaping mouth mars the handsomest face,
For of wisdom and wit it destroys every trace ;
Even Beauty herself is less fair in our eyes,
With a wide open trap, as if set to catch flies ;
Mark the contrast in many a comic woodcut—
Which our author here gives—of mouths open and
shut.

But Catlin's advice more instruction affords,
Than he thought of, perhaps, when he uttered his
words :

He hoped he might lessen the Bills of Mortality,
But I think he may also improve our morality :
There are evils as serious as dust, smoke, or smut,
Where you'll find it a safeguard to keep your mouth
shut.

When the banquet is spread, and the long-laboured
feast

Still tempts you to eat when your hunger has ceased ;
When the wine-cup is bright, and you've basked in its
ray,

Till you're conscious that prudence might quickly give
way ;

Ere you venture still further your passions to glut,
Think of next morning's terrors, and keep your mouth
shut.

When detraction and malice the absent assail,
And each speaker contributes a scandalous tale ;
If you can't use your tongue such attacks to arrest,
Let your silence at least be your solemn protest ;
Ere you brand friend or foe as a sot or a slut,
Think of Charity's mandates, and keep your mouth shut !

The Mouth, it appears, in the business of life,
Has two duties to do, yet they're seldom at strife :
In due season it needs to be open by day,
Any good thing to swallow, or good thing to say :
But at all other times, if you'd not be a butt
For disease or disaster, best keep your mouth shut !