

the absorption of the fangs of the temporary teeth, and, pushing them out, occupy their places.\*

As the jaw bone, during its growth, extends principally backwards, the posterior portion, being later in forming, is comparatively of a larger size than either the fore or the lateral parts; and it admits, therefore, of teeth of the full size, which, consequently, are permanent. The molar teeth, which are last formed, are, for want of space, rather smaller than the others, and are called the *wisdom-teeth*, because they do not usually make their appearance above the gum till the person has attained the age of twenty. In the negro, however, where the jaw is of greater length, these teeth have sufficient room to come into their places, and are, in general, fully as large as the other molars.

The teeth of carnivorous animals are, from the nature of their food, less liable to be worn, than those of animals living on grain, or on the harder kinds of vegetable substances; so that the simple plating of enamel is sufficient to preserve them, even during a long life. But in many herbivorous quadrupeds we find that, in proportion as the front teeth are worn away in mastication, other teeth are formed, and advance from the back of the jaw to replace them. This happens, in a most remarkable manner, in the Elephant, and is the cause of the curved form which the roots assume; for, in proportion as the front teeth are worn away, those immediately behind them are pushed forwards by the growth of a new tooth at the back of the jaw; and this process goes on continually, giving rise to a succession of teeth, each of which is larger than that which has preceded it, during the whole period that the animal lives. A similar succession of teeth takes place in the *wild boar*, and, also, though to a less extent, in the *Sus Æthiopicus*.† This mode of dentition

\* It is stated by Rousseau that the shedding of the first molar tooth both of the *Guinea-pig*, and the *Capibara*, and its replacement by the permanent tooth, take place a few days before birth. *Anatomie Comparée du système dentaire*, p. 164.

† Home, *Phil. Trans.* for 1799, p. 237; and 1801, p. 319.