

5th. I find it almost impossible to depend as entirely upon mallet force in the posterior approximal cavities of the second and third molars, as in other cavities, unless an opening is made through the crown. It must be remembered that there is always a certain amount of hand pressure used immediately in advance of the blow, under all circumstances; but there are difficult cavities in the above two teeth in both maxillaries, wherein I have no faith in the exclusive use of the mallet. A strong point against the hand mallet is thought to be in the assertion, that the direction of force is on a line or parallel with the shaft of the plugger, and that a curved point cannot be steadied so as to give a firm impaction of the gold, but must necessarily glide off, or over the metal. In opposition to this argument, the advocates of mallet force hold, that an instrument bent at any angle, can be controlled in difficult cavities by a strong hand pressure on the gold at the point desired, steadying the point of the plugger to resist the direction of the blow, at the moment the mallet is used. The advantage of the mallet is shown in just such cases; as after the force of hand pressure has been exhausted, further condensation with the aid of the mallet may be made.

Dr. Atkinson has substituted a metal head in the mallet, in place of lignum vitæ, from two ounces and a half up to ten or twelve. Pure tin, tin and lead, and composition metal have been used, but I prefer pure lead, as the vibration is less, the spring tap duller, and it is easily renewed. In almost every case, I have tested the wooden and lead mallets upon the same patient, and with only one exception, the preference was given to the latter. I believe I was the first to use it in Canada, and before it appeared in the dental depots, and my humble experience is identical with that of Dr. Fitch, who said that if he had to go back to hand pressure, he would abandon dentistry.

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#### DENTAL HYGIENE.

BY M. POURTIER, QUEBEC.

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From time immemorial and among all civilized nations, medical practitioners, physiologists, naturalists, philosophers, poets, and phy-