

presence. When new, the color of amalgam is less objectionable than that of any other material with which teeth are filled, and when subject to constant friction by mastication presents a smooth, bright surface for a long time. Amalgam should be used immediately after it is mixed for, if disturbed after crystalization begins, it is likely to become more or less friable. Too much mercury or too little will also injure the properties of amalgam.

Amalgam can be used to advantage in some cases as a foundation for gold fillings ; for example, a cavity which extends so far below the margin of the gum as to make it impossible to apply the rubber dam successfully the cavity may be filled nearly to the margin of the gum with amalgam, allowing it to set, apply the rubber dam, and complete the operation with gold.

I would conclude then, that amalgam would be preferable to gold in the following cases :—In back teeth, the crowns of which are too frail to stand the pressure necessary for the insertion of gold, in cavities where it is impossible to properly consolidate and finish off a gold filling ; for example, the posterior surface of a second or third molar, in molars of the temporary set and, as above suggested, as a foundation for gold in certain cases.

Next in order, we will mention tin, which is not very extensively used on account of the difficulty of inserting it. It is manipulated in the same manner as soft gold, therefore considering the difficulty of inserting it, the very slight difference in cost of the quantity of material required for a filling, and the fact that it becomes black where the fluids of the mouth are vitiated, gold is preferable, for where you can insert tin you can insert gold.

It is better than amalgam to preserve a tooth ; on account of its malleability it will not crevasse or chip at the edges, it will therefore remain in contact with the walls of the cavity if properly introduced.

Gutta percha has a number of good qualities, although not hard enough to bear the friction of mastication, yet in protected cavities, or those where no great amount of pressure comes on the filling, gutta percha will give years of service. It is especially useful in the teeth of children under the age of fourteen years ; under this age it is not advisable to use gold as the teeth are not thoroughly developed, the pulp larger and the proportion of inorganic matter less than in teeth of adults. The pulp being larger a metal filling, by reason of its great conducting properties, is liable to cause death of the pulp. During the constitutional changes of puberty the mucous