

to drugs to the exclusion of less harmful, if more mechanical, methods of securing a desired result. The *Materia Medica* contains many formulæ of absolute necessity to the dentist, but there are many things in the realm of mechanics which can often be employed just as advantageously, if not more so, but which seemingly are ignored largely because they are too simple to employ when an exhibition of learning can be made, or are too far beneath the dignity of a man of the standing of a dentist.

Let me give a few illustrations. Take first the case of hemorrhage from tooth extraction. When this occurs the patient usually returns to us and gravely suggests the possibility of danger from an excessive loss of blood. Of course the dentist does not concur in that, but immediately seizes his box of tannin or a solution of that drug; or probably one of the preparations of iron. No matter what his favorite prescription is, he straightway proceeds to use it, meanwhile employing language about these drugs that is Greek to the patient, and occasionally slow and ineffective as a means of stopping the hemorrhage. One thing, however, that is very likely to have happened is that the mouth is left in a most disagreeable condition because of the astringent and other properties of the drug employed, or probably pain is occasioned by plugging the cavity with absorbent cotton saturated with the styptic used. It is not an unusual thing for a patient to complain for hours afterwards because of the discomfort caused by the use of these drugs. It may be said that it is pure carelessness in the use of them that permits this, but I have seen such a result after the patient had passed through the hands of very careful men.

It is, indeed, a very exceptional case of hemorrhage that cannot be stopped with the mere use of a little bit of absorbent cotton employed in a mechanical sort of a way. In fact I have not yet had a case that was not stopped in less than three-quarters of an hour, usually in a few minutes.

By taking a small amount of cotton between the thumb and finger, then placing it over (not in) the bleeding cavity, then exerting a gentle pressure thereon (first, however, having removed all the external coagulated blood which usually gathers in a more or less stringy condition), and maintaining the pressure for from one to two minutes, then allowing the air—for air is almost an essential to coagulation—to reach the cavity for an instant, and then returning the pressure, repeating this until the cavity is filled with a natural coagulated mass, the desired end will be attained without the use of any drug whatever.

Or let us take the case of a sensitive palate, of which we wish