

The writers on the *electro-chemical action*, and all the other theories, having discovered the enemy, shouted—and how have they shouted, *an alarm!*—do not retire and arrange as practicable a specific defence as possible in the first place, and then, secondly, an attack against the encroaching foe, but are so entirely dismayed at their own discovery, which they so diligently impart, nevertheless, that confusion arose in the main body to which they belong. This, in its turn, panic-stricken as it were, immediately divides into factions of extremists. Thus, weathering the general defence—and we all know that a party divided in itself must fall—such appears to be the state of affairs amongst us since an eminent practitioner and others discovered the undermining enemy and retiring in dismay—returned, bearing their horns before the hitherto strength of dental practice, expecting the walls of the most progressive specialty of the century—walls founded in gold through educated ability—to crumble away as the walls of biblical history, in order to be built anew in plastic materials.

Those who run into one extreme are accountable for the folly of those who run into a contrary—so the printed words of Dr. Flagg, in vol. 20 of the *Dental Cosmos*, 1878, where he states in italics:—“I have not used one sheet of gold-foil for almost two years, and have sailed for the last seven months with ‘no gold used’ on my appointment cards”—is an extreme statement from a gentleman of his capacity and position, liable to have caused, and ‘to still cause, an indefinite amount of corruption in the core of our profession, particularly among younger members, who look up to and expect to learn maxims of wisdom from men of such experience.

We must always appreciate the electro-chemical theory, if only that it has drawn the attention and skill of the “gold-or-nothing” operator to the value of filling teeth with something other than gold. The relative work of the experiments made to demonstrate the electro-chemical theory is yet far from being open to objection. It may be conducive to dental science to experiment in the laboratory, but I do not think such experiments are conclusive, when we consider the innumerable changes in the fluids of a living organization, besides the changes in temperature in the oral cavity (F. 98°6' natural), which cannot be directly recognized in every case so as to diagnose the best practical result. I believe it impossible to obtain the same conditions out of the mouth as in it; the destructive agents used out of the mouth always affect the enamel