

would be no more than consistent for some of our disbelieving brethren to write an article to prove that both mercury and its compounds are inert. They would be at no loss for arguments stronger than those they are in the habit of using in discussing the "amalgam question." Why, a patient has taken over fifty drachms of calomel in less than so many hours "without the least sensible effect!" Take the position, and *stick* to it, that calomel never produces ptyalism. And if it should occur while the patient is taking the drug, be firm and *consistent*, by claiming that it was about to occur any way, and has resulted simply from "mechanical irritation."

Mr. W. G. Beers and the advocates of amalgam allude to an old compound used years ago, as if mercury had not the same effect upon the constitution now as it had years ago. They do not deny that there is mercury in the improved compound of amalgam now used, nor do they tell us in what the new improvement consists. We pause to know in what way their amalgam is improved? According to Dr. Watt, amalgams used to be made of mercury and silver; their use has long since become unpopular, and is regarded as a *black spot* on our professional escutcheon. They are simply rendered respectable and perfect now by the addition of another *base metal*.

Mr. W. G. Beers says:—"We might give up filling teeth altogether if we were to abstain from every material that may be abused. With equal propriety it might be urged against gold that because when highly oxydized it becomes a powerful medicinal agent, therefore it should not be used for filling teeth."

The weakness of such an argument needs no pointing out, for the objection to amalgam and the preference for gold are equally based on special causes. As long as I have been a member of the profession, I was not aware that pure gold would become highly oxydized when used as plugs in the teeth, or would have any medicinal effect on the constitution.

Gold is the best and most innocuous material that can be used for filling teeth, and as such was never known to have any deleterious effect upon the constitution. With mineral paste or amalgam how different! There are some constitutions so susceptible to the action of mercury that even one half-grain in a tooth will cause severe neuralgic pains, so that however carefully manipulated and vastly improved the amalgam now used may be, the effect is frequently such as to enforce the immediate removal of the poisonous compound from the mouth, which being done, all the unfavourable symptoms at once disappear. The difference is obvious, in the use of gold the patient does not incur any risk of injury.