

and dip the silver-pointed instrument into a quantity of quicksilver. The silver having an affinity for the mercury, a quantity will be taken up, adhering to the point which may be carried to the plug. There is a stronger affinity between the quicksilver and the amalgam than between the quicksilver and the instrument, and it will therefore immediately leave the instrument and unite with the plug. The quicksilver will reduce the hardest amalgam plugs to their original plastic condition in a few minutes, when they can be removed without trouble. Ten or a dozen plugs may be removed in this way in as many minutes, which otherwise would be a good half day's work. The operation may be facilitated by using considerable pressure in rubbing the mercury on the plugs with the instrument. I rub it on all the plugs, and then commence on the first one and cut into it with a strong excavator or sharp drill, and then add more mercury and pass on to the next plug, and so on excavating and adding more mercury till I have gone over all the plugs. In the absence of the proper instruments, a strip of thick silver plate, or a piece of silver wire fastened in any ordinary handle will answer as a substitute. Before dipping the point of the instrument in the mercury, it should be well scraped to remove any oxidation caused by the mercury at a previous time.—*Amer. Jour. Dent. Science.*

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