

seen more than a hundred of such fillings in all parts of the mouth put in by him, which had a record of over forty years ! As to gold, of which I am not writing, and which has its indispensable preference in so many cases, the record of soft foil is proportionately the same. With reference then to the material, I question if we are any better off to-day as to durability, even though we may be as to color.

2. *Manipulation.*—There was not much ceremony in the old days on this score. It was entirely guess work, and whether you put in too much mercury or not, the question was as to the quantity you squeezed out. My father believed it was a mistake to file or cut the alloy too fine, or work it too long, and he always finished the surfaces by rubbing in as much of the dry alloy as possible. We may get an ideal alloy, the physical properties of which may be destroyed by the manipulation, and it would be well if some one would institute a series of scientific experiments with various alloys to prove which is the best way of preserving these properties for our purpose.

3. *Margins.*—I sometimes think that it would be better for our patients if the dental engine had never been invented ; while oftener I feel that it is as good for them as for us that it was invented. The older dentists depended upon files and chisels to trim the margins of cavities, and excavators exclusively to get at places inaccessible to hand drills. To-day we can dispense with files ; and it may be that we are not as careful as our fathers were to do our work thoroughly, because we let the engine do a good deal that once our own hand did. It may be, too, that many dentists have not the perfect outfit for the engine which the depots are now able to supply, and having, perhaps, lost the art of using files, or perhaps not having the proper files on hand, we use neither the best of the old methods nor the best of the new.

4. *Fees.*—The older dentists lived calmer and cheaper. They made many of their own instruments, alloys, etc. They were not in such a rush. The patients, too, lived simpler lives, and used simpler food, and the homes of the farmers and the village people did not contain the many destructive constituents of diet which help to predispose the teeth to decay to-day. My father, for instance, got as good fees forty years ago as the average Vermont, Quebec, or Ontario village dentist gets to-day. The cost of materials were very much less ; the temptation to expenditure, professional and personal, were less than one-half ; the credit system was unknown, and was regarded as a sort of proposed burglary ; the dentist every week was able to pay for what he bought, and to lay aside his savings. Is it not true that in city, town and village the average dentist is to-day struggling for a bare existence, and that he is in debt, and is not saving money ? It