

when fastening cannot be obtained in any other way, and then using as large an one as possible.

Sharp angles are more liable to be broken than the round and broader form of fastening; thus the filling being loosened under pressure. Care is necessary to avoid wounding the pulp. Make the margins smooth with a fine corundum point or a stone, in the engine or by hand, to secure close adaptation of the filling. This may also close minute openings in the enamel which would take in by capillary attraction, such fluid substances as might cause renewal of decay. Carefully wipe out the cavity with cotton or spunk, to remove all particles which would prevent perfect adaptation. The alloy for amalgam should be such as will give hardness sufficient for the necessary pressure of mastication, non-shrinkage and retention of form in which it is made. It should also have edge strength. It is not the intention to discuss the composition of the various alloys and their relative merits. That would form material for a separate paper. The points I have mentioned are all that are absolutely indispensable.

The amalgam must not contain an excess of mercury, as that destroys the edge strength, and causes the filling to change its shape—approaching the spherical form, drawing away from the margins. All the mercury that is necessary is that quantity which will unite the particles together into a solid mass, without producing a soft surface when pressed into the cavity. There seems to be no fixed rule as to the proportions; some makers of alloys say, one of mercury to three of filings; others, one to six. Alloys containing tin in excess of silver require more mercury, and yet are more injured by an excess than those which have less tin and more silver. With such alloys, therefore, it is necessary to use more care in the mixing. Place a small quantity of mercury in the hand, or in a mortar, and add a little of the alloy; rub together until thoroughly united, then add more filings and rub again; continue thus until the mass works into a powder. Thus the point is secured at which it will unite under pressure in the cavity, and at which it makes the best filling.

Whether made into discs by the use of a condenser or not, is a matter of convenience. In some positions of the cavity, it may be most easily inserted in the form of discs, and in others in powder.

Dry the cavity, and wipe out with antiseptic—creosote, oil of