

fact that the Dental pulp is one among the most highly organized structures of our body, and responds to morbid influence through the medium of the most sensitive nerve of the entire nervous system. Besides the difficulties arising out of those conditions, it is enclosed within a wall of solid, unyielding bone, the resistance of which would prove quite an impediment to success, should the operation be performed in a rude, bungling manner, or at a time when inflammation was too great to admit of the probability of its being overcome in the natural way of vital resistance and recuperation. Viewing the subject in the light of other days, when the practice of capping an exposed nerve was in its incipiency, can we be surprised at the limited success met with and the meagre support it received at the hands of our profession then, when to-day, with a theoretical and practical experience of twenty or thirty years in advance, and many valuable improvements to render us assistance, we fail in not a few of such cases intrusted to our care. Indeed, quite a number of the profession have abandoned the operation to considerable extent, resorting to it only when the pulp presents unmistakable signs of freedom from morbid conditions, while upon the other hand a few have turned their attention to therapeutical treatment when necessary, and, judging from the amount of success obtained in a comparatively short time, we would at least consider the practice commendable and well worthy a thorough trial.

When the practice of capping, for the purpose of protecting an exposed pulp first began to attract attention, its enemies were numerous and for several years the reign of arsenic or its kindred preparations continued unabated, but now we may rejoice in the thought that this fell destroyer has seen its palmyest days, and the possibility of saving an exposed pulp, when there exists but little inflammation, is no longer a question at issue, the only question being one as regards the relative value of the materials in use and the most satisfactory mode of manipulating the same to secure the best possible results.

If I mistake not, capping an exposed nerve or pulp dates prior to the operation of destroying it, and the first material used was the charred surface of the pulp itself, the actual cautery being used to produce the char, and this broken down tissue left remaining as a shield or barrier between the living pulp beneath and external filling, as might be inferred from the rudeness of the means resorted to and the nature of the parts involved, its use was not long continued; but the ill-success of this first attempt to fill over an exposed pulp, in all