

### Choice of Material for Filling.

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This subject is one full of interest to the operator and importance to the patient. In considering the subject we must take it for granted that the patient has put himself into our hands for treatment: expecting the dentist to perform such operations as are necessary, with the greatest skill, and by the use of the best filling material.

In general practice our hands are often fettered by either the economy or choice of the patient, and to this we may attribute many failures in filling which might have been obviated had the choice of material been left to the superior knowledge of the dentist.

We have no filling material to which we can apply the name "Perfect," and, therefore, we must select from such as we have, the most suitable for any given case, or particular class of teeth, considering also the condition of the cavity to be filled.

To merit the name "Perfect," a filling material should be the same color as the tooth to be filled, a nonconductor of thermal changes, easy to introduce, easily adapted to the walls of the cavity, capable of resisting the dissolving power of the fluids of the mouth, capable of bearing the same amount of pressure as tooth tissue in the same position, should adhere tenaciously to the walls of the cavity and not shrink, should not be liable to cause any physical disturbance, and capable of taking a high polish.

In order to choose a filling material we must first ascertain the condition of the tooth to be filled, the position of the cavity, and conditions of the fluids of the mouth.

Teeth are either temporary or permanent, and all teeth of either sets may be included in two classes: 1st, hard, dense, or well calcified teeth; 2nd, soft teeth: which will include such as are deficient either in lime salts or animal matter. The deficiency in the latter class is due to causes which prevent the deposit of the required amount of inorganic matter in the teeth during their development, or its proper assimilation. These causes are various, the principal of which are disease, improper food, and hereditary