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FILLING: ITS SUCCESS AND FAILURE.*

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Our subject stands for about three-quarters of the field of dentistry as practised to-day. All other operations and services take up very little more than a fourth of the average dentist's time. Our consideration of "filling" must, on the whole, be quite general, and, at best, very incomplete.

There are some quiet, retiring dentists, having small practices, but who are capable and thorough operators, whose percentage of successful fillings may be greater than that of men prominent as dentists. The kind of work one does is a good recommendation, but circumstances, influence and business tact often do quite as much as one's work in procuring and sustaining patronage. Very successful men at times have severe failures, while highly successful and skilful work may come from the hands of a man considered an unsuccessful dentist.

Ideal fillings are very seldom inserted. No one substance or preparation has all the requisites necessary for an ideal material, which should have the following properties :

- (a) Plasticity for insertion.
- (b) Unchangeableness of form or bulk.
- (c) Sufficient hardness and edge-strength.
- (d) A poor conductor of thermal changes.
- (e) Insolubility in the fluids of the mouth.
- (f) Resemblance in shade of the natural teeth.

A material with this combination of qualities remains yet to be discovered.

* Read before Toronto Dental Society.