

filling teeth to prove it is abused. Doubtless, too much amalgam is used, but doubtless it is mostly the fault of the patient, who cannot, or will not, pay for gold, and dentists cannot afford to insert gold for the fun of the thing. The financial argument is unanswerable. If I had my way, for instance, I would rarely ever use vulcanite. As a non-conductor, and a fluid and odor absorber, it is the worst base we possess. It has many objections, like shoddy cloth and departmental millinery, but the financial argument appeals in the use of vulcanite as in that of amalgam.

If, however, it can be proved that amalgam and vulcanite are injurious, the financial argument must be abandoned, and we and the public must take the consequences. But we must have something more accurate in the way of "proof" against them than *ex parte* statements; the crazy heroics of "belligerent victims"; the conjectures and dreams, which prove nothing, and which admit nothing can be proved. It is a very serious assertion to make that we are imposing on the public. It is a very modest pretension, is it not? that the only non-poisoners in the profession are those who do not use amalgam. The author of the paper to which I refer, admits (to use his own words) that "to furnish any 'scientific proof,' in the ordinary sense of the phrase, of the injurious effects of amalgam fillings, is quite impossible; nor do we as dentists really need any such proof." In an erratic way, he rattles among the dry bones of the most absurd parallels, and reminds one of the nonsense talked by Christian Scientists and such cranks about "instinct," "deep-seated conviction," which are offered in lieu of experimental proof and deep-seated common-sense. To quote one of many specimens of his arguments: "The writer of this paper makes no claim of having scientifically *proved*, in the common acceptance of the phrase, that amalgam fillings are often a source of evil, or that the question is one that admits of such proof. He merely makes the claim of having *abundantly proved to his own satisfaction*, during the past seven or eight years, the fact that they very often are a source of harm—such proof resting, to a considerable extent, of course, upon what we have seen is necessary in any consideration of the question, to wit, the *conscious, personal experience* of others."

For unmitigated rot, I commend the above as a model. I do not think it necessary to follow the author and his satellites through the fogs of such pseudo-science and false logic. Were it not for the fact, that the "*conscious, personal*" susceptibility of the public is easily startled into serious alarm by the most nonsensical cry if it is sufficiently proclaimed, the theory would not be worthy of a drop of ink. All the ills of life, we are told by just such cranks, come from the use of meat, salt, pepper, tea, coffee, etc. A class of skeptics is bred, a prey to all sorts of fads and