

rubber may lead to a sort of poulticing of the surface on which it rests, but this is very far removed from mercurial poisoning.

With respect to amalgams, recent investigations show that under some circumstances copper amalgams do undergo disintegration in the mouth, and that free mercury may, in these circumstances, be detected on their wasting surfaces. It does not, however, follow that this free mercury is potent to do any harm; if it passed into the stomach it would probably pass through unaltered, or if acted upon by the acids of the gastric juice would merely amount to a dose or two of calomel distributed over years.

Ordinary amalgams, however, hold their mercury more closely, and do not part with any at ordinary temperatures; they are chemical compounds, though perhaps of a loose kind, and it is almost inconceivable that they can produce any effect, some funny experiments published in America some years ago notwithstanding, in which confinement with pieces of fresh amalgam is said to have been deleterious to the health of cockroaches. In Tomes' "Dental Surgery" there is also an American case quoted as having been set down to mercurial poisoning, which was, on the recorded symptoms, as clear a case of arsenical necrosis as was ever met with.

In England Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson entertains the view that amalgam fillings may, by setting up some form of irritation, be responsible for some cases of leucoplakia of the tongue; but the evidence in favor of this view is very small and it does not appear to have any other adherent, and if amalgam fillings were a cause of leucoplakia that disease would be much more common than it now is. It is equally common where there are no amalgam fillings in the mouth, and where the two do co-exist the distribution of the abnormal patches is not such as to support the idea of any relation of cause and effect. It is safe to say that there is no evidence on record which can for a moment satisfy the requirements of scientific accuracy that mischief has been traced to amalgams, and to borrow again from Tomes' "Dental Surgery," "with the advance of liberal education, which will ensure to the dentist some degree of acquaintance with collateral subjects, such as physics, chemistry and therapeutics, we shall hear no more of this bugbear."—*Editorial in Journal of British Dental Association.*

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THE DEATH OF MADAME BERTHAUX.—An interesting figure has passed away from the French dental profession in the person of Madame Berthaux, of Soisson, the wife of a dentist of that town. This lady was seventy-four years old, and had been practising dentistry for forty-five years, and as there were but few women in the profession at the commencement of her career, she may be said to be the *doyenne* of French women dentists.—*Jnl. Brit. Dent. Asso.*