

diseases, something analogous to amputating a finger for a wart. And it must be remembered that the names "Royal Mineral Succedaneum," &c., transcribed by Mr. Bowker, were only given to the old compounds, many of which contained copper, lead, bismuth and other alloys, and that these old compounds were decidedly "condemned" by all intelligent dentists, and are to-day. But when the material was improved, and brought to the pureness of the amalgams of the present time, many of the very leaders who opposed "Royal Mineral Succedaneum" approved of and used the improved compound.

We might give up filling teeth altogether if we were to abstain from every material that may be "abused." A dentist whose gold fillings are soft as cheese a month after insertion gives us clear demonstration either of his "unskillfulness, ignorance, or want of honesty;" and certainly any one who would put an amalgam into a tooth which had 64 parts of mercury to 36 of silver would be deserving of some much stronger epithet than "dishonest." The use of filthy amalgam is paralleled by the use of impure gold; slovenly manipulation with either material has the same results. Teeth are filled with gold and amalgam that should never be filled at all, but alveolar abscess resulting after the latter is traced by some to the material, when a worse case after the use of gold is diagnosed to causes distinct from it. There are certain conditions of dental caries where we can guarantee to produce periosteal disease by inserting a gold or any other filling; and amalgam, unfortunately for its reputation, is too often used as a *dernier resort* in teeth which should never be filled at all.

Before giving your readers brief extracts from the latest opinions of "high authorities" in Europe and America, I may venture to say, with the highest respect for the knowledge of those who are not dentists, and who have given opinions prejudicial to amalgam, that the opinions upon this subject of men of acknowledged ability and experience, who, besides being physicians and practical chemists, are eminent dentists, are worth something more upon the average, than the opinions of men who have not the same special life long experience with the pathology of the teeth. For over twenty-five years this subject has been before the dental profession; every day, we may say every hour, fresh opportunities appear for investigation: and the opinions of such investigators as those I will quote surely cannot be ignored.

No one in Europe has made more thorough and dispassionate investigations into this subject than the author of "Tomes' Dental Surgery," a name familiar to more than dentists. In the early editions of his "Surgery" he says he never saw a case of salivation, and did not believe