

mercurial poisoning, but it has turned out to be nothing more serious than simple inflammation of the periodontal membrane.

The third objection to the use of amalgam. If care is taken in the preparation and introduction of the filling I do not think we will be troubled much with the fillings contracting in the mouth. One great trouble is, we put too much mercury in our fillings. It is a well known law of fluids that they have a tendency to assume a spheroidal form and especially is this the case with mercury. Hence the benefit of using amalgam as dry as possible. This can be better accomplished by mixing in the hand than in a mortar. It should not be allowed to stand after it is mixed. Haste is an important principal in the introduction of amalgam fillings. Then we should burnish down with warm instruments and get rid of the excess of mercury on the top of the filling. I have no faith in the "wet pack." I think the drier we can get the cavity and keep it so the better. Then we should insist upon our patients coming in after the filling has got perfectly hard, and having the oxydized substance removed from the surface, and the filling well burnished down against the walls of the cavity.

As regards the use of instruments for the introduction of the amalgam every man will have to be a law unto himself, to a certain extent. Some like using the angular and some like using the round headed instruments. As for myself, I believe I can make good use of them both, and do not think I could dispense with either, very well. I do not think we can condense the amalgam with any thing so thoroughly as with the ball-headed burnisher but of course there are cavities which cannot be *all* filled with it. There is a tendency among dentists to rush to extremes. The truth usually lies between the two extremities. Let us then strive to strike the "happy medium" in this as well as other things.

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### FIRST OR SECOND BICUSPIDS?

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Some recent discussion has revived the question as to whether the first or second bicuspid should be extracted in the treatment of crowded teeth, where the extraction of one or the other is "fore-ordained."

It seems to me that here as everywhere in practice, extremes are dangerous; and after all is said and done, probably the extremists are more deserving of the name in their assertions than in their custom.