

to do so." Granted that it would be more desirable to have a state of things prevail where it would be unnecessary, the fact remains that prosthetic dentistry, to a perhaps increasingly large proportion of our people, is a necessity. I remember, in the graduating class of which I was a member, in our school of dentistry a young man of such aristocratic tendencies, that he declared that he was going to do a practice exclusively operative when he began. I have not followed the career of this young man closely through the years that have passed since, but I venture the opinion that he has since found it profitable to do a little prosthetic dentistry while he waited for the "select practice." I think that you will agree with me that there is a decadence in the prosthetic art, which is to be deplored. Perhaps it is due to the advent of vulcanite, which has to such an extent usurped the place of all other materials as a base. It would seem as though the skill necessary in the days of the gold plate, and the accompanying limited laboratory facilities, has departed, and the hand of the average dentist has lost its cunning.

Though vulcanite may be a blessing in the sense of being "the greatest good to the greatest number," yet it seems to be, in a certain degree, responsible for this state of affairs. Not that less skill, judgment or taste, may not be called into play in the making of the most ordinary denture, for the horrid examples of inartistic arrangement, selection and articulation of artificial teeth may be seen daily in our street cars and on our thoroughfares.

One factor that may help in bringing about this seeming lack of interest in prosthetics is that competition and quackery have been felt to a greater extent here than elsewhere. While it is rare, indeed, to see fees for filling advertised, on the other hand five dollar teeth are to be found advertised in almost every paper in the land. The people again are often less refined and companionable who require this class of service, and try the dentist's patience by "Jewing him down," if possible; but surely our best should be done for all for whom we agree to work. Certainly, to a greater or less extent in all our practices, the replacement of lost dental organs is a necessity, and personal as well as professional pride should demand for this work our best endeavor.

During the period of our student life spent with a preceptor, necessarily the first work given to a green student is in the laboratory, and he naturally, after a time, looks on his duties in the laboratory as "freshman work." Later in life he will discover that there are difficulties to be met in making a simple vulcanite plate which will tax the patience and experience of the veteran. Who of us will not confess that there are cases where the getting a correct articulation or fitting a plate to a flat upper, or a ridgeless lower will call into play every whit of patience and skill we possess?