

Our Laboratories.

By "PHINEAS."

What a rare thing it is to find a dentist who is proud of his laboratory. To the average practitioner the name suggests a small, close room, furnished with a work-bench, lathe, and vulcanizer, and presenting three or four shelves filled with such boxes, bottles, plaster casts, scrapers, files and other instruments, as are not lying on the bench. Should a visitor or patient find his way into this apartment, an apology is made for its appearance, and the dentist mentally resolves to have everything in apple-pie order before any one else comes in—but he won't. Some men are naturally systematic and orderly, others have become so as the result of long and careful training, but the average man rather enjoys disorder, and while, as a matter of business, his reception and operating rooms may be so carefully kept as not to offend the most fastidious taste, he gets even by allowing the laboratory to take care of itself. It is not my intention, however, to justify such a mode of procedure, but to make a few suggestions, which may be of some value to those who are trying to make the laboratory what it should be—a workroom adapted to and arranged for the work of prosthetic dentistry.

In the first place, the laboratory should be well lighted, with the bench in front of a window. It is difficult to work by a side light, and still more so by a light from behind. Many operations in the laboratory need to be watched very closely, and to avoid straining the eyes everything should be done in the best available light. The bench should be just high enough to allow the dentist to sit comfortably while at work, and should have a lathe permanently attached to it. It should contain a drawer for gold and another for rubber work, to which others may be added if there is sufficient room. Wherever gas is available a pipe should be run along the whole length of this bench with four taps. To one of these attach a bracket for lighting purposes, with joints to permit of movement in every direction. Have rubber tubing attached to the others and arrange one for waxing up, one for heating water, and one for vulcanizing. For waxing up use an ordinary Bunsen burner with