PATRIOTIC ASPECT OF ORAL HYGIENE.

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PATRIOTISM prompts the individual to demonstrate love for country by living and doing those things which will develop and maintain to the maximum degree, their physical strength and vital force, in order that their efficiency may be brought to and sustained to the highest possible standard.

That spirit which inspires and carries one to this normal plane of true Americanism can be relied upon to make sacrifices, should the need arise.

A purely self-interest should prompt every one to comply with this simple and partial definition of that greatly abused word Patriotism, but we all know that is not the case.

We will assume that all appreciate the importance of a healthy body and sound mind as a right and necessary basis for efficiency; that efficiency is a pre-requisite for any patriotic service. Let us briefly note some of the conditions that obtain in this country which may be aptly styled "prevailing conditions," in order to better appreciate just how far we are, as a nation, from that standard of living from which springs the true—the real patriotism.

We are told that no nation is so blest with such a diversity of natural resources as ours; no country so rich in everything needful for the comfort and well-being of its people. There are no marked adverse climatic or other conditions that seriously affect the general health of the people, yet what do we find; what is the physical, the health condition?

When dealing with well known and apparent truths it is quite unnecessary to resort to statistics so I will but generalize upon these conditions.

We know from authentic sources that we are a people of such low vitality; so great a number afflicted with one or more of the entire repertoire of maladies that quite often we hear our nation referred to as a nation of semi-invalids.

Indeed, it is a safe assertion that 90% of our people; men, women and children—must, or do have recourse to one of the many healing arts at some time during every year of their lives. But we have grown into this condition so gradually that we accept it as a necessary part of our so-called civilization.

If a farmer's stock required treatments for physical ailments as often as do the members of his family he would become alarmed and would diligently seek out the cause and take immediate steps to correct it. The illness of his family causes little concern until the danger point is reached. Why this difference? Custom!

We can become accustomed to anything and take it as a matter of course, regardless of whether or not it is helpful, as is evidenced all about us. Read statistics from various Boards of Health; School Authorities and Oral Hygienists, working in our schools. Compare the social life of our young people with that of twenty years ago, and study the trend of the times.

All branches of the various healing arts with their many departments of intensive specialized study and re-

search; wonderful and mighty in good results to humanity,—have failed to keep pace with the ravages of abnormal conditions that produce disease, as is evidenced by abundant statistics from Life Insurance Companies; Government and other sources of information.

To question the efficacy of modern methods of preventing, combating and healing disease is to declare ignorance of what is being accomplished.

Logically then, this brings us back to the premise that there is an agency, most potent, which is undermining the physical foundation of the people of our nation.

This agency is complex in the extreme, one phase dove tailed into another; all cooperating in the physical deterioration, carrying with it a moral and social unrest to such a degree that our leading sociologists and biologists view with uneasiness the trend of the times.

Indeed, these conditions are apparent to all thinking men. The real patriotic; the man whose love of country is more than a superficial emotionalism must view these changing conditions with deep concern, for they are not conducive to contentment, health, happiness and national greatness.

While we viewed these changing social conditions with many misgivings before we became involved in this great world-war, we now view them with growing alarm, for the spirit of real patriotism does not spring from a people whose daily life must be continually stimulated by excitement and questionable amusement, and whose physical strength and vitality is on the decline. History is of value to us only in so far as we profit by its teachings.

It is not within the province of your essayist to analyze these conditions or to offer a remedy for any other than that which touches the physical health in this complex problem and in this regard only in so far as that which logically comes before the dentist, except to emphasize this truth; that this low state of national health is the basic cause of

this social unrest with its long train of evil.

As a result of the labors of scientific men in various lines of research work we now know that the unclean and diseased mouth and teeth are largely responsible for much of the general ill-health, therefore we may justly say that this is the basic cause of much of this low state of vitality and social unrest.

This places upon the Dental profession a responsibility that can hardly be exaggerated, much less, appreciated by the rank and file of our profession.

We sometimes wonder if dentists realize their unusual opportunity for the study of people and the problems of life; opportunities that others do not have to the same degree.

The Minister sees his parishioners at their best; when they are prepared for inspection; the lawyer sees the sordid, the destructive emotions of society; the Physician sees them when they are ill or mentally disturbed, but the dentist sees them day after day, just as they are. His education, from the beginning of his college life to the present, prompts him to study not only types of features and temperaments, but with it the real inner self.

Knowing these social problems, the cause of which is largely a lack of health, we are impressed with the wonderful and far reaching influence for good which would accrue if all dentists would take advantage of their opportunities and see to it that all patients understand the reasons why they should follow oral hygiene instructions.

Is it not reasonable to say that each dentist could influence for physical improvement, at least one hundred patients each year? There are about 20,000 members of this association. This means that more than two million of our citizens would receive helpful counsel that would not only greatly help them but would help others of their households.

In all seriousness I ask, "Is not this true patriotism? Is not this doing one's

bit?" "But," you say, "we cannot afford to take the time to talk to all of our patients, we must work fast and keep at it. Our sole income is limited by our personal work at the chair."

That we must work fast and keep at it is true, and pity 'tis—'tis true; because of the average fee paid for dental service.

The true financial condition of the average dentist is not fully appreciated by many, who, by virtue of special training and other advantages not enjoyed by the rank and file, are not in a position to know. The only way to understand the conditions and problems of the great army of dentists throuth the nation is to strike an average.

Thru a reliable source of information we learn that the net earnings of the average dentist in twelve of the central States is a little less than \$110 per month, for the twelve months.

Doubtless some of you will say, "this is his own fault, if he does not charge enough to make a just and reasonable salary. He should charge more." Of course he should, but he does not. And, the people are the greatest sufferers because of this.

Remember we are dealing with existing conditions and trying hard to find a remedy that is practical; that will actually bring results to the laity.

For years some of our leading men have been preaching larger fees; our journals have published much on this subject, and some good accomplished, but the conditions we are talking about and trying to correct, *still exist*. Therefore it is time to change the medicine, or at least apply the remedy in a different form. Some method must be found whereby the dentists of America will take the necessary time and conscientious effort to perform every operation as well as they know how. Anything short of this is not professional service. It is a "price for a job," not a fee for professional service. It is up to the dental profession to adopt some method whereby

professional service will supplant the other kind.

For one patient it will require but twenty minutes to clean their teeth; another, two hours. The roots of one tooth may be properly filled in a half-hour; another, two hours or more. A compound cavity in a molar may be scientifically prepared in 45 minutes, another compound cavity, prepared by the same man, may require more than an hour. One molar may be properly prepared for a crown in 30 minutes, while another may require an hour.

And so on thru the list of all operations. Can there be a fixed fee for all operations which will be just to both patient and operator? If a patient needs instruction on how and why to care for their teeth should not the dentist receive a fee for this? If not, why discriminate in favor of the Physician?

Manifestly, the only fair fee basis for nearly all, if not all dental operations, is on a time basis. This change to a time basis for fees can not, or will not become the custom; regardless of its merits, *unless there be concerted action*.

What agency could be more positively helpful in bringing about this change than for the National Dental Association to go on record as favoring this plan? The movement will then be sanctioned by the parent body of all dental organizations and will greatly aid the various State, District and County Societies to adopt this much needed reform.

If, thru the various agencies by which the individual is reached, this plan can be made popular, so that it becomes the custom, we will have accomplished a distinct and far-reaching service to the people of this Nation, for this is but a means to an end, and the end is,—SERVICE TO MANKIND.

TO RECAPITULATE.

There is a steady retrogression of the people of America, physically, morally and socially.

That the moral and social unrest is largely due to ill-health.

A definite and positive knowledge that this ill health is, to a great degree, due to and is a result of, the diseased teeth and mouth.

That the character of dental service thruout the Nation is not up to the standard it should be in order that the Dental profession may contribute its full share in combating disease.

That this high standard will not obtain until the dentists of America receive a just compensation for their professional services.

That other methods having been tried and found wanting; the logical remedy is,—a nation-wide adoption of a time basis for fees.

As we study this problem, following the logical leads, we see that it is a social problem in its largest sense, involving the basic principles of the philosophy of life, including the philosophy of the Utilitarian and the Altruist, therefore it involves National greatness and true patriotism. My earnest plea is for higher standard of health for the American people, for I repeat, this is the logical basis upon which is builded the super-structure of happiness, efficiency and patriotism.

While it is true we can not insure, govern or control the health of even our patients, it is possible for the dentists of our Nation to exert a most potent influence for health far above the present standard.

This improved health standard will be the main-spring that will put into action and make stick the good resolutions that an all-wise Creator planted within the breast of us all; resolutions that are honestly made, but too often are "honored in the breach rather than the observance."

Never before in the history of America have the social customs reached such a state that produced so persistent a moral conflict within the consciousness of the race; a conflict between inclination for exciting pleasures that tend to undermine studious habits; make negative the

wholesome influence of the home and creating a spirit of selfishness, and;—that good, cool judgment we call conscience.

That the enemy is a well trained, seasoned regiment is shown by its frequent charge and successful onslaught over our entrenchments of good resolutions which we believed at the time of the resolve to be impregnable. Each successful attack has not only encouraged the enemy but has weakened our defenses until in many instances we have gone down in utter defeat.

If this is true with the average individual, it means that it is a National condition, and as such will require vigorous and concerted action on the part of the entire branch of our army to do our full duty as becomes an organized body of patriotic men.

DISCUSSION.

B. S. Hert, of Rochester, N. Y.

I think in the general turmoil that exists thruout the country, like Dr. Mitchell, probably no one is giving quite the preparation and care to his paper that he otherwise would.

Dr. Mitchell has selected a very timely subject in "Oral Hygiene" in its relation to patriotism. That oral hygiene may influence an individual's patriotism is probably true; but to what extent it does, either individually or collectively, is still problematical, as there are so many influences operating to produce this condition, that it is difficult to give to each its correct proportion of effect. Patriotism is a state or condition of the mind, and may be likened to religion and the sincerity of the person claiming to be either patriotic or religious can justly and more correctly be judged by his actions than by his professions. True patriotism constrains a person to become efficient, because unless efficient it would be impossible for him to do his best for his country. Efficiency depends in a large measure on one's physical condition, and no intelligent person now questions

the influence a healthy mouth has on the well-being of a person, and therefore on his efficiency. However, that many of our citizens are patriotic in spite of diseased mouth conditions, is evidenced by the fact that so many of our men who volunteered for military service had mouth conditions which prevented their being accepted, and many who were accepted had unhealthy mouth conditions corrected before they could enter the service. In Canada one-twentieth of the population volunteered, while England had millions of volunteers, and we have no reason to suppose that the average mouth conditions were any better in those countries than in ours. This proves that much and true patriotism exists in spite of the general unhygienic mouth conditions. The essayist states that the people of this country have very low vitality; that the general health is poor, and that these unfortunate conditions are waxing rather than waning; but unfortunately gives no statistics to compare the present with the past in this country, or our country with any other country or countries. In speaking to insurance men, physicians and others, our Health Officer in Rochester among them, we find that in their opinion the physical, mental and moral condition of the people of this country is amending, not deteriorating; that the social and probably moral unrest are due to the desire of the people for better things and efforts to obtain them, rather than to ill-health. In support of this, I will read a letter received from Dr. G. W. Goler, Health Officer of Rochester, who writes as follows:

"I have the statement from the paper which you are to discuss. Of course, as I said to you over the telephone, I entirely disagree with it.

People are better physically. The duration of life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was from 18 to 22 years in England. It is now over 40 years. The average duration of life in Rochester in 1891 was 34½ years. In

1915 it was 43.9—an increase of 9.4 years, and with the increased population, this means an aggregate saving of 2,350,000 more years of human life in Rochester alone.

If you will get MacKenzie's book on the Nineteenth Century, and read the chapter on "Social Unrest," I think you will get enough information to be able to successfully refute the statement made in the enclosed extract."

Also an address by Mr. E. E. Rittenhouse, president of the "Life Extension Institute," given at a meeting of the Association of Life Insurance Presidents," in which he stated that the average of human life is lengthening, due mainly to preventive measures in the control of germ diseases, and has been gained in the first half of life; but it is during the first half only that a man can enter the military service and show his patriotism in that manner, and it is during this period that the improvement in health has been achieved.

In the book "The Nineteenth Century," mentioned in Dr. Goler's letter, there is evidence that the social unrest has been in existence for many years, and particularly since the French Revolution. The idea of equality, that all persons should be free and equal, was largely inspired in France by the success of the American Revolution, and encouraged by the French soldiers who returned to that country after aiding us in our war of freedom from Great Britain; and the French Revolution, with its sequelae, in turn created to a greater or less extent knowledge of, and a desire for self-government in the minds of all the people of Europe; and this, with the hardships suffered by the poor, created for years much greater unrest than we have at present. It thus seems to me that the physical, moral and social retrogression that Dr. Mitchell claims is present in this country, does not exist, but that the people are gradually improving in these qualities, and the unrest that does exist is not mainly due to ill health, but to

other causes. From what has just been said, it can be seen that I believe that Dr. Mitchell started with a false premise and if so, any deductions depending on it must necessarily be faulty.

When in the latter part of his paper, however, he endeavors to impress on the dental profession the importance of its work, its value to humanity, and a method whereby that value can be increased, we can only give to it our heartiest approval.

The assertion that time should be the main basis for our fees, and usually the only one, is true. That it is most satisfactory, I can testify from experience, as the method was adopted by me many years ago. It is much fairer to the dentist, and more just as between patients, each one being charged only for that which he individually receives, and also, the patients can easily understand it. Any instructions relative to the care of the teeth should be charged for just as any other dental service, and can be on the time basis. While it is much the best method of charging, many dentists have not adopted it, and more education as to its merits must be carried on. The plan proposed in the paper, that the National Dental Association go on record as favoring the plan, would be of value, and of material assistance in promoting it. Other agencies that could be employed to further this end, are papers before smaller societies, personal missionary efforts, instruction in dental colleges, etc.

That this method of determining the fee, if adopted, will elevate the standard of dentistry, is doubtless true; but we must guard ourselves from expecting too much from it. It is not a panacea for all our dental ills, but will be a material help to some of them, and is a step, forward. However, it seems to me that more important even than the fee question is the need of creating or increasing in the minds of dentists the moral responsibility of doing their best for every one in their care. Let there be instilled

into every dentist the spirit of true ethics, the desire to do right in all his dealings with his fellow-men, and to the extent that this feeling is possessed by dentists, will our profession be elevated, and our calling ennobled.

George F. Burke, of Detroit, Mich.

In all civilized countries, American dentistry is looked up to as having attained the highest standard. Abundant proof of this is shown in the fact that foreign countries send their students, in large numbers, to the American dental schools to be educated while our own students remain at home for their education. The problem of maintaining or improving this standard will not be solved merely by the profession going on a time basis for fees; but it is rather a question of education which should be worked out thru the medium of dental societies, study clubs, and post-graduate schools. Proficiency in dental practice, as in the other professions, is justly rewarded.

This is not a nation of semi-invalids, for previous to the present war, this country had a lower death rate than any of the larger nations. Germany was second, but some distance behind this country. Relative to "ninety per cent of the people having recourse to one of the many healing arts annually"—it is true that many people consult their physicians on the slightest pretext, such as a headache, backache, or cold; but is it wise to condemn this practice in its entirety? It appears to me to show a desire, at least on the part of many, to have an early diagnosis of their ailments.

Our people are not going backward physically, morally and socially. Do not the successful campaigns carried on for improved sanitation, outdoor sleeping, clean alleys, better housing, a living wage, and against vice and alcoholism, indicate a better order of things to the essayist? They show that the world is getting to be a better place in which to live. Observe the efforts of the govern-

ment to do away with vice and alcohol in the neighborhood of the cantonments recently established. Typhoid fever, at one time one of the greatest curses of the army, is now practically extinct in this branch of the service. During the period of the Spanish-American War, the government's oral hygiene activities were practically nil. Compare this with conditions in the present war, where dentists are assigned to both the Army and the Navy, and each enlisted man is given a tooth brush, and where a system is adopted whereby its proper use is insured. We are not going backward; we are improving.

Feeble, ill-directed, desultory efforts will not produce results when it comes to making an appeal to tax payers for funds to carry on school dental hygiene work. There is a genuine need for a thoro understanding of the subject in its broader aspects. Have all the facts at your tongue's end, and make sure of the sincere cooperation of your Board thru which you intend to work. Enlist the support of your local papers, and support them with a signed petition of your tax payers. Unless one is willing and prepared to make a vigorous fight, you may lose; but in case you do, do not consider the time and funds used for this educational work as totally lost, because it has educated some, and consequently will make it easier for you and others to succeed in the future.

Those who plead for universal oral hygiene are not preaching an old doctrine. The great majority of the people know very little about it. To tell the truth, they have presented to them so many new preachments, that it is hard to understand them all. The visiting nurse with her pleas for open windows, ventilation, cleanliness and the rest, with the babies' milk fund associations, with their detailed instructions for keeping the infant's milk cool and clean, and himself comfortable during the hot summer days; the health and hygiene committees with their new ideas for the care of garbage;

the civic improvement bodies showing how to convert a filthy alley into a vine-bordered lane; the juvenile courts auxiliaries, eloquently pleading for greater vigilance over the boy and girl—and a dozen others.

With so many new things up for consideration, and always with us the indifference and apathy of the people, how could you expect ardent espousal of this cause on the part of its public servants in the Board of Health and Board of Education, or a lively response from the aldermen for appropriation for this work from out of the public funds?

There is much criticism in our day of the press, just as there is of the pulpit; but we feel sure that there is no power so overwhelming, so far-reaching, so swift and penetrating, as this power of the press. The papers reach all the people all the time. This, too, I have discovered in my experience: if the mother in the home is indifferent, because overburdened; if the father is indifferent because naturally reactionary; if the well-to-do are indifferent because untouched by the needs of those less fortunate; and if the political boards are indifferent because of the indifference of all these others—there is one who, by the very nature of his profession cannot afford to be indifferent. He is the newspaper man. To the newspaper cannot be given too large a share of the credit for the success of our movement in Detroit.

Intelligent and sympathetic reports of the efforts being made by some of the dentists to save the children in this regard, were given to the news columns, interviews on the needs and best methods of meeting them were used, editorials setting forth the meaning of this special phase of the big humanitarian impulse were printed in all the papers. No other means of education; of spreading the news, goes so far or so swiftly as this. No influence for conquering indifference, especially on the part of politicians is half as powerful. There is no ally so

powerful as the newspaper; and for the encouragement of those who have been disheartened by the slow progress of this great work, I wish to point to the increasing number of articles appearing in the various papers.

It was with the hope of bettering the dental conditions of all classes of school children that Detroit adopted its present method of caring for their dental ailments. One very noticeable feature of our work is the added knowledge which parents have in regard to the first permanent molars. To this pardonable lack of knowledge on the part of parents is due, I believe to a very great extent, much of dental suffering; and had dental hygiene accomplished no other results, this would make it a success for, thru it, parents and children are being educated to the value of the first permanent molar.

Not alone have these children been benefited because of dental treatment; they have been taught the value of clean, well-cared-for teeth. Missing incisor teeth, green stains and toothache are not so common in Detroit, and the children are taking greater pride in their personal appearance. In addition to the inspection which is carried on in both the public and parochial schools, clinics care for the operative work among those children not able to pay, and illustrated talks are given both in the primary and grammar grades.

A very potent influence for inducing children to take better care of their teeth is a system of grading or marking the children in Oral Hygiene on their monthly report cards. Each child is marked "S" for satisfactory, or "U" for unsatisfactory, from report cards kept on file in the school room, showing results of dental examination. From these cards the oral condition is marked "S" or "U" on the monthly report card which goes to the home for the signature of parents or guardian.

For a child to bring a report card home showing Oral Hygiene marked

"U," seems to injure the pride of not alone the child, but the parents, resulting in a desire to improve the oral condition so that the "U" may be changed to an "S." For parents to send their children to school with foul, ill-smelling mouths and teeth to poison an atmosphere which others must breathe in common, is not fair to the other children; therefore it is well that thru the medium of this system of marking, the facts can be made known, so that the oral conditions can be improved.

An orthodontic clinic located in the main building of the Detroit Board of Health is doing a splendid service in the treatment of some of the worst cases of mal-occlusion of the teeth among poor children. Patients are selected from those presenting the most severe cases, and extremely satisfactory results are being obtained by bringing the teeth into normal occlusion, in many instances, changing the entire facial expression. Grateful parents are deeply appreciative of this service. Only little less of a menace to the growing child than the diseased unclean mouth are those frightful mal-occlusions which not only make thoro mastication of the food impossible, but so distort the features of the child as to make it conscious of the disfigurement.

No account of the progress of Oral Hygiene in Detroit would be half adequate without reference to Dr. Charles H. Oakman, a man of breadth and sympathy, who has expended much energy in securing appropriations. Dr. Charles E. Chadsey, Superintendent of Public Schools, has on more than one occasion raised his voice in behalf of the toothbrush and systematic dental inspection. Dr. W. A. Giffen and Dr. Frank C. Neinas have contributed generously to the progress of this work locally, and the entire profession has shown a splendid interest in the entire movement.

Oklahoma, the home of our essayist, is a state to which the dental profession owes much, for it has shown us the best

method of holding a State meeting. It has done much more, it seems to me, for it has given to one of its citizens a most ingenious name, "Catch-em-Alive Jack Abernathy." This gentleman has established the reputation of taking much of his game alive, while on his hunting trips; therefore he has been given this most remarkable name. Other names that convey ideas are "Swat the Fly," "Sunkist" and "Rough on Rats"—such terms have a meaning. This is not so with "Oral Hygiene" and "Prophylaxis"—at least these terms mean nothing to such a crowd as you would find at a big circus; and yet these are the people who we should be the most anxious to reach, for they need this information the most. Yet in making an appeal to them, we select a name for our propaganda that "goes over their heads." What this work needs is a good name—one that grips, takes hold, so that it carries a message.

An editor of a commercial dental journal recently suggested that the technic of brushing the teeth should be systematized. He is right, as far as he went; but he should have added flossing. The dental profession would do well to decide, thru a representative committee—at least one member of which is a well-known histologist, and also a pathologist—what the best method is of caring for the teeth. Funds should be provided to put before the profession the results of their findings. This would not only be of the greatest value to those who now give some attention to this matter, but in educational work it would help, for the reason that those learning these lessons for the first time would be less confused.

The whole work of conducting oral hygiene propaganda in the schools should be standardized, not alone for the reason that it will bring it up to a higher plane of efficiency, but it will greatly aid those who are about to start this work in those communities where it is new.

I take second place to no person in my admiration for this work, and in order to emphasize its importance, the senior students of every dental college should be required to prepare a thesis on the subject of oral hygiene.

School dental hygiene will not only relieve much unnecessary suffering, but it will save thousands of lives. Such philanthropists as Fcrsythe and Eastman should be the recipients of the highest honors from the dental profession, for their contributions to this cause have given a tremendous impetus to this work, which is doing for dentistry what preventive medicine has done for that profession—put it on a higher and more useful plane.

John F. Stephan, of Cleveland, O.

I was very glad to accept the invitation to discuss Dr. Mitchell's paper. Unfortunately, not thru any negligence of his, it only reached me this morning. I feel very much that discussions in topics of this character should be eliminated, and we should have more papers. We have just listened to a discussion which I should consider a very able paper, and it would bear out my contention that extemporaneous discussions are almost always irrelevant, and a waste of time.

Altho I can hardly do justice to Lieut. Mitchell's effort, I shall present to you a few of my thoughts. The essayist has taken one aspect of the subject, which I think is a very nice one. I think there is one side of the patriotic aspect that we should bear in mind, and that is our attitude toward oral hygiene as it benefits our people, and thru our people the nation—that we should produce able citizens that they may be able defenders of our government. Patriotism to me means that element which makes men sacrifice for the maintenance of their government and their home, that they may defend it as well as maintain it. In so doing they must have a sufficiently strong physique, and by that we mean

also a strong mind, that they may do the work that may be required of them.

If we, as a nation, are working upon our nerve—that is to say, at high tension—our nervous force is dissipated, and that is one of the undermining elements of American life. Our energy is depleted, as Dr. Crile has shown, the nerve cells being destroyed, and the nucleus exposed, and we are not able to get back into as good a condition as we would if we were to spend more time in maintaining health and those elements which make up personal hygiene—and whether it is the first element or the last element, the hygiene of the mouth.

It has been well demonstrated during the last few years, that the hygiene of the mouth is one of the most important, if not *the* most important question before us as a people today. Rosenow's paper read yesterday at the opening session showed that most conclusively. Therefore the work we, as dentists, have to do in maintaining the health of our people, and thereby their ability to defend the nation and their homes, is a most patriotic work. We should sacrifice everything to put our young men into good condition, just as the agriculturist will sacrifice everything to produce good seed to propagate good fruit afterwards. We cannot produce good seed if we neglect these dental matters, and that is our work in life.

The patriotic aspect of oral hygiene therefore is exemplified not only in the sacrifice the soldier makes—that is, the man in the Dental Reserve Corps—but also in the sacrifice a man makes in his daily practice in preparing the children and the younger men for life's battle. Life's battle means not only the battle at the front, but in civil life as well, because there are as many sacrifices there as in military life. Oral hygiene in putting the mouths of the soldiers into the best possible condition, so they may meet all of the hardships put before them, is a patriotic duty.

I feel that the hourly charge is really

not the crucial test. I feel that conscience should be back of all of our fees, and I like to think that every operation we perform, irrespective of time or remuneration, should be done the best it is possible for us to produce, because of our training and skill.

In my own practice, I have felt the greatest remuneration has come sometimes in cases where I received no actual monetary consideration, altho eventually they may have brought me greater compensation. I heard of a case of mine recently wherefrom, during a period of years, probably ten, I have been reaping a financial benefit of which I knew nothing. I was interested in the loyalty of a family that were willing to pay me any figure I might ask. They had sent one of their servants to me, that I might put her in good condition until she might return East to the dentist in her home and be cared for. I did this and said: "This will tide you over until the time you reach your dentist and can be further cared for." When she reached her own home, and visited her dentist, the dentist said to her: "If this man calls this temporary work, it is much better than many men would do for permanent work that they would expect to last."

The servant reported this to her mistress, who said: "If that man will produce for my servant work of that character, his work is good enough for me and my family." That family is unshaken in its loyalty. If that is not remuneration in dollars and cents, then I cannot appreciate it.

I do not believe the surgeon charges by the hour. We would not charge as much for removing an appendix as for an operation upon the heart or the brain, altho the time might be the same. We are not selling time, but selling skill to our patients, and we must do it so conscientiously that we ourselves are satisfied, and if we are satisfied, that should satisfy our patients, because it is the best we can do, and if we constantly do our best in all walks of

life, we need not worry about the compensation, because that will surely come. It will not fail. If we are as conscientious in taking care of the soldiers who come to us—soldiers in civil life as well as military life, and put them into condition to fight the battles of life, we will be fulfilling the patriotic aspect of oral hygiene.

L. G. Mitchell: I think Dr. Stephan has justly stated in his remarks that one should not discuss a paper extemporaneously, because if it is going to be published and go into the journals to be sent all over the nation, it should have careful thought and preparation.

He has taken the personal viewpoint; but if we are going to handle these things helpfully, we must strike an average. We cannot look at it from the personal ideal.

His illustrations and descriptions were from the high moral plane of the real professional man, but that is not the plane we are dealing with. We are trying to serve humanity all over the country, therefore we must have as the basis for our consideration, the *average* dentist. Dr. Stephan is conserving humanity professionally and doing his full duty as a professional man, but we are trying to reach the great mass of men thruout the nation, and to do this we must strike an average, and the average dentist is not up to the standard of the professional dentist he should be. I do not like to say this, but when we know that less than 10% of the operations we see in the average mouth are conserving the tissues, and the balance will produce pathological conditions, what shall we do?

We must try to apply some remedy that has not yet been tried. The efforts we have been making have produced results—yes; but the results are so far from what they should be, we feel we should turn to some other method.

The argument used pertaining to the fee question, as compared with the phy-

sician's fee, I think is hardly germane. Take, for instance, root canal operations. Sometimes we must put in four hours' work on properly preparing, cleaning and filling the canals of one tooth. If the dentist says to 'his patient: "This will cost you \$3.00 or even \$5.00," he is working at a dead loss. It is not only the high professional man, but also the average man who *wants* to do what is right; but he is human, and what is the natural thing for him to do, when he is putting in four hours' work and is accepting a fee of about \$5.00 for it. He is getting less compensation in net profit than the man who works out on the street. The natural thing is a tendency to slight the work.

The other day, at the camp, a dentist had prepared and filled a root for a soldier. It was then ready for the permanent filling, and the next sitting he chanced to come to me. I ran a broach clear down to the apex. Had I inserted an amalgam filling over that imperfect canal work what would have been the result? A blind abscess with systemic disturbances; probably putting that soldier in the hospital, and perhaps a larger pension bill for the government to pay later on. We have tried for years, this thing of appealing to the dentist in various ways;—at meetings and in journals—appealing to the dentist's honor as professional men but where are the results? It seems to me it is high time to change the remedy as I have mentioned in my paper, or apply it in some other way. If that man knows he gets even \$3.00 an hour for that work he knows his compensation is at least that much for that difficult root canal work. There is no inducement for him to hurry thru with it. I believe it is the best plan we can use for correcting these errors in our profession. Its good influence upon society will be far reaching. If there is a better plan let's have it. But some method should be applied that will bring better results than we have had in the past.