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**A**S PRESIDENT of this Association, it is my happy privilege to address this august body which represents the highest ideals of our profession; and as a citizen of New Orleans, to add my welcome on the occasion of your visit to our beautiful Crescent City. I believe that our open hearts and glad hands have made it plain to you all that you are thrice welcome.

Before entering upon the field of discussion which offers important problems for our careful and wise solution, I must not permit the small part that I played as one of its members, to restrain me, thru false modesty, from offering to the Dental Corps of the United States Army, and Navy, for the great work it has achieved during the late war, the sincere tribute and solemn homage of our respect and gratitude.

The rapidity with which the Dental Corps was organized and set into efficient activity, the tremendous amount of work done in a surprisingly short space of time amidst a thousand vicissitudes and perplexing problems, justly has won for it the praise and admiration of the Government officials.

Hence, the Dental Profession as a whole should, and does, feel proud of the work done and the record achieved by those who were fortunate enough to be called into the service of our Country; and it recognizes and keenly appreciates

the lustre and glory brought to the profession thru their earnest and zealous efforts.

Particularly were we fortunate to have had at the head of the Dental Service a man with extraordinary genius for organization, with lofty ideals and practical, efficient methods; a man whose broad mind and noble heart could blend the highest conceptions of his profession with the staunchest patriotism, my predecessor in office, Col. W. H. G. Logan. It was thru his untiring efforts and efficient planning over here and the energy and determination of Col. Robt. Oliver over there on the field of action, coupled with the never-questioning spirit of the entire corps to cooperate with them, that this magnificent result was brought about.

But, while praising the Army Dentists, we must not forget the patriotic efforts so generously put forth by our brother dentists who, not finding it possible to go into service, gave their time and skill gratuitously to the care and treatment of the men who were called into the National Army. These hidden heroes have added no small share to the proud distinction which is ours today, and we take this occasion to publicly recognize their devotion.

Now to return to the field before us. At the outset we have forced upon our attention the fact that the public life of

America and our profession are becoming day by day more intimately entwined. We are realizing more keenly our responsibilities and the helpful influence of our profession worthily performed, upon the vital power of the nation; and the public is coming to understand and to grasp the importance and necessity of saving itself from untold ills by care of the mouth and teeth; which knowledge brings it into closer, more friendly, more trustful relations with us.

While this very confidence, ever increasing, stimulates our sense of responsibility, adds zest to our labors, and makes the future look rosy for those who will come after us and reap where we have sown, still it must not be overlooked that it presents us with a grave difficulty and serious problem which we have to face just now.

When we consider the insistent, increasing demand made upon us by an ever growing population,—a demand which is increased by the fact that people are being educated thru the beneficial influence of the physician, the hygienist and the dentist himself, so that they possess definite knowledge and a very vital interest and concern regarding the value of care of the mouth and teeth; and on the other hand we look at the out-put of our Dental Colleges or, rather, to the reluctant filtering of a few of the educated intelligent youth into these schools, we must recognize the distressing fact that the demand is outstripping the supply.

This problem is perhaps the most serious question that our profession is called upon to encounter at the present moment. It must be solved by us in the interest of the people who confide in our ability and sense of duty, as well as for our own. To proclaim our professional standing, we must assume the

attendant responsibility in a full and unselfish measure. The public will not accept less from us.

Nor are we free to lessen the causes of this demand. The population must and should grow in rapid bounds in keeping with our vigorous tradition. Edmund Burke says of us in his speech on the Conciliation: "Such is the strength with which population shoots in that part of the world, that, state the number as high as we will, while the dispute continues the exaggeration ends." And again, "Your children do not grow faster from infancy to manhood than they spread from families to communities, and from villages to nations." Now, it is important that the Dental Profession meet this growth and play its part along with the Medical Profession, in the making of a better, healthier, and stronger America.

Education, too, in matters Dental cannot, and must not be checked. We owe it to our high ideals as well as to our country to help the spread of useful knowledge which saves our people from suffering and disease. Indeed we should be sadly deficient and unworthy of our calling, did we fail to show a holy zeal in this important health measure.

So we are forced by the circumstances of the case to increase the supply of worthy, capable dentists. We must find the cause of the deficiency in aspirants to this profession, and study ways and means of lessening the obstacles in the way of ambitious young men.

No one who has had any experience with young students who are deliberating upon a graduate course in a college or university, but knows that the Dental Department is often passed over in favor of the other professions.

We see a bright and ambitious lad, who has just finished high school, seriously running thru the university cata-

log to decide his life's vocation. His mind may be divided among many interests. He may like science and medicine, literature and art; but no American boy settles this life problem on mere feeling or inclinations. He has inherited the business instinct. He knows that he must get his education by paying for it with all its accidental expenses; that he must look out for his future so that he may build up a sufficient fortune for the living of a happy and social existence among the best of his fellow men; and that he must be able to store away a sum for his old age, or the "rainy day." Every American boy has these cardinal points by which he steers his bark. We watch him closely as he weighs the conditions, requirements, expenses, and prospects of Dentistry; and we heave a sigh of regret as we see him pass it by, and turn to medicine, Architecture, or Engineering, or some other calling, where he believes these hopes can be arrived at more surely and more speedily.

Now, why is it that the splendid, noble professional field we have to offer him does not captivate this budding genius, this fountain of energy?

Can it be that the youth of our land does not know that there is such a need, so urgent a demand, for good dentists in all parts of our country? Have we spread this information in time to engender interest in the high school boys thruout the States? Do we now need a systematic propaganda to increase the Supply so as to keep pace with the propaganda that has so wonderfully increased the Demand?

Or is it that the time prescribed for the Dental education is too long? May it not be that the higher requirements and longer course, which the circumstances of the over-crowded larger schools seem to make imperative, become a burden and shackle to the efficient

smaller schools, when these have sufficient obstacles to contend with already?

Is it that the cost of such an education as compared with other professions is too great? For many of our young aspirants to Dentistry, who have the qualities and the spirit which promise great things, have to stint themselves to be able to gain their goal. A high school boy might shudder when he figures the expense of a four-year course along with the certain outlay required for his initial equipment.

Or it may be that the professional standing of the Dentist in his community seems less eminent, less appealing, than that accorded to other professions. Our best Dentists, because of the very nature of their calling, are so often over-worked that they may, thru fatigue of a desire for distraction, fail to join the other professional men in affairs civic and social, and so come to lose that influence and prestige which they are justly entitled to. And the American boy, as you well know, plans on being a power wherever he is, and wishes to be an active participant in every big affair whether in war or peace.

Perhaps too many are allowed to enter upon the study of Dentistry without a sufficient test of the aptitude and manual dexterity required for success in their work. These men soon fall out of the course, and their defection may be a stumbling block or a source of unnecessary anxiety to a prospective student. For few of our boys can afford to waste a year or two in experimenting, only to find out at the end that they are unfitted; and so many are led to choose a course which they are sure they can complete.

These are some of the possible enemies of our progress towards keeping up an efficient supply to meet the daily-growing demand. We need plans of a practical nature more than theory, which

while safeguarding the high standards of the profession, will not add to its difficulties, nor deter young men from embracing a calling at once noble, useful, and profitable.

We know that the Dental Educational Council of America is working diligently on this subject, and it is to be hoped that that body will be able to lay before the House of Delegates and the whole body of this Association some very practical solution which will enable all efficient dental schools, whether large or small, to bring into our ranks young men of talent, industry, and influence. For it seems to me that this is a problem requiring the most business-like discussion and accurate weighing of suggested legislation by all active members of this Association, but especially by the House of Delegates on whom rests the responsibility of safeguarding the rights of the young aspirant to dentistry and of providing for the welfare of the public,—demands as urgent, if not more so, than any mere interests of colleges or the plans and theories of idealists, no matter how plausible these plans and theories may appear.

Acting on the suggestion of the Gov-

ernment, the Dental Educational Council of America has in the past year, expended much time and energy in an effort to bring about a consolidation of the National Association of Dental Faculties and the Dental Faculties Association of American Universities. This was done because it is believed that such action would promote the best interests of Dentistry.

It is not generally believed that there is room for more than one organization representing the Faculties of Dental Schools of this country.

If the great World War has taught us anything, it surely has taught us that we must get together in order to obtain the best results in our various undertakings.

To be of the greatest service to humanity in preparing men to become safe beginners in the practice of Dentistry, our Dental Schools should not be divided, but should present a solid front and make a united effort to advance the cause of Dental Education.

Permit me therefore, to express the hope that this great body which represents the Dental Profession in the various states will take steps at this meeting that will aid in bringing about this much desired result.