

The Angle Orthodontist

*A magazine established by the co-workers
of Edward H. Angle, in his memory. . . .*

★ ★

Editors

HAROLD J. NOYES

ANNA HOPKINS ANGLE
ROBERT H. W. STRANG
ERNEST M. SETZER

FREDERICK B. NOYES
ALLAN G. BRODIE
GEORGE C. CHUCK

Business Manager

SILAS J. KLOEHN
IRVING ZUELKE BLDG., APPLETON, WISCONSIN

APRIL

Editorial Department

1942

Dental Meetings for the Duration

DENTISTRY is gradually awakening to a serious realization that we are engaged in a tremendous and vital war. Not a tin soldier war with business as usual. Not a gesture in the direction of democracy and freedom of world peoples, but a fight for our principles, our homes, our lives.

It is difficult for Americans to make this adjustment not through lack of courage or fear of hardship but because we have come to consider fundamental democratic principles as invincible as the natural laws or the principles of biology. It is hard for dentists to realize that half of their number, perhaps even more, will be needed in the armed forces. It is difficult to appreciate that their way of life, the materials they use and their procedures must be adapted in all possible haste to fit the needs of this emergency.

There is no good purpose to be served by becoming either panic stricken or depressed as we contemplate and become adjusted to war living and war practice. These extremes in attitude are no more to be desired than the complacent optimism which approaches indifference. Sociologists and governmental officials have been inclined to underestimate the cooperative spirit of the civilian population. The salvaging of aluminum, paper, rubber, and tin has been embraced with conscientious response which in some instances appears to have far exceeded that anticipated. In all there has been a very representative effort throughout social-economic strata and geographical areas. The average American has an intelligent desire to retain his manner of life insofar as it may be done without interfering with the war effort and at the same time a willing determination to make any and all sacrifices when and as they are demanded by a coordinated war program.

Large professional meetings and conventions fall clearly within the

category of activities which should be laid aside for the present if not for the duration of the war. Not only for the very obvious burden which they place upon transportation facilities but the conservation of housing, the saving of food and alcohol when considered in the proportions they assume when thousands of men and women are gathered for large meetings are items of consequence. The costs of war materials must come from the family budget which for most professional men means a diversion of funds from usual peace time expenditures. It is safe to say that if the dental profession alone purchased war bonds with their average expenditures for professional meetings, the contribution would be close to ten million dollars annually.

The elimination of the larger dental meetings will not work too great a hardship upon the profession and may have some beneficial by-products. It is well recognized at the present time that the number of meetings exceeds the volume of material available. With the reduction of man power and curtailment of funds needed in research and clinical investigation this shortage is becoming more evident. There has been growing concern in the minds of many over the shifting emphasis from educational to social phases of the professional meeting. As long as professional publications can be maintained without handicap to war activities there is still ample opportunity for exchange of opinion and distribution of clinical and research data.

On the whole there seems to be abundant evidence to support a recess from professional meetings. If in the interval of the emergency there emanates a greater need for dental conventions, a keener appreciation of their educational purpose and a more extensive use of professional literature, the benefits will not all accrue to the exigencies of war.

H. J. N.