

Editorial Department

Standards of Practise

"The law as a philosophical study is very interesting. The law as a system of workable rules of human conduct is a project worthy of the highest endeavor. But the modern practise of law, which calls principally for mental ingenuity to help a client do anything he wants to do, seemed to me intellectually one of the most degrading occupations in the category of respectable employments. I began to believe that the superlawyer should have the brains of a Machiavelli, the hide of a walrus, and no moral convictions."—Donald R. Richberg, *Literary Digest*, December 1, 1934.

This quotation from one who came to that conclusion after attempting to practise his profession in a highly ethical and honorable manner, is worthy of careful analysis, not only by members of that particular body of professional men but also by those who practise in all other professions.

It is a well known fact that age in body structures leads to degeneration. This can be prevented, to a considerable degree, by careful attention to details of physical exercise and regulation of food intake and elimination, combined with liberal hours of rest.

In a corresponding manner, mental processes, the expressions of brain functions, tend to degenerate with advancing age. Again, this can be controlled and retarded by proper exercise of these various brain areas through reading, studying and analytic thinking. In conjunction with this, rest periods are also essential.

Ethics and morals need constant supervision if they are to maintain the highest level of expression. Selfishness, greed and jealousy are but manifestations of degeneration of that group of attributes which constitute character. There can be no rest periods, however, associated with this form of prevention. Keen alertness is most essential.

In the early days of the development of any profession, the aims of the pioneer practitioners have always been of a very high average. Concentrated upon the problems that are omnipresent in a virgin field, there is no opportunity offered for stagnation and degeneration. The future is promising, the outlook hopeful, the reward is great!

Gradually the pathway becomes worn and smooth and at last easy

travelling is offered for those who choose to journey that way. This is an enticement for an influx of men of a different calibre. It brings in a group of individuals who are ready to reap in well-cultivated fields but who are equally as reluctant to maintain those fields in as fine a condition for future cultivation as when the first harvest was gathered. If there are short cuts that can be used as a means for an end, these men take them. If there are compromises in methods of cultivation, they do not hesitate to use them. If the results of such laxity are passable, that is all they care for. When such conditions manifest themselves, the average of achievements in any profession begins to drop. That particular profession has started to show signs of degeneration.

It seems to the writer that orthodontia has arrived at that period in its history. Men are being drawn into our specialty by the lure of making an easy living. The pathway has been smoothed by the pioneer work of conscientious, studious operators. Ideals are being forced into the background and compromises are in evidence. The average of results is travelling downward. To the older men, this is a tragedy. To the younger men, who still persist in maintaining the vision of perfection, it is an anxious and discouraging situation.

The time has come to face this problem. It can only be checked and overcome by forcing high standards of education upon those who would enter our special field of endeavor. Properly prepared men will, in the vast majority of instances, be a credit and a benefit to orthodontia. Thus, the specialty will be assured of giving better service to humanity as the years go by, and that is the salvation of any profession.

To further this change, orthodontia must be controlled by advantageous laws. Nothing else will stop the pollution at its source. Let us work earnestly and unselfishly for such legal advantages before it is too late!

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