



“The mind of a child is as tender and as lovely as the petals of a full-blown rose. Beware how you touch it! Meet it with all the reverence of your being. Use it with gentle respect and fill it with the honey of love, the perfume of faith and the tenderness of tolerance. Thus shall you fulfill the mission of your life.”

*Edmund H. Wuerpel*



## A Classic Revisited

Edmund Wuerpel was a long-time friend of Dr. Angle, and together they formed a unique blend of personalities. Angle the autocrat stepped aside for Angle the student in Wuerpel's presence. They shared a mutual respect born of an appreciation for the breadth of knowledge and a dedication to excellence.

Dr. Wuerpel was a gentle and sensitive man, one who regarded his own subject of art as a humanitarian skill that derives its value through the relief of the tensions of daily life. His compassionate nature drew him closely to a specialty that is dedicated to the amelioration of physical and emotional distress, and his lifelong study of facial form blended perfectly with Angle's efforts to improve that form.

He viewed esthetics, ethics and ideals as inseparable components of a continuum. The verbal essay that follows examines that continuum from many sides. It began as a part of the program at the annual meeting of the graduates of the Angle school in 1928. The stenographic transcript was published in Volume 1, Number 1 of the *ANGLE ORTHODONTIST* in 1931. That time lag is but one indication of its deep and lasting impression on the assembled orthodontists.

Since it was presented verbally, and at least partly extemporaneously, it is replete with anecdotes and colloquialisms. These have been left intact. An attempt was made to select excerpts for reprinting, but the subtle flavor of the whole is too easily lost. Final editing was limited to minor details to further adapt the spoken word to print.

There is an eerie timeliness in those comments from another area of interest a half-century ago. Dr. Wuerpel viewed our specialty from the unique vantage-point of an artist looking in. His acute perceptions of the world around him had been sharpened by a long career of continual analysis of his entire environment, and he did so with an intensity approaching total immersion. When orthodontics became a part of his environment, he quite literally became one of us.

His words could just as well have been written by an orthodontist today as by an artist in the twenties. In many ways they are even more relevant and challenging now, with clinical and personal import to every orthodontist and to the patients we serve. It is time that they are once again made available to our specialty.

*r c t*