

11-1934

Dental Hygiene and Its Ideals

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dh.howard.edu/dentoscope>

Recommended Citation

(1934) "Dental Hygiene and Its Ideals," *The Dentoscope*: Vol. 14: Iss. 2, Article 6.
Available at: <https://dh.howard.edu/dentoscope/vol14/iss2/6>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Howard @ Howard University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Dentoscope by an authorized editor of Digital Howard @ Howard University. For more information, please contact digitalservices@howard.edu.

SPECIAL ARTICLES

DENTAL HYGIENE AND ITS IDEALS *

THE PAST of dental hygiene is rather limited, for it is a relatively new field. However, its achievements are a vital stimulus for its continuance and growth. The positive contribution which the workers have made will go a long way toward the establishing of this splendid profession. The pioneers have blazed the trail, stamped out hostilities, broken down barriers, surveyed the field, begun operations, and aroused a consciousness of the necessity and the imperative demand for dental hygiene service.

The present of dental hygiene is of paramount importance, for it concerns the training of an adequate number of efficient workers, and a critical analysis and consequent evaluation of the services of the dental hygienist. Medical and dental inspection reveal with astonishing certainty the lamentable condition of school children's teeth. The seriousness of this state of affairs is not measured from an aesthetic point of view—although this is an important consideration—but on the basis of the close relationship existing between dental caries and other physical defects. School authorities are sensing a vital connection between defects of the teeth and poor attendance, retardation, and lack of adaptation to the school program. The problem of education, necessitating the expenditure of public funds and having as its chief objective the training and preparation of youth for wholesome living and useful citizenship, is of immediate interest and vast importance. Conditions which hinder school activities must speedily be adjusted, for any agency which plays such an important role in a national welfare must function effectively and indeed, with the maximum degree of efficiency.

Although dental hygiene is still in the experimental stage, it has attracted the attention of the medical, dental, and educational professions. It is bringing to light the profound realization that oral health cannot be neglected if the goal of a healthy citizenry is ever to be realized.

The future of dental hygiene presents a mammoth problem. Its scope, not too clearly defined at present, will broaden and a commensurate increase in importance and opportunity for service will inevitably follow. However, the training, attitude, and professional activity of the hygienist

* Special contribution by Miss Daisy W. Frazier, R.D.H.

at work will determine very largely our place in the field of public health. The public must be informed of the necessity of "mouth cleanliness" as a combative force against infections of many kinds.

Dental clinics are needed urgently, especially for school children, since the first years of school life are crucial periods for preserving the teeth. Knowledge of how to preserve and care for the teeth, which could be readily disseminated by such agencies, is invaluable at this period. Those who have studied the problem most judiciously and seriously conclude that civilized nations are afflicted with no diseases more prevalent or far-reaching than those of dental origin.

We, the dental hygienists, take up the fight, prepared by training, encouraged by an enlightened attitude on the part of the public, and confident that persistent effort on our part will ameliorate conditions and materialize our lofty ideals of "a clean mouth for every person."

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE AT THE NATIONAL DENTAL ASSOCIATION MEETING

By Westanna O. I. Byrom, D.D.S., '33
Cleveland, Tennessee

IT WAS my very pleasant privilege to attend the meeting of the National Dental Association which was held in Nashville, Tennessee, July 9 to 13, 1934. It was indeed interesting, inspiring and largely attended.

On arriving in Nashville all delegates, visitors and guests were received and extended the most cordial welcome by the members of the reception and housing committees, under the most efficient directions of the chairman, Dr. W. B. Reed of Nashville. The halls of Fisk University proved most comfortable and convenient living quarters for the majority of those in attendance. The doors of the Tennessee State College were open to us on several occasions.

Meharry Medical College has a wonderful plant. The buildings are magnificent and strictly modern in every detail. It was indeed an excellent place for the meeting of the N. D. A.

The program included registration, manufacturers' exhibits, public meetings, clinics and papers on the various branches of Dentistry by members and guests. A paper, "Dentistry During Pregnancy," containing a wealth of information, was brought to us by E. F. Alleyne, M.D., head of the Department of Obstetrics at Meharry. Geo. F. Seeman, D.D.S., Nashville, specialist in Oral Surgery and Exodontia, gave