

11-1934

CLASS TALK

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Recommended Citation

(1934) "CLASS TALK," *The Dentoscope*: Vol. 14: Iss. 2, Article 9.
Available at: <https://dh.howard.edu/dentoscope/vol14/iss2/9>

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CLASS TALK

SENIORITY COMPLEX

By Caesar J. Valdes '35

HUNDREDS of senior students in the various professional schools look forward to their last year in school with great anticipation. In their estimation the month of June in the coming year will be the biggest moment in their lives. They are confident that as soon as they receive their professional degrees, pass the state board examinations and hang out the well known "shingle," there is nothing in the world that will hinder them from becoming successful in their chosen professions.

As soon as the senior dental student returns to the clinic, he automatically assumes what is termed professional dignity, every move indicating sufficient confidence in himself, and giving his patients the impression that he knows what he is going to do and does it accordingly.

The senior medical student also assumes the professional air. He tries to cultivate the bedside mannerisms of a physician who has been practicing for years and to impress the patients in the hospital by his nonchalant air and ease of doing things.

The senior law student acquires a wonderful gift of sales talk and a commanding use of the English language.

The students may be criticised by those older and wiser in the ways of the world, but such are the ways of every young, enthusiastic man—confident of himself and of his future. "Youth must be served" and no amount of warning or advice can alter their viewpoints on the rosy outlook of life. This confidence is a natural occurrence, just as natural as the turning of day into night. It is nothing more than the confidence of youth with his vitality and freshness about to step out into the world and make a name for himself in his chosen profession.

"ENCOUNTERING THE PRACTICAL" CLASS OF '36

By James J. Byrd

THERE ARE many banalities which might be written about the opening of the school term. Those who have gone before us probably encountered them in the same way.

To the Juniors, it is not unlikely that such drastic changes in the

academic schedule, after having two consecutive years of rigid routine, can pass without the feeling that some burden has been lifted. The first two years appear to be the most difficult. There is a great consolation in knowing that the half way mark has been reached successfully with only a few casualties.

The newest thing and the most looked for objective was the infirmary. Fortunately, we were introduced to the routine during the spring months of our Sophomore year. Consequently, the thrill and strangeness had been slightly dulled. The very thought that we were well on our way as embryonic dentists and practitioners afforded a desire to push on to a perfection of technique and the application of theories which had been put before us.

The greatest thrill came when we made our first attempt to administer a local anesthetic to make an extraction. Only a few members of the class have had this experience at the moment of writing due to regularity of clinical assignments. It has been most amusing to hear the conversation among those who have not had the experience. It goes something like this, "You know I am scared stiff about Oral Surgery. Suppose something should happen. What about the patient when the injection is made?"

I suppose the very same thought passed through the minds of many of our present day practitioners during their embryonic stages as dentists. The newness of anything acts as a stimulus to the aspiring young man.

We look forward to our experiences with an increasing number of practical phases of dentistry with an increased pulse rate, but a realization that our ideals must begin to crystallize during the current year.

"RETROSPECTIVE THOUGHTS" CLASS OF '37

By Sidney Fellman

WHEN WE, the dental class of '37, entered Howard University little did we realize what was to confront us. We knew that we intended to study Dentistry, and, we earnestly desired to participate in the profession which promotes health and fitness of mind.

I dare say that many of us had a very high esteem for the profession, but somewhere in our intricate minds lodged the idea that it was something for which one needed only to stretch out his hand and grasp. To our astonishment, we discovered that our thoughts were merely an hallucination. Many of us realize now that a professional school is

not a continuation of the undergraduate college. In the former, we encountered something we had never heard nor dreamed of in our philosophy.

It is an institution which demands work—work supplemented by an untiring attitude. Now that we have reached this stage of the game we know that it is of no avail to complain that the work is too difficult. This very fact is constantly in the thoughts of each and every member of the faculty and they can surely vindicate their methods of procedure by past experience. Are we not pursuing the course which those before us have followed and by which they have attained success? Will not those who follow us along the same road also reach the goal of success?

Don't stand and gaze. Look at the sun a moment, be inspired with the force and zeal with which we first began. Let's go!

"A FRESHMAN LOOKS FORWARD"
CLASS OF 1938

By E. R. Dudley, Jr.

DESPITE the fact that the majority of our larger cities seem abundantly supplied with dentists, the real need of efficient and conscientious men to relieve human suffering, and, to alleviate distressing conditions prevailing in other quarters is appalling.

It is with this situation in mind that we, the class of "38," continue to struggle against what seems to us almost insurmountable odds, in order that we may hasten to the corners of the globe from whence we came, and devote our services earnestly to humanity through the dental profession.

We are thankful to Howard University, whose responsiveness during this period has enabled many of us to take advantage of what seemed at first a hopeless endeavor. In a large measure the class is grateful for scholarships and other worthy grants made to students. In spite of this thing called "Depression," we find in our midst students representing nearly every section of our country and other countries as well.

From day to day, the grind gets tougher and tougher. Now and then, among our group, we hear a grumble, a groan, and a sigh, but it is merely the expression of a determined will and a spirit of "plug-plug-plug" and "never say die."

Today, we find that the dental school offers a foundation in medical science, that not only enables the dentist to extract and restore lost dental organs but to diagnose his cases thoroughly, and to acquaint him with any number of ailments that can be traced directly to the teeth. Sys-

temic disorders of various organs of the body may be the result of failure to recognize and apply fundamental health rules. With the modern methods taught us, we firmly believe that the dentist will work hand in hand with the physician more than ever.

At present, the freshman class is studying Gross Anatomy, Embryology, Bio-Chemistry, Oral Anatomy, and Prosthetic Dentistry. With these subjects as a basis, and the competent faculty surrounding us, the field of dentistry has no limits in the uncovering of newer ideas and the continuation of the meritorious work which it is now doing. We are looking forward to the culmination of our ideals which are a search for scientific enlightenment and a chance to serve our fellowman. The dental profession is an invaluable cog in the machinery of health.

In appreciation of the foregoing, the class is pursuing its duties with great enthusiasm.

OUR CLASS OF DENTAL HYGIENISTS

By A. Louise Tucker

THERE are nine young women pursuing the profession of Dental Hygiene at the Howard University College of Dentistry. This year marks the opening of a course that promises great future development at this institution.

In the first place, although the profession as such is a comparatively new movement, the dental hygienist when trained may readily feel secure of her position because she has a firm background. Ever since there have been dentists, the dental hygienist has existed—at first as an ideal to be attained by the most progressive dentists; later, as a rather remote possibility (at this time a person not especially trained for the work served in her capacity), and, finally, concurrent with the ever-advancing methods of science and civilization, we have reached the point where we see that the professional dental hygienist is as much an essential part of dentistry as the instruments are to the dental surgeon himself.

As early as 1866, we find extraordinary foresight exhibited on the part of Dr. James Truman when he advised the admission of women into dentistry. In 1884, Dr. N. W. Kingsley set forth his ideas about the competence and help of a woman as an assistant at the chair and in the office. These were the first signs of the development of the dental hygienist, and gradually, as time has passed, bringing with it a demonstration of the needs of man, we have come to realize clearly the need for this licensed profession.

In the conservation of the health of the community, the profession has been proven a recognized factor with constantly increasing possibilities. Its worth has been illustrated by the inclusion of the subject in the curricula of many private and public schools, in the establishment of municipal and industrial clinics and by special legislation. The last feature mentioned is of prime importance because, through this means trained workers are given the distinction of a title and are licensed as dental hygienists.

The licensed dental hygienists may serve in two distinct types of work: first, the giving of prophylactic treatments, and second, the teaching of oral hygiene. As a prophylactic operator, she is permitted to "remove stains and accretions from the exposed surfaces of the teeth or directly beneath the free margin of the gum while under the supervision of a practitioner of dentistry." Either in public institutions or in private offices she may prepare the field of operation for the dentist and give periodic prophylactic treatment to children and adults. Today there is as urgent a need for teachers of oral hygiene in both urban and rural communities as there is a lack of competent instructors to give talks to school children, mothers' clubs, industrial employees, and in private and municipal dispensaries.

At present, there is a great demand for competent dental hygienists by the general practitioners, periodontists, orthodontists, oral surgeons, and municipal, industrial, and charitable institutions. Two factors may account for this—the one, the rapid increases of interest in this phase of the health problem, and the other, the newness of the vocation. Many hospitals are making appointments of dental hygienists to their nursing staffs, and are including oral prophylaxis as a part of the hospital routine.

Thus, briefly, have we followed the beginning, growth, development and scope of the work of the dental hygienist.

Our class at Howard University is a unit intensely interested in its profession. The class, with Dr. Robert M. Hendrick as advisor, has organized and has elected the following officers: President, A. Louise Tucker; Vice-President, Louise Overton; Secretary-Treasurer, Phoebe Johnson; and Business Manager, Myrtle Mackall. At present our work consists of lecture-recitation and laboratory classes for the most part. This serves as the foundation for and the introduction to our work in the clinic. All of these methods are stepping stones which will prepare us to practice our profession scientifically and intelligently in the field of public health service.