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EDITORIAL

DEATH OF DR. STILL

One of the world's great men passed away when Dr. Andrew Taylor Still died.

To have reached the stature of greatness among the world's millions is a distinction achieved by only a few.

Man has many standards by which he measures the rise of his fellows in the realm of human effort. Their successes may be materialistic; they may be militaristic; they may be individualistic, vanishing with the life of the one achieving them; they may be altruistic, for the benefit of all mankind even for generations yet unborn. It was in this latter realm that Dr. Still wrought and achieved such remarkable success.

His boyhood and youthful observations of the system of human slavery served but to strengthen and accentuate his innate opposition to slavery in all of its forms. Long before the great Lincoln called for volunteers, first among whom was Dr. Still, he was found in the territorial Legislature of Kansas trying to eradicate or at least limit slavery. Those four trying years of war left him with a searchingly inquiring and a logically active mind delving into all of the principles of life. Searching for scientific truth became a passion with him. Steady application to the study of the human body and the principles of his profession, the practice of medicine, soon brought him to the parting of the ways. Disease to him was no longer an entity to be relieved by blood letting or the application or administration of

drugs. He was the first to teach that structural integrity of the body is an absolutely necessary precedent to health, and that the body possesses within itself auto-protective and recuperative powers sufficient to restore it to health and to preserve it so when that structural integrity has been restored by complete alignment and adjustment of the parts of the body.

With the announcement of those principles he discarded the use of drugs as a curative measure and dedicated his life to aiding nature in the alleviation and prevention of disease by the mechanical readjustment of the parts of the disordered body.

The period covering the life of osteopathy has witnessed a marvelous diminution in the administration of drugs as curative agents, and a corresponding growth of osteopathic fundamentals. The scientific world is gradually accepting the basic fundamentals of Dr. Still's teachings. His life was a warfare against medical slavery to drug therapy as a rational and scientific method of controlling disease. It required a high order of courage to take a stand like that. It required an even higher order of courage to face a dwindling practice resulting from such a stand. A consciousness of right, however, begets such a courage, such a faith, and successful results add to it mightily.

Logic, reason, results made the teaching and studying of osteopathy a possibility, and later a reality. Restored health is a quick messenger and a convincing advocate. It required a courage and faith almost

equal to that exhibited by Dr. Still himself, however, for men and women to undertake a lifework of studying and practicing a new and untried school of medicine with no privileges and no safeguards anywhere in any State.

Had the principles of osteopathy been enunciated by a man of less philosophic acumen, of less faith in the laws of nature and nature's God, of less courage, less force, less perseverance, less love and devotion to humanity than Dr. Still, it is extremely doubtful whether osteopathy would now or ever have reached the position which it occupies to-day in the therapeutic world. The world perhaps does not hold a parallel to osteopathy in the growth of its principles and the relief obtained from its practice. In a measure osteopathy stands as a monument to the failure of drug therapy.

Rarely indeed have the world's really great lived to see their contribution to humanity attain such a marked acceptance by their fellow citizens as did Dr. Still.

To-day we feel proud indeed that we are members of the osteopathic profession. We feel proud that we are representatives of this sane and safe school of therapy. We take a joyous pride in the consciousness that not one of the hundreds of thousands of drug addicts in this country can point the accusing finger of shame to any osteopathic physician as the cause of his deplorable condition.

The physical and mental relief that our practice has brought to millions of our fellow citizens is but an earnest of what our work shall accomplish in the future.

Dr. Still dedicated his life to the work of relieving suffering humanity. When we began the study of osteopathy, ignorant though we were of its possibilities, we, too, dedicated our lives to the same cause.

His death is a challenge to us to re-dedicate our lives to that cause, and to a renewed effort on our part in the furtherance of his teachings. We have lost an incomparable leader, but we have each inherited a wonderful legacy, and with that legacy the responsibility of seeing that osteopathy

is transmitted to our professional heirs, a little further in advance of what it was when we inherited it. That is the hope he often expressed. The most effective preparation for that responsibility would be a studious re-reading of his entire writings by every member of the profession.

We mourn his death, but we rejoice in his wonderful contribution to the welfare of humanity, and we rejoice that we were privileged to know him personally, as a man, as a teacher, a great teacher, as a philosopher, as a physician. To have known him thus was a rare privilege indeed.

G. W. RILEY, D. O.,
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