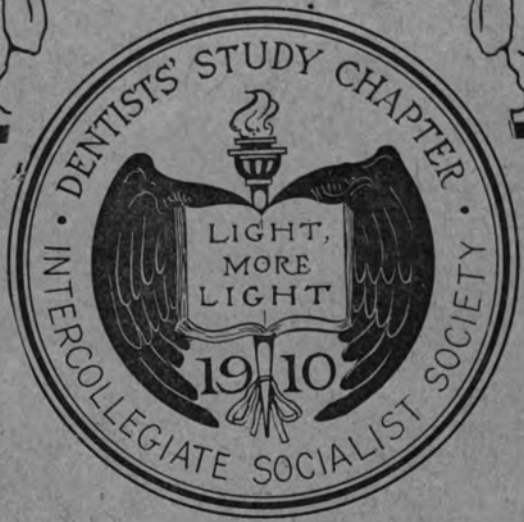


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THE N. Y. ACADEMY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
JUN 1912

THE PROGRESSIVE DENTIST

Published by the



MONTHLY PUBLICATION

Vol. I. April 1912. No. 4

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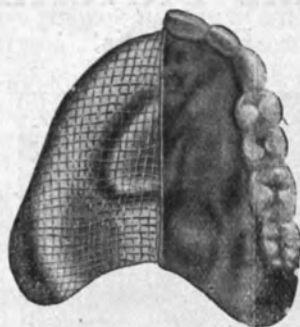
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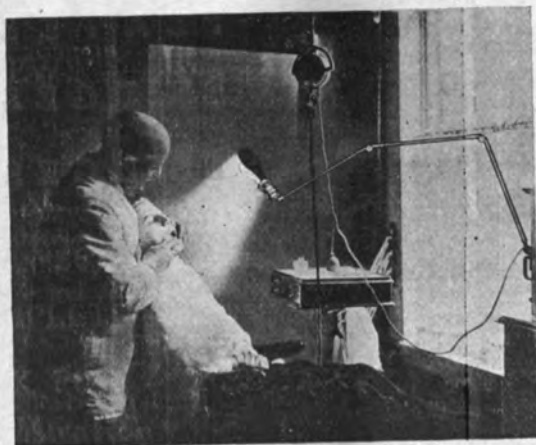
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The Progressive Dentist

Vol. 1

April 1912.

No. 4

OUR INADEQUATE DENTAL LAWS

By Adolph Lappner, M. D., D. D. S.

Of all the professions abounding today the one in which the dentist is engaged stands out conspicuously as being indifferent to its own interest. Even the trades know how to protect and maintain themselves with dignity.

This state of affairs is due to the fact that professional education is both a State and private matter. The consequences are that every State seeks to make severer laws for those dentists who have received a high-school education. Some of our legislators as well as the legislative committee of the State Dental Society, are now at work devising methods whereby to augment the difficulties in the way of those who are striving to comply with the legal requirements to obtain the degree and later on, the right to practice dentistry.

I want it understood that I am not opposed to such measures, but I want to point out the fact that while much attention is paid to the preliminary requirements for admission for the study of dentistry, little or nothing is done in the way of protecting the legal practitioners from the illegal practice which if left unchecked may reach, I fear, the stage of a *trust* of dental companies.

The dental parlors, in the majority of cases, are owned by former agents or salesmen. They employ as a rule non-licensed dentists and very often operate themselves. They defy the present dental laws and are a source of untold misery to the patients who become their victims. Our legislators have no idea of the extent of the injuries inflicted upon the poorer section of the public and, therefore, they do not bother about enacting better protective laws.

Every European country, whenever the question of protecting the public's health arises, does its best in enforcing laws designed to eliminate the professional charlatans. They also enforce a high-standard of education, thus reducing the number of aspirants seeking a medical or dental degree. In this manner a process of weeding out actually occurs during the required period of study.

As an illustration typical in other European countries, I want to mention here something about the laws of Roumania and Germany.

In the former country the majority of the medical men engaged

mechanics to operate at the chair. The minority of the M.Ds., who took special courses in a dental college considered this as a great injustice to themselves. The Sanitary Service, therefore, passed a law which is now in force, that only those medical men who possess a dental diploma from a foreign country where they had the right to practice shall be allowed to engage in the practice of dentistry.

In Germany, where the laws are more liberal than in the United States, the legal practitioner's sign reads *Praktischer Zahnarzt* (practical dentist), while the mechanic's sign must read *Zahntechniker* (mechanical dentist). So that, when one goes to an office he knows whether a dentist or a mechanic is to perform the required dental work.

In this country, in some states where the requirements of admission to the State Board examinations are not even as high as those in New York State, there are laws making it possible for the public and the dental inspectors to keep track of the dental parlors, to force them to observe the laws.

There are in New York State a number of dental societies. On one hand we have the so-called State Dental Societies, whose members are strictly ethical dentists because they were fortunate enough to establish a practice in a rich neighborhood and can afford that their signs should not exceed 24 inches square. On the other hand, we have those whose signs exceed 24 square feet, and are not admitted to membership because they are not ethical in *this* respect. Circumstance compels the latter to open offices in the poorer neighborhoods where a dentist is estimated according to the number of signs he displays. In this very neighborhood we find the majority of dental parlors under different trade names that in themselves are a drawing card. The dentist who starts practicing in an ethical way in the midst of this gentry is soon forced down to their level and resorts to the dishonest methods employed by the dental parlor.

The legislative committee of the State Dental Society is not raising a finger to protect the profession and the public. As proof we can point to the increasing number of illegal dentists. If this committee cannot or does not care to check this steady increase, then let them resign and another committee be elected that will do the work for which it has been called into existence.

For controlling the dental parlor evil I would suggest the following:

1. Every dental parlor must be registered once a year with the Dental State Board.

2. The owner of a dental parlor must notify the State Board as to the number of registered dentists he employs and every time he engages a dentist he must notify the Board at once.

3. The dental parlor must have a sign posted at the entrance to the office bearing the name or names of the dentists it employs, and in front of the operating chair shall be posted the certificate of registration.

4. In every dental district a committee of three registered dentists shall be empowered to inspect the dental parlor so as to ascertain whether they comply with the laws.

5. Any violation of the dental laws shall be considered a misdemeanor punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both.

Establishing a Board of Dental Examiners

By Dr. M. S. Calman.

Dentistry, in the last few years, has attained front rank among the healing professions. The importance of sound teeth to the conservation of the body, is becoming more and more evident. Recent research work has traced a number of diseases to carious teeth.

The oral cavity is an ideal place for the propagation of all kinds of bacteria. When food is ingested, along with the bolus are carried innumerable bacteria into the stomach and the alimentary canal, where they set up all kinds of trouble. Infection takes place also by way of the capillaries of the pulp, when this organ is exposed as in the case of extensive caries.

The more these facts become known, the greater becomes the cry for the proper care of the teeth. More so is this the case with our public school children. They are the greatest sufferers from neglected teeth, which result in improper development of body and mind. Tonsillitis, nose, eye and ear troubles, from which the children suffer a good deal, in a great number of cases can be traced directly to a filthy mouth, which in turn is due to caries of the teeth. The reason parents pay little attention to the condition of their children's teeth, is because they have as yet not been taught the importance of sound teeth to the general welfare of the individual. If a child suffers with "tooth-ache" the parent insists that the dentist extract the offending tooth, for, they say, "the child will get another one in place of this one." That is as much as they at present know of the importance of conserving the children's teeth.

The government has taken upon itself the education of its youth, why should it not also take upon itself the prevention and cure of diseases that from time to time afflict the public school children? For health is of prime importance in the education of the young. A healthy body means a sound mind, and only a sound mind can assimilate knowledge. Of prime importance to the health of the individual is the proper care of the oral cavity. The physician may succeed in relieving constitutional disturbances due to a filthy mouth, but you may rest assured that the cure is but temporary and that the disease will occur again, notwithstanding all the drugs which may be taken.

Let the State government, then, set up in conjunction with the Board of Health, a Board of Dental Examiners. The duty of this Board to consist in:

1. Incorporating into the text-books a chapter on the importance and care of the oral cavity, written in a way that the children should understand it.

2. Explain to the teachers how to instruct the children in the uses of the tooth brush and mouth washes. This to be regularly done a few times a week.

3. Examine the children's teeth from time to time, and in the event of carious teeth being found, to compel the parents of such children to take them to the family dentist for treatment. Vaccination, remember, is also compulsory.

4. Establish a clinic in every public school building, where children of the poorer classes shall receive free treatment, at the hands of an experienced dentist.

5. Deliver a series of lectures on the oral cavity, in conjunction with the Free Public Lectures at present given under the auspices of the Board of Education, to the general public.

The health of the future citizens of this wealthy republic ought to rank highest in importance to any other question. We find the government lavishly spending fortunes every year in instructing the farmer how to make his land more productive, how to raise chickens, breed cattle successfully, the care of pigs, etc., but the same government woefully lacks initiative when it is a question of preserving the health of its citizens. But the time is coming, and that sooner than you, reader, may think, when the government machinery will be in the hands of the members of the Socialist Party, which alone of all parties, is pledged to the reorganization of society on the basis that the health of its citizens is of prima-facie importance.

Chapter Activities

A very important meeting of the Chapter will take place on Friday evening, April 5th 1912, 8 P. M. sharp, at 56 St. Marks Place (E. 8th St.) A lecture on a very important topic will be delivered followed by discussion. Also very important business to transact.

As there will be no meeting in May—the next regular meeting taking place Friday, June 7th,—all the members are therefore urged to be present on the 5th inst.

On Friday evening, March 8th, Dr. Wm. J. Robinson, editor of the "Critic and Guide", etc., delivered a very interesting lecture on "True Eugenics—Three Means of Improving the Human Race". A number of questions were asked to which Dr. Robinson gave very instructive replies.

...The Progressive Dentist...

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE
DENTISTS' STUDY CHAPTER, I. S. S.

Subscription price 25 cents yearly.

Free to Students

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26 E. 106th Street, New York.*

*All editorial communications should be addressed to Wm. MENDELSON
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Publication Office: 26 East 106th Street, New York City

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

In another part of the magazine we are printing a very interesting letter sent us by one of our readers, apropos the article in our last issue, "The Socialization of Dentistry."

The writer begins by stating that socialists differ among themselves as to what socialism is. Our experience is that while socialists differ as to tactics, the majority of socialists are agreed as to its theory which the writer states correctly is "the collective ownership of all things that should be used by the people collectively and the private ownership of all things used by the people individually."

There are many things that the state should not control; he claims particularly the "State control of Dentists." We did not advocate the state control of dentists, but the state control of Dentistry. We believe dental and medical treatment should be given free to the people just as education, if the great majority of the people are to receive the benefits that these two professions have in store for them, and not be the means whereby some practitioners by various methods become rich.

As for the oversupply of dentists we have no fear of that. We believe that there are many dentists today who would make better shoemakers and vice-versa, and under a system of society where the remuneration of the shoemaker and his social position would be in no way inferior to that of the dentist, he would take to shoe-making instead of dentistry. Besides, if the teeth of the people were properly cared for the 40,000 dentists in the country today are in no way sufficient for the work.

"A great deal is being done already for the poor in this respect, and we should be first in advocating this kind of philanthropy, but the way to do it is not to label it socialistic," says our correspondent.

It is philanthropy today, and a poor philanthropy at that. We are not advocating the care of the nation's teeth as a form of philanthropy, but as a necessary function of the state.

Mr. Merrill, the socialist member of the assembly, we just learned, has introduced a bill in the legislature for the free care of the teeth of all school children of the state. Would the writer not have us label it *socialistic* when the bill emanates from the socialists, it's introduced by a socialist and fought for by them for fear of it not being adopted?

Let me whisper into your ear that the people are watching today our assemblymen and congressmen as never before, and many a "socialistic" bill will be passed for fear of losing the confidence of the people.

Below we print the bill introduced by Mr Merrill, the Socialist assemblyman, which empowers the Board of Education to have the teeth of all school children examined at least once a year and treated from funds to be provided by each city or district in which such school is situated.

Here is an opportunity the dental societies and the profession at large ought not to let slip by without doing their utmost.

First. If the bill is passed it will be of untold value to the thousands of school children that need dental treatment.

Secondly. It will establish the recognition of dentistry as an aid to the healthy development of the minds and bodies of the children

Thirdly. It will give state recognition of dentistry by placing the dental surgeon upon the same footing as the physician, as a servant of the state.

A great deal of money was spent and a great agitation has been carried on to place the dental surgeon upon the same status as the physician in the U. S. Army. Why not do the same when it means not only the recognition of dentistry as a necessary adjunct to education by the state but also the well being of thousands of future citizens

We especially call upon all those societies who preach so much of oral hygiene, of the relation of the dental surgeon to the public welfare, etc., to send representatives to appear before the Committee on Public Education where the bill was referred and urge upon them to recommend same favorably to the house.

We also ask all practitioners to write to their representatives in the assembly, urging upon them to pass the bill.

AN ACT

To amend the education law, in relation to the powers and duties of board of education

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Subdivision twenty-one of section three hundred and ten of chapter twenty-one of the laws of nineteen hundred and nine entitled "An act relating to education, constituting chapter sixteen of the consolidated laws," as amended by chapter one hundred and forty of the laws of nineteen hundred and ten, and further amended by chapter six hundred and two of the laws of nineteen hundred and ten, is hereby amended as follows:

21. To provide for the medical **and dental** inspection of all children in attendance upon schools under their supervision [whenever in their judgment such inspection shall be necessary] **at least once during each school year and the result of such examinations shall be made a part of the school records and a copy of the examinations of each child shall be furnished to the parents or guardian of each such child** and to pay any expense incurred therefor [out of funds authorized by the voters of the district or city which may be properly] **funds shall be provided by the district or city or** set aside for such purpose by the common council or the board of estimate and apportionment of a city.

§ 2. This act shall take effect September first, nineteen hundred and twelve.

EXPLANATION:- Matter in **heavy type** is new; matter in brackets [] is old law to be omitted

We have just learned that the Harlem Dental Society, at a regular meeting held on Thursday evening, March 28th, 1912, has instructed its Secretary to send a letter of indorsement of the above bill, to Assemblyman Merrill; also the law committee of the society was instructed to communicate with all other dental societies in the state, with a view of having them take favorable action, in order to insure the successful enactment of the bill into law. The members were also urged to write personally to the Assemblyman and Senator of the district in which each resides, and ask their support of the bill.

In view of the fact that many students are absent from college owing to the approaching exams, the Progressive Dentist will be sent to them by mail, free of charge. Most of the names and addresses of the students have been secured. Those whose names have not been secured, are asked to see or write to the manager, Mr. J. S. Calman.

HOW CAPITALISM AROSE

By Herman Mendelson

Socialism is a philosophy of history, a system of political economy; yes, even a business proposition, if you will. It is all these and more. It is a world-wide political movement having definite principles and definite demands. But in order to understand any phase of the socialist philosophy we must know something about the economic forces that brought about our present industrial order known as capitalism. It is necessary for a clear understanding of the socialist program to have a clear conception of the industrial development thru which society passed. Besides that, a study of the scientific basis of the modern socialist movement will show you that it is based on the nature of the several stages of industrial development that preceded our present capitalist society.

Industrial evolution teaches us that primitive man lived like the animals, on whatever nature had to offer. That in the course of time he began to devise tools. He became fisher, hunter, herdsman, finally farmer and craftsman. This development went on thru the centuries. The way in which people get their living is directly dependent upon the means of production, the tools and raw materials they have at their disposal. The different forms of society, in their turn, depend on the manner of production. When men rely on hunting and fishing for a living, they are very different individuals from what they are when they lead an agricultural life, or when they satisfy their wants by means of large accumulations of capital.

The individual tool was the means of production of primitive man. As the individual owner of the tool he enjoyed the product thereof. But as the means of production changed, in the course of advancing civilization, the notion of ownership also changed. Right here it's appropriate to remark that nothing is stationary in life. That in society just as in nature a continual development goes on. A change in our ethical or social notions corresponds to a similar change in our economic environment.

Capitalistic society begins with agriculture and handicraft. The agricultural family produced all it needed. With the advance in farming methods more than enough was produced to satisfy the immediate needs of the family. It placed the family in a position to exchange their product for weapons, tools and other articles which they could not produce. This led to the appearance of production for exchange. Exchange products became commodities. There is a distinction, for instance, between the corn which the farmer raises for his own consumption and that which he sells. The former is not a commodity, the latter is.

Exchange of commodities implies two conditions: (1) Division of social labor; (2) Private ownership of the things exchanged. Due to the development of division of labor and the increase in private property, production for exchange became more general. This form of production gave rise to buying and selling. People began to make a living by selling dearer than they bought. As a result of this form of exchange the trading class arose.

The farmer or craftsman buys for consumption, the tradesman buys in order to sell. Money used for this purpose is capital. The shoes a merchant buys to sell is capital, that which he buys to use is not. It is important to note this difference because the defenders of the present system try to befog the average man's mind, so that he may not see the difference between the ownership of an object intended for personal use and the ownership of a branch of industry upon which countless people depend for their livelihood.

The craftsman depended on his industry and skill. Whatever he produced was his because he owned the tools he used. His industry tho' never went beyond a fixed limit, because all he had to invest limited itself to his capacity to work, while that of the tradesman was determined by the amount of his capital.

Here is a condition which led to further social development. We started with a state of society in which each member owned the means of production, in which the individuals were equally equipped, and arrived at the industrial stage in which they set out unequally equipped in the struggle for bread.

Private property in the means of production was necessary for the good of society when the average man had a chance to own property. But the economic conditions making possible such ownership have passed away and with them the nature of the ownership also changed.

How has this happened?

During the middle ages the handicrafts developed steadily. A great increase in the division of labor took place and tools were improved. Trade developed as a result of improved means of transportation. When it was at its highest point, the European monarchies cast about for the acquirement of new colonies. The tradesmen that were able to fit out ships with unscrupulous crews got the greatest share of the proceeds of these colonies. England and Spain were the leading colonizing nations on account of their powerful trading classes.

In looking for a shorter route to India, America with its immense supplies of gold and silver was discovered. The colonies soon became the chief sources of wealth from which the empty monarchical coffers were replenished. Their inhabitants were plundered and oppressed. The history of colonization, if it shows anything, shows us that capitalism was ushered in thru piracy, smuggling, slave-trading and war.

During this period of commercial adventure and activity the modern state had its beginnings. The state met the demands of the rising capitalist class and depended upon it for financial support. By virtue of the influence which money gave them, the capitalists were enabled to force the political and military power of the state into their service. The state was obliged to improve the highways of communication, take over colonies and carry on wars in the interest of capital.

The newly discovered lands and commercial routes opened new markets. The demand for continental goods grew. As handicraft was unable to satisfy the increasing demands, production on a large

scale was imperative. The merchants found it profitable to meet these demands. They had the money to buy the raw material, build factories and employ labor. But as the process of the depopulation of the rural districts had not begun as yet, the rising manufacturers found it difficult to obtain the necessary labor. In this he was soon aided by the landlords who desiring a share of the new prosperity demanded a larger portion of the agricultural product. The tillers of the soil not being able to meet the demand were deprived of their land and were forced to the doors of the new factories. Thus capitalist industry began by means of expropriation, by confiscation. It deprived the peasant of the land which he had inherited, for centuries, from his forefathers.

The use of steam-power in manufacture, made possible by the great mechanical inventions of the latter part of the eighteenth century, brought about that far-reaching and rapid change known as the Industrial Revolution. It ushered in the era of capitalism, the wage and factory system. The laborers were forced to leave their homes, throw their simple tools upon the scrap-heap and assemble in factories in order to use the costly machinery which each one could not own for himself. Economic evolution brought about the first requisite of capitalist production, i. e., the separation of the masses of workers from the means of production.

When machinery was first introduced the workers revolted, they resorted to violence. They thought that by destroying the machine they would also wipe out the unbearable conditions under which they had to suffer. Appalling abuses were prevalent in the English factories. Men, women and children worked under conditions that destroyed both soul and body. To attempt a description of those abuses or of the changes that took place in men's ideas regarding the duties of the state in regulating the rising industries with a view to the amelioration of factory conditions would carry us too far afield. Suffice it to say that they form a blood-stained chapter in early capitalist history.

Along with the introduction of machinery division of labor was also introduced. This system of production became so developed that each operative had to perform but a single operation. The machine conquered industry after industry. It enabled the factory worker to do the work of several hundred handicraftsmen.

In this country a complete evolution in the method of production took place in the last decade before the Civil War. Improved machinery was gradually introduced into every branch of manufacture. Inventions multiplied rapidly. Between 1840-1850 patents were granted at the rate of 646 per year. The most notable of the inventions affecting manufacturing was Elias Howe's sewing machine which he brought out in 1846. Its most important application was made in the manufacture of shoes. In 1861 McKay invented a machine for sewing soles to uppers more cheaply than pegs could be driven. The invention of the automatic needle enabled a skilled workman to sew the soles on to nine hundred pair of shoes in a ten-hour day (U. S. Census,

1900). As an illustration of the effects of machine-made goods, it may be mentioned that the cost of the machine-made shoes was reduced to one-eleventh of that of the hand-sewn article.

Today, improved machinery, increased division of labor and thoroly centralized industry makes it possible for the working-man to produce, according to Census Bulletin 150, nine times as much as fifty years ago. This change was brought about by revolutionizing the method of production from an individual to a social or co-operative basis. Take the shoe industry as an illustration. While formerly, under the old handicraft system, a pair of shoes was made by one man, it takes now sixty men to produce the same pair of shoes because sixty separate and distinct tasks are involved in their making. But these sixty men can produce many times more shoes than an equal number of men could have done on the individual plan. And this because today everything is done co-operatively. The modern factories are co-operative institutions. There is co-operation in production. Only when it comes to the distribution of the worker's product there is "division." The rewards of modern industry are reaped by the capitalist class in the form of increased profits.

It results from what we have considered up to now, that capitalism is the direct descendant of the old handicraft system and that its main feature is the private ownership of the means of production and distribution. This social transformation brought about a condition wherein the worker is deprived both of the tool and its product. It created a wider and wider breach between the property-owning and propertiless class. The struggle between these two classes which has been going on for centuries became more intense. But inherent in this transformation were the seeds of a great movement which was to arise and put an end to all class-struggles. That movement is today represented on the political field by the Socialist Party.

Consider for a moment the so-called blessings the working-man enjoys under capitalism. Briefly stated, he works the most but has the least, while those that do not work at all and employ others to work for them have the most. There is poverty for the worker, riches for the shirker. The workman produces all wealth but is prevented from enjoying its benefits. Not only is he forced to sell his labor power on the capitalist market, but he sells it that he may be better exploited.

We Socialists claim that this exploitation ought to be done away with. We also say that palliative measures or superficial reforms that only alleviate the symptoms of capitalism will not do it. That we must attack the cause of this exploitation, which, as we have seen, is the private ownership of the socially necessary means of production and distribution.

The Socialist Movement is here to educate the workingman to a realization of his power. It points out to him that the present anomaly of things in our economic life will cease as soon as he will capture the powers of government and run the industries in the interest of all the people instead of in the interest of the few as they are today.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

The trouble with Socialism is that too many Socialists do not understand Socialism. Ask half a dozen Socialists what Socialism is and they will give you six widely differing answers; ask the same question of half a dozen anti-Socialists and they either do not know or have erroneous ideas. I make this introduction because it leads to the discussion of the interesting article in your last month's issue on "The Socialization of Dentistry."

Socialism, I have been taught and like to believe, is the collective ownership of all things used by the people collectively and the private ownership of all things used by the people individually. For example, shoes are required by people almost universally but in order to manufacture them it is necessary to collect together very ponderous and costly machinery in a costly building and run the machines at enormous expense. One selfish, narrow-minded individual, if he wishes, because he possesses these means of manufacturing and because he can produce an artificial scarcity of the supply, can withhold the product from the public or sell it with extremely high profit to himself. It may, therefore, be advisable to control this industry for the benefit of the people, and Socialism so proposes. Now, the same shoes, once in the hands of the individuals who purchased them, are no longer socialistic or common property and Socialism cannot properly lay any claim as to how or what the owner should do with them. No sane person could advocate the ownership by the state of those shoes, any more than they could the public ownership of tooth brushes, yet very intelligent people will tell you seriously that under Socialism personal property would have to be divided.

Besides shoes, there are many other valuable assets which the state should not attempt to control. Most important, to my mind, is labor. Often, altruistically minded Socialists look far in advance of Socialistic doctrines as laid down by the teachers, and advocate policies which Socialism does not include or wish to include. Such a policy is the one advocated by Mr. Mendelson: The State Control of Dentists. As Mr. Mendelson ably states it is an ideal condition of a golden age when men will think more of their fellowmen and not so much of themselves. It introduces complications and difficulties which, with our minds trained in the selfish ways of past centuries and our environments such as present themselves now and will for centuries to come, we cannot solve.

I do not believe the state could ever completely control any industry or profession, for if it should attempt to do so with dentistry, for example, and an over-abundance of the supply should develop, what would the state do? Refuse to employ the surplus? Surely, that does not seem just. Limit the number permitted to study the profession? Obviously unfair. Why prevent a man from seeking the livelihood for which he feels he is

best fitted or exclude men who may develop into geniuses, inventors and discoverers?

"Think," says Mr. Mendelson, "what it would mean to the practitioner when his livelihood is assured so that he can enjoy life in its fullest sense, without having to compete with his fellow-practitioner—without fear for the days when he would become old and unable to continue his calling." "Enjoyment of life in its fullest sense" is a very broad term and I doubt whether we could agree upon its meaning, but whatever your views or ideas are, I advise you to be most modest if you wish to gratify them with the salary the government is wont to pay. And in regard to dispelling our fear of old age, surely the government's pensions are hardly sufficient for the gratification of our every desire.

There are undoubtedly thousands of people who are neglecting their own teeth and the teeth of those dependent on them because they cannot afford to pay for treatment. The undertaking, by the state, of the care of this class of patients, cannot be too strongly advocated. But that is not socialism; that is philanthropy.

That a great deal is being done for the poor is not generally known by the profession in general. The educational departments are working very energetically and I saw a report of one examining doctor in which over 1,500 cases had been referred to free dental clinics. In New York City there are at present 15 such clinics where treatment is either entirely free or nearly so. Some charge a registration fee of 10 cents, presumably to reduce the humiliation incurrant upon the reception of charity. Some do work at cost or a little less, as evidenced by a plate costing but \$1.50, a gold filling 50 cents.

In a small town in Virginia of 50,000, 34 dentists were accepting all charity cases sent them and I believe a majority of our local dentists are making the same practice.

However, this kind of philanthropy should, undoubtedly, be carried out by the state and your paper should be foremost in advocating it.

Let me whisper this: the state hates to accept any idea which seems socialistic, so when you have a reform to advocate do not be so hasty to attach the title "socialistic" to it with the hope of bringing the credit to the ranks of socialism. Rather get the suggestion adopted first and you will have lots of time later to place the credit where it belongs.

Yours very truly,

CHARLES WOLFF,
N. Y. C. D. 1914.

Dear Editor:

I am in receipt of the "Progressive Dentist," for which accept my thanks. I quite agree with you on your article "A Plea for a National Law to Regulate the Practice of Dentistry."

Very truly yours,

A. LIPSCHITZ, D.D.S.

SOCIALISM AND PUBLIC HEALTH

By W. R. Shier

I was asked by a physician the other day how the Socialist party would cope with the question of public health.

I replied though the Socialist party had not as yet addressed itself especially to this problem, it could be expected none the less to make public health one of its chief concerns when it attained a fair measure of governmental power.

But this general statement did not satisfy my friend. He smiled at me somewhat contemptuously and remarked that Socialists seemed to have only glittering generalities instead of definite measures to offer the electorate.

"How do you Socialists," he asked, "ever expect to inspire confidence in your party unless you bring detailed knowledge to bear upon public questions and show the people that you know how to solve the various problems that confront them here and now?"

"It is all very well," he added, "to theorize about social evolution, to paint pretty pictures of the future, to denounce the evils of the present, to attack the old political parties, to expose the class character of modern institutions, and to point out that private property in the means of wealth production must eventually be done away with. I sympathize with all that, but I want to know, and what thousands of other broad-minded people want to know, is what stand Socialist party candidates will take upon the various questions that must be solved within the next two or three years. But you Socialists seem to live rather in the pink clouds of romance or the black depths of despair. It's too bad that you have gotten into these ruts, for if you were as well versed in State and municipal problems as you seem to be in the statistics of poverty you might accomplish something worth while."

I ventured to remark that a thorough knowledge of social evils and their causes along with an understanding of historical tendencies was essential to those who sought to bring about human betterment.

"Yes! Yes! Yes!" the doctor replied impatiently, "but you fellows never seem to get beyond the stage of analysis and denunciation."

That put me on my mettle and I proceeded to mollify my critic by telling him that Socialist governments would take care of the public health in the following ways:

By shortening the hours of labor, thereby reducing the time spent in the dust-laden, poisonous air of mines, factories, stores and offices.

By enforcing clean, healthy, sanitary conditions in all industrial establishments, by safeguarding the employes against dangerous machinery and avoidable accidents, by securing for them as much fresh air and sunlight as practicable.

By building model tenements and homes for working people and renting same to them at a price sufficient only to cover the cost of construction and maintenance.

By abating the smoke nuisance in cities and separating the residential from the factory districts by stretches of woodland.

By spending any sum of money necessary to secure a pure water supply, and, until dairies are municipalized, compelling milk venders and milk producers to observe the greatest cleanliness in order to prevent their supplies becoming infected by the germs of tuberculosis and typhoid fever.

By fighting the unscrupulous adulteration of food by manufacturers and, as rapidly as possible, bringing all food producing industries under public control.

By educating the people in hygiene, sanitation and the care of the sick through illustrated public lectures, special exhibition and the free dissemination of literature.

By the multiplication of public baths, supervised playgrounds, school gymnasiums and public breathing spaces.

By the free medical treatment of all dangerous diseases, by the erection of immense public hospitals to take care of the sick, and by providing substantial, well-cooked, scientifically-prepared nourishing midday meals to school children instead of sending them home at noon hour.

By the establishment of a National Department of Health that would co-ordinate the work of State and municipal boards of health, gather information of value to the public, conduct special investigations and do for human beings what the Department of Agriculture is doing for pigs and corn.

"Excellent! Excellent!" cried the doctor, "but how will Socialist governments raise the immense sums of money with which to carry out this admirable program?"

"They will raise the money," I replied, "by wresting back from the rich most of the wealth they succeed in mulcting from the poor. They will do this through graduated income taxes, heavy death duties and the appropriation of unearned increments. Another source of revenue will be the industries that are brought under direct government control. However, the hundreds of millions of dollars that are now being squandered by Republicans and Democrats upon engines of destruction will be used to save life instead of destroying life. The Socialists believe that arbitration treaties plus the international solidarity of the working class will bring the abolition of armies and navies within the sphere of practical politics."

My medical friend wished to continue the discussion, but that was enough for one day.—From "New York Call."

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