

FROM THE ARCHIVES

A. T. Still, MD, DO

Autobiography of A. T. Still: Chapter XXV

Address to Students and Diplomats, May 7th, 1894—Osteopathy Adheres to the Laws of Nature—Affidavits of Medical Doctors—Osteopathy Can Accomplish All Things—All or Nothing—Stand by the Old Flag.

At the beginning of your Osteopathic duties you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are about to enter the practice of a science. By a systematic adherence to its never-failing laws, you will prove an honor to yourself and a benefactor to mankind. You should ever remember that Osteopathy is confined to the immutable laws of nature, and an unerring Deity who is its Author. As such, it only remains for the Osteopath to conform to these laws, and his efforts in this life will not only be crowned with success, but made rich with thanks of his fellowman. You are indeed to be congratulated upon the splendid grades attained at the close of the recent examinations.

The American School of Osteopathy stands to-day with all the evidences of success. It has reached this attitude in spite of the schemes invented by designing men to connect our science with antiquated ignorance and modern stupidity, to force us to accept relationship with allopathic drugs, homeopathic pills, electric shocks, medicated sweat tubs, and orificial surgery. We are proud of the fact that our science is giving more relief to suffering humanity when properly applied, than all the sciences known to human sympathy combined. We pride ourselves on the truth that we are daily giving to suffering humanity health and comfort, peace and happiness, relief from pain, with good-will toward men.

This is the sole object of our school, and we should strive to maintain it in its stainless purity. No system of allopathy, with its fatal drugs, should ever be permitted to enter our doors. No homeopathic practice, with its sugar-coated pills, must be allowed to stain or pollute our name. No orificial surgery, with its tortures and disappointments to the afflicted, can possibly find an abiding place in the mind of the true, tried, and qualified Osteopath. Osteopathy asks not the aid of anything else. It can “paddle its own canoe” and perform its work within itself when understood. All it asks is a thorough knowledge of the unerring laws that govern its guidance, and the rest is yours.

Eminent physicians and surgeons of the “old school,” who have obtained considerable prominence in their respective localities, and who were former instructors in this institution of learning, have cheerfully given us affidavits as an evidence of the high regard in which they hold the science of Osteopathy.

Editor's Note

Once again, we are at the time of year when the annual AAO Convocation will occur. Convocation is a very special time: a time to come together with like-minded colleagues, when we can renew ourselves, teach each other, learn from each other, and to be grateful for the privilege of being able to practice osteopathic medicine. In keeping with this sentiment, we present some words from our founder, Andrew Taylor Still, MD, DO, as given to his own students in the very early days of our profession. Enjoy!

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To them, as their sworn statement shows, Osteopathy stands preeminently above all things else. They do not link it with various other devices for the relief of suffering humanity, but make it the all-absorbing and permanent science of the age. So with pleasure I submit you the following sworn statement:

KIRKSVILLE, Mo., January 13th, 1893.

I am a fully qualified physician and surgeon, registered to practice. I have an intimate acquaintance with the methods of treating diseases known as Osteopathy, in which no drugs are used.

I solemnly and sincerely swear that I believe and know the above system to be in advance of anything known to the general medical profession in the treatment of disease.

ANDREW P. DAVIS, M.D.,
Registered in Mo., Ill., Colo., and Texas.

WILLIAM SMITH,
Physician and Surgeon, Registered in Scotland, and Mo.

F. S. DAVIS, M. D.,
Registered in Texas.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this fourteenth day of January, A.D. 1893. My commission expires September 5th, 1895.

WILLIAM T. PORTER, Notary Public.

Thus will be seen the position that Osteopathy occupies in the estimation of these gentlemen, who doubtless would blush with shame to see their names affixed to anything inconsistent or contrary to their sworn statements. I will be observed that allopathy, homeopathy, eclecticism, and orificial surgery in particular are conspicuously evaded – and surely they would not stoop to belittle our science by mixing or connecting it with these fading sciences of

antiquity. You are thus appealed to, to be likewise in the practice of your chosen profession. Remember that all power is of no avail unless guided by the laws of the unerring Deity, to whose unchangeable laws we must conform if we hope to win the battle of life. Osteopathy should be the lighthouse on which your eye must be continually fixed. In its study you will find room for every thought, a place for every idea, and comfort for every fear. New and difficult cases will be presented to you for adjustment, but stick to Osteopathy. Do not warp your intellect or stain the good name of this school by straying after strange gods. Always bear in mind that Osteopathy will do the work if properly applied, that all else is unnatural, unreasonable, and is therefore wrong, and should not be entertained by the student or diplomat who has the brain to grasp in all its fulness the most advanced and progressive science of the nineteenth century.

If Osteopathy is not complete within itself, it is nothing. It walks hand in hand with nothing but nature's laws, and for this reason alone it marks the most significant progress in the history of scientific research, and is as plainly understood by the natural mind as the gild at even-tide that decks the golden West. Hear me again You are the only true and brave soldiers in the great army of freedom, battling for the liberation of fettered bodies. On your conscientious work will rest the thanks of man. Live up to the great cause of Osteopathy, and let not the weary one fall by the wayside. Lift in sympathy and love the suffering brother from out the depths of disease and drugs. Let your light so shine before men that the world will know you are an Osteopath pure and simple, and that no prouder title can follow a human name. Stand by the "old flag" of Osteopathy, on whose fluttering folds are emblazoned in letters of glittering gold: "One science, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." ■