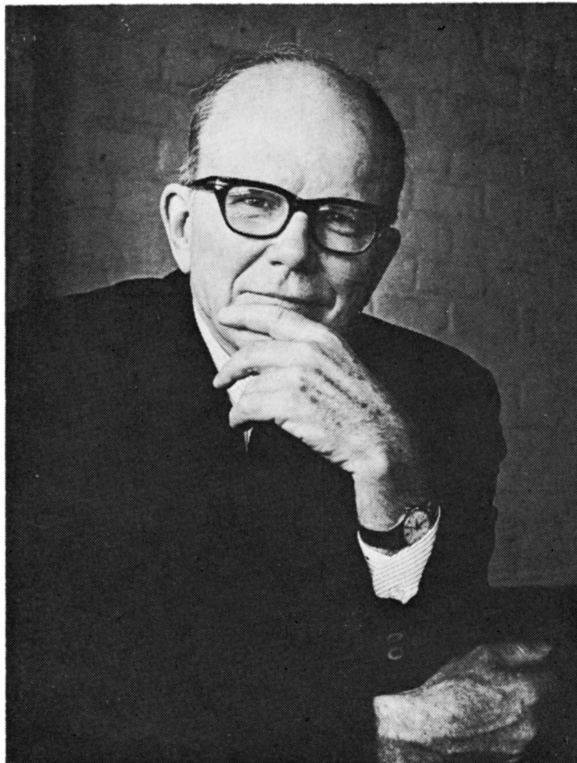


EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Reporter - WILLIAM STANDISH



Dr. Ralph W. Tyler

Dr. Ralph W. Tyler had the perilous position of being the initial speaker to address the audience attending the Centennial of the Faculty of Medicine of Dalhousie University. It was anticipated that Dr. Tyler would deliver a dynamic, pungent critique concerning "Modern" Medical Education; he succeeded indeed.

Dr. Tyler began by praising the Medical School at Dalhousie University for the vast contributions it had made to the medical community in general during the past century. He went on to emphasize that our medical school should be admired equally for the tremendous energies that had been funneled into moulding an even more dynamic and progressive future.

He stated that we are all part of a very affluent, obese society which was placing new demands on the medical faculty particularly in regard to facilities for the ever increasing numbers of Geriatric patients. He also placed emphasis on the progressive shift, in our society, from the uneducated and unskilled worker to a labouring force which is revolutionary; educated and skilled. Medical education, it was said, must be equally as dynamic and versatile as the surrounding social adjustments in order to function effectively.

The university student today, particularly the medical student, has many problems in the learning process. Dr. Tyler pointed out that these students generally have no model for learning and that these individuals must find behavioral ideals in order to insure performance. Students are obsessed with memorizing rather than learning more fruitful behavioral patterns.

It was stated that the contemporary student must have the purpose of his education firmly conceived and also it is essential that he have role models in order to maintain perception of tasks and goals. Even during the preliminary years of undergraduate education the student must maintain contact with the role model. Dr. Tyler stated that

to decrease the present day inadequacy in role models, the individual student must be offered a choice of various types of images with which to identify. There should also be a concerted effort to eliminate the ambiguity of role models.

Dr. Tyler said that there is tremendous difficulty in formation of the syllabus prior to the student venturing into the specific program. Coupled with this is the inadequacy of posing the objectives for the student. It was stated that energy should be directed towards motivating the student to enquire and learn from problem solving rather than from data and solutions which had been derived previously. There is often a great lack of concrete material being offered which, if present, would offer the student a guide for behavioral patterns.

Dr. Tyler felt the sequential learning process was excellent because it avoided repetition which is considered ineffective. Students must have good teachers. Dr. Tyler applied the analogy of the golf professional teaching the novice how to achieve complicated motor function to achieve eventually effective pattern behavior. Inappropriate behavior is a nemesis and should be avoided at all costs.

It was expounded that there is a wide variety of sources of motivation for the individual student. Some students, usually the more confident, are well motivated by the challenge. Dr. Tyler went on to state that the majority of students are repulsed by teachers that give them too much confidence; but, in the same vein, to the average student encouragement is vital.

Dr. Ralph Tyler was effective. He hit very hard on issues regarding medical education which require contemporary ideas and application. The Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University must entertain these ideas, revolutionary or not. The competence of our medical school has never been challenged on either a national or international level but still we must incessantly explore and exploit new trends in education.