EDITORIAL

HERBERT JAMES HALL

It is with a deep feeling of grief that we record the death on February 19, 1923, of Herbert James Hall, a member of the editorial board of Archives, recently president of the American Occupational Therapy Association, founder of the Medical Workshop, of Devereux Mansion, and of the Marblehead Pottery.

His efforts to advance occupational therapy are probably well known to all of our readers. His constructive ideas have been presented in these pages and elsewhere, and it is in some sense a satisfaction to recall the address which is, unfortunately, his last message to occupational therapists. A clear thinker, with a keen sense of humor, Dr. Hall was quick to detect fallacies of reasoning and defects in plans which were presented for his approval. He was withal broad-minded and ready to perceive the different viewpoint of those whose ideas may have diverged from his.

His most marked characteristic, however, was his lovableness. No one could talk with him long and fail to be attracted by his kindliness, gentleness, and love for his fellowmen. One left him with a feeling of having been in contact with one who thought and acted straight.

It is unfortunate that so good and kindly a man should have had to undergo the physical suffering which was his lot during the last eight months of his life, a large part of which time was spent in a hospital. Through all of this period, however, his constant thought was of occupational therapy.

Of tangible accomplishments, besides those mentioned above, Dr. Hall was the author of two books of medical essays, The Untroubled Mind, and Wartime Nerves; two books of poems, Moonrise, and The Sea Awaits; and, with Miss Mertice C.
Buck, of two books upon occupational therapy, The Work of Our Hands, and Handicrafts for the Handicapped. He was also the author of a number of articles upon strictly medical subjects.

As Dr. Hall was born March 12, 1870, he was slightly under fifty-three years of age at the time of his death. He was born at Manchester, New Hampshire, the son of Marshall Parker Hall and Susan Maria (James) Hall. He graduated in medicine from Harvard Medical School in 1895 and, after a year’s hospital service began general practice in Marblehead, Massachusetts. It was not long before he became interested in the milder forms of functional nervous disorders and in order to give them treatment according to his ideas opened a sanitarium.

From the beginning he had recognized the value of occupational therapy in the treatment of this type of disorder and by reason of his original and progressive ideas became a leading exponent. Many prominent occupational therapists have worked at Marblehead under his direction and all fell under the spell of his kindly nature and became devoted admirers.

Dr. Hall was a man of wide culture and broad interests, yet withal he was most modest and unassuming. He was a member of the following organizations: First Congregational Church, American Medical Association, Massachusetts Medical Society, Boston Medical Library Association, Alumni Society of the Massachusetts General Hospital, Children’s Hospital Alumni Association of Boston, Board of Trustees of the Massachusetts Mental Hygiene Association, recently elected to the American Psychiatric Association, Children’s Island Corporation, for two years President of the American Occupational Therapy Association, Board of Directors of the Occupational Therapy Bureau of Boston, Medical director for ten years of Devereux Mansion Sanatorium, President of Medical Workshop Corporation, Board of Trustees of the Mary A. Alley Hospital, Member of the Corinthian Yacht Club.

We shall feel his loss for some time but may his spirit and ideals continue to guide and inspire us.

W. R. D.