

ments. To get the best results in our hospitals for the insane all medical appointments thereto should be of men thoroughly trained and experienced in every branch of the specialty, and yet how rarely we see this rule observed. The appointment of outside practitioners to superintendships for political purposes is a flagrant injustice to the patients, to the taxpayers, and to deserving juniors, of whom there are many in the service. No man should be given charge of an institution for the insane unless possessed of experience in the treatment of the insane, and no junior should be appointed unless he has had special training in psychiatry and has shown a penchant for the work.

I speak feelingly on this subject, gentlemen, because I myself have gone through the mill. Sixteen of the best years of my life were spent in the asylum service of Ontario, and when time and again I saw myself passed over in favor of some outside man, though the senior for promotion, I thought it was time to quit, which I did. This was, of course, under the regime of the late Government. Whether the present one would have treated me any better, I cannot say, but I think it extremely doubtful.

Do not think that I blame the Government entirely for the wrong done by the appointment of outside practitioners. The men who accept such positions without previous experience are equally blameworthy. As bearing on this point I would like to quote you a few words by one of the ablest writers, himself a physician, in the city of Montreal. They appeared in an editorial, "Insanity and Politics," published in the MONTREAL MEDICAL JOURNAL. In this the author says:—"We yield to none in our admiration of the general practitioner. We are aware of his energy, his resource and his fidelity, but not even the general practitioner will lay claim to a capacity for treating off-hand and to the best advantage grave lesions of the eye and ear, or of the more secret parts of the body. He should adopt the same attitude toward the brain. In time it will come to be a shameful thing for a general practitioner to accept a position for which he is not qualified, since thereby he is committing a wrong towards his colleagues and towards his patients."

To my mind the ideal asylum service is that which exists in New York State. There, all superintendents are appointed by the Boards of Management of the various institutions, and must be selected from men who have served at least five years in an institution for the insane, and have proved their capacity by passing an examination for a superintendency. The assistants are appointed by superintendents, their selection being restricted to the three names first on the list of these eligible for the vacancy. No step in advance can be won unless the candidate has had