

ASYLUM APPOINTMENTS.

We have seen repeated editorial comment upon the speeches at the recent meeting in Toronto, at which Dr. Barbart, of New York, spoke strongly against the political aspect of appointments to asylums in Canada. This is ground that we have often before held in these columns, and we make no apology for reproducing the words used on that occasion by Dr. T. J. W. Burgess of Verdun.

"In an address, "The Insane in Canada," delivered at San Antonio, Texas, two years ago, as President of the American Medico-Psychological Association, I summed up my remarks by saying, that while with respect to custodial care and ordinary treatment, moral and medical, Canada, generally speaking, was well up to the times, she was doing little toward the solution of the many problems connected with the scientific aspect of insanity, and, in this respect, she presented a sorry picture when compared with the good work being done in many hospitals elsewhere.

With the erection of a Psychiatric Hospital, as outlined by Dr. Clarke, such a reproach can no longer be made, and, as a native of this province, I am proud to think that Ontario should be the first to take a step that will place her not only foremost as regards this Canada of ours, but foremost as regards the whole vast continent of America.

In praise of the wisdom of the Government for taking such an advanced view too much cannot be said; and here let me tell you that such an establishment will be not only a boon to the most unfortunate of all God's afflicted ones, the insane, but a true economy. Most of you, I have no doubt, know how very prone mental disorders are to become chronic and incurable; and some of you are probably aware that, once the acute stage is passed, lunatics are even more likely than the sane to live to a ripe old age, because protected within hospital walls from so many malign influences. But have any of you thought what each thirty or forty years of lunatic life costs, not only in actual outlay for hospital care but in the loss to the state of the wage-earning power of each insane person. It is simply an enormous sum and if the establishment of a Psychiatric Clinic increases the ratio of cures by even five percent., as I feel sure it will do, the institution will more than pay for its cost no matter how large that may be. For their choice of a superintendent for the new clinic the Government deserves no less praise. To Dr. Clarke we are indebted for our first training school for nurses for the insane, our first isolated hospital for the treatment of the sick insane, and, I think, for our first building for the segregation of the tubercular insane. In the length and breadth of the land no better or more experienced man could have been chosen. I wish I could say the same for the rest of their appoint-