

R. v. Boyle*Youth Personates Medical Practitioner—Illegal Practice
of Medicine Without Registration—Assistance to
College of Physicians and Surgeons*

With amazing effrontery a 23-year-old native and former labourer of Montreal, Que., posed as a medical graduate of the University of Columbia, New York City, U.S.A., and assumed the duties of a qualified interne at Sherbrooke General Hospital, Sherbrooke, Que.* Fortunately the imposture was discovered before any harm resulted from it.

On Nov. 6, 1946, Dr. W. E. Hume of the hospital notified the local R.C.M.P. detachment that the self-asserted medical interne was suspected of being an impostor, and in the investigation that followed it was disclosed that the suspect, who identified himself as Dr. Gerald Boyle, had applied to Dr. H. D. Bayne, chairman of the hospital medical board, for the position and as the hospital was in need of such help he was granted an interview.

During the interview the audacious young man averred that he had applied to the Montreal Neurological Hospital for a position as doctor at that institution and that his services had been accepted to commence on Feb. 1, 1947. At the conclusion of this formal meeting with the bogus physician, Doctor Bayne brought the matter to the attention of the hospital executive and requested permission to accept the application, stating that investigation of the applicant's qualifications and appointment at the Montreal Neurological was under way. Boyle was introduced to several members of the medical staff of the hospital then present. Immediately after these happenings the chairman was called away on a business trip to the United States.

On arrival at Sherbrooke at the end of October, Gerald Boyle—for that in-

deed was his name—had registered at a hotel, signing the degree of "M.D." after his name. When he reported at the hospital for duty on November 1, it was assumed that the chairman had instructed him to do so, and accordingly he was admitted as an interne. During Doctor Bayne's absence, Boyle told a staff physician that he was expecting an appointment to the regular staff of the Neurological Institute where, so he said, he was listed for a position as a doctor in the near future.

In the discharge of his duties during his five-day sojourn at the Sherbrooke hospital he assisted in a number of operations, including an appendectomy and various maternity cases that necessitated surgical skill of a high order, and on at least one occasion administered an anaesthetic. However, all information concerning his activities at the hospital shows that none of the patients suffered any ill effects from the treatment he gave.

While Boyle was personable, intelligent and had some knowledge of hospital requirements, his prepossessing facade started to disintegrate as certain of his errors aroused the suspicions of the nurses and doctors. Becoming aware that all was not as it should be, the hospital authorities on November 6 telephoned the Neurological hospital to check on his assertions only to be told that no application had been filed under his name at that institution nor had he even been heard of there. A board of inquiry then questioned the sham M.D., and when he was unable to produce credentials the R.C.M.P. were called in.

Confronted by the R.C.M.P. investigator in the presence of some ten members of the medical profession with his lack of identification proof or creden-

*For a similar case of personation see *R. v. Galbraith*, 11 R.C.M.P.Q., 176.