

"*friends at court*," as we commonly hear it expressed. From a personal acquaintance with the present Trust, we are confident in saying that they are men possessed of powers of discrimination and honesty of purpose which will keep them above any such considerations as those indicated.

There is a great deal of force in the idea that, except in very rare cases, hospital appointments should have a limited duration. It will be apparent to anyone who is at all careful to inquire into the matter, that, without a definite limit to these appointments, a large number of medical men can never hope to reach them at any age when they could make them of any value in a practical way. If we cannot get the experience that is acquired in a hospital during the first ten or twelve years of professional life, the time has passed when it will serve anything like as valuable a purpose in giving increased efficiency to our labours. And, therefore, when we have but one General Hospital, and so many men whose claims to appointments are alike strong, it is impossible that all can be gratified under the existing mode of appointing the medical staff.

But we think that, if it were so arranged that every appointment made upon the medical staff of the hospital should terminate after a certain length of time, very much greater satisfaction, both to the profession and the public, would be the result. No one will deny that there is no profession in which the most extensive and varied experience that can be obtained is so important as in that of medicine. Scarcely a day passes without the occurrence of a case in which we feel the want of the kind of experience obtained in a General Hospital only. There, if we so desire it, we get the benefit, not only of all the cases coming under our own care, but also of every case possessing any interest that is admitted into the institution. Well, it is only reasonable to suppose that in an institution where the average number of patients is in the neighbourhood of two hundred, a vast amount of information is obtained that we would absolutely fail to secure, within any reasonable limit of time, in private practice. If, then, it be admitted that extensive experience is so important a desideratum for eminent professional success, we are

only speaking in the interest of the public when we claim that professional appointments should be available to as large a number of the profession as possible. This can only be accomplished by attaching a limit to the time for which they may be held. If appointments can continue during pleasure or for an indefinite period, it is manifest that only a very small proportion of the profession can hope to secure them at a time when they will be of any practical value. We are inclined to suggest, therefore, that no appointment should extend over a period longer than ten years.

To meet the suggestion made in the *Lancet*, we would propose that, on the retirement of any member of the regular staff whose services have been eminently valuable, so as to render his counsel desirable, he should be appointed upon the consulting staff of the hospital. We are free to admit that there are men amongst us whose labours upon the regular staff have been so eminently successful; in every way, as to render their counsel, in difficult cases, of the first importance. Hence, to adopt any measure which would result in the severing of their connection with the hospital entirely, would be a great mistake. But if they are willing that their services should be retained as consulting physicians or surgeons, every end would be fully met. We see no valid reason for limiting the number appointed upon the consulting staff; and we would, therefore, favour the continuance, in this capacity, of every man of prominence who has served a term upon the regular staff.

In making the suggestions now offered, we trust it will be distinctly understood that no selfish motives have prompted us. We are desirous that hospital advantages may be placed at the disposal of as large a number of the profession as possible. We are confident that such a modification of the present arrangement of our General Hospital as we have now indicated would be greatly in the interests of the profession, by more eminently qualifying them for the grave responsibility of their calling, and thus rendering their services, in every way, more acceptable and valuable to the general public.