

a proper preparation for the work. Young physicians, without a knowledge of insanity in its various complex manifestations, and without a practical experience in the methods of treatment, must be appointed to fill these positions, and assume, subject to the superintendent whose chief time must be occupied with business matters, the grave responsibility of these cases. Even their theoretical knowledge of psychiatry is either nil or extremely limited, the great majority of medical schools unfortunately omitting mental diseases from their curricula entirely, or giving only an incomplete and unsatisfactory course upon it as a side issue of the course in neurology, and in only a few instances do we find systematic instruction given by prominent alienists. The young men chosen to fill these positions are usually selected with care by those having the appointing power, many of them have had a college education for their medical studies, and a large proportion of them have had a term of service in general hospitals after their graduation in medicine, but they are given little or no opportunity for a study of psychiatry, and as a result the first years of their service in the hospitals for the insane are used in making up the deficiency. If the alienist has a right to claim his field as a specialty, as he undoubtedly has, some practical and theoretical knowledge should be demanded of those appointed upon his staff, and as the treatment of the curable insane is of too much importance for the institutions provided for this purpose to serve as training schools in psychiatry for the recent graduate, some other opportunity for such training should be given. Furthermore the number of physicians is entirely inadequate. We find the assistant physician with hundreds of insane patients under his care, and with the general medical work, the excited stages of the chronic forms of insanity, clerical duties and other work to occupy his time, but little time is left for the study of the acute insane under his care. Consequently the time which should be given to the most careful study of these cases is totally inadequate, and as a result the most thorough knowledge of such cases is either not obtained, or it is obtained only at the expense of other duties. Nowhere is close and constant study of a case so necessary as in the rational treatment of the insane. In general diseases of a diagnosis once made, and a course of

treatment determined upon, the case needs simply intelligent watching for new indications and complications. In insanity, with its constantly varying symptoms, its changing delusions, morbid propensities and imperative conceptions, changes cannot be detected by the physician by the use of some sensitive instrument like the clinical thermometer, but are discovered only by the most constant and careful scrutiny of the constantly changing panorama which is passing before him, every phase of which must be observed, in order that the most successful treatment may be pursued. Under the present system, this cannot but fail.

(4) The attendants are insufficient in numbers and, in the great majority of cases, totally unfit for the work. Upon no part of the organization of a hospital for the insane does the success of treatment depend more directly than upon the efficiency of the attendants. Constantly present, as they should be, with their influence always exercising an important control over the mind of the patient, they form an essential part of the healthful atmosphere which should surround the curable insane, and to them in great part belongs the duty, by proper conduct, example and guidance, of leading the afflicted mind of the patient into more rational channels. Nowhere are kindness, sympathy, intelligent interpretation of the methods used, and a proper understanding of the objects to be accomplished, more essential than in the care of the insane. A harsh word, injudicious conduct or ridicule, will do irretrievable harm. The necessity for better attendants has long been recognized by the officers of hospitals for the insane, and its accomplishment has been attempted by the commendable effort to raise their standard by the organization of training schools. Some good results have followed this movement, but here again we have to contend with an insurmountable obstacle, the insufficiency of their mental qualifications. The remuneration which attendants receive is insufficient to bring to institutions many of those who are fitted, by education and natural aptitude, to fill the responsible position of trained nurse and attendant upon the insane, and as a result our material is largely incapable of training. Furthermore, of those who are well fitted for the work, the majority soon find more lucrative positions outside of institutions, and the advantage gained by the training schools is thus