enemy. The committee who have in charge nominations to fill vacancies are the individuals who should ask for an account of qualifications, and for nominations. Personal friendship, on the part of Trustees, will, of course, enter into every election for every office; and where an institution is carried on under the direction of Trustees elected by a political body, and frequently changed, political, as well as personal, friendship becomes, sometimes, an element. It is for the advantage of a hospital to have its government a permanency. This is desirable on every account. Men become interested in an institution to which they are long attached. They learn its wants. They become acquainted with its officers, and their ways of administration. They become qualified to advise and direct in its matters of finance. Although they may arrive at the age of fogginess, there are always young ones enough to counterbalance too rigid economy and to prevent elections of physicians and surgeons too old for work.

This subject of appointments has long been in the mind of the writer, who feels entitled to speak upon the subject, having himself held a hospital office, though he never asked for one. It seems to him that the following plan would be a good one. When a vacancy is about to occur, let the fact be made known by advertisement that any one *may* apply for the office who wishes, and let him send in as many names of medical men as references as he may choose, but no testimonials from his referees. The committee of nomination should be the party to seek information concerning ability, qualifications and character; and although it would be as well for an applicant to show his person, any solicitation from political acquaintances, any entreaties from family and friendly bores, should be done away with. A referee could then, without the slightest inconvenience, express his opinion concerning an applicant for a position, and his comparative judgment between two or more applicants.

Men who ask you for certificates of qualification are often very much vexed when they discover that, either before or after writing them, you have also written the same for others. This is truly a piece of self-sufficiency. That one has said that Dr. A. is qualified to do a certain work, is only evidence that he knows or thinks he knows it. It is not evidence that he has not the same knowledge of the ability of Dr. X. or of Dr. Z. His giving a certificate to that effect does not make him a partisan of Dr. A., and it would be as well, though some do not like to do so, to inform one applicant for a certificate that you are willing to furnish it, but that you have already done the same for another.

Some of the readers of the JOURNAL might prefer the system by *concours*. That will do well in some places. It has been adopted to a certain extent in one of the city institutions. On a more extended scale, we do not believe it would be either possible or useful in this country. * * *

Obituary.

SEWALL G. BURNAP.

AT the annual meeting of the Thurber Medical Association, held this day, the following resolutions were passed:—

Whereas, Our brother, Sewall G. Burnap, of Holliston, has been removed from the scene of his long and useful labors on earth, and, as we trust, to a happy and everlasting home in the life which succeeds this, therefore

Resolved, That, while we bear our willing testimony to his character as a man and physician and deplore his absence from this the annual meeting of our Association, we tender to his wife and other relatives the sincere expression of our condolence and sympathy in their affliction, and commend them to the love of that Being who doeth all things well.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the family of the deceased, the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, and the *Milford Journal*.

J. ALLEN FAY, M.D., Secretary.

Milford, Mass., October 22, 1874.