

only an informal line from an intrepid physician beseeching their admission. It is felony to detain any person without definite legal conditions. These may seem exacting, but the superintendent does not coin them, neither can he alter the laws of the land. Doubtless, over-stringent lunacy laws have delayed the restoration of many a curable case. Take Illinois, for example, where every suspect is dragged before a jury, no matter how ill, and made the butt of the court idlers. What is the consequence? The sensitive hesitate to seek the commitment of early cases of insanity, and have family troubles exposed. Nothing is gained, for sane people have been deprived of liberty under the system. Too many legislators would thus submit the sick in mind to the same ignominy as criminals.

In Canada, we are progressing towards the ideal we hope for, that holds liberty sacred, but still admits the insane to treatment without injurious delay. We are many steps from it yet, however, at least in Quebec. The only cases where we think strict formalities should be dispensed with are those where persons come of their own accord for admission, as they do sometimes to most superintendents. Such are usually genuine patients, seeking relief from symptoms recognized by themselves, the forerunners, perhaps, of serious mental disease. These should be allowed to enter as freely as to a general hospital. However, our duty is in the present, when it is obligatory that patients be admitted in a set way. Certain formal documents, correctly prepared, are requisite. Those who see many of these observe occasional errors, for which the fallibility of human nature is answerable. Some of the points commonly neglected will be noticed, in the hope that benefit may accrue to some case of "moping melancholy" or "moonstruck madness."

In our different provinces, the blank forms vary somewhat, but the essential features in all are based on the English statutes. Whatever else be wanting, a medical certificate is always required, and with it some history of the patient. When the friends of an insane person accept a physician's advice to adopt hospital treatment, the admission blanks should at once be pro-