

since last June. We believe the custom is to retain the lunatics in our prison for a certain period, with a view to having them under the *surveillance* of the jail physician, who is expected to certify before a judge of the Superior Court that they are dangerous lunatics and fit objects for confinement in a lunatic asylum. This form has to be complied with, and no lunatic can, in Canada, be legally incarcerated in an asylum for the care and treatment of the insane, without the certificate of two medical men and an order from a judge of the Superior Court. We regard this as unnecessary, and certainly in the case of the lunatics from this part of the Province of Quebec it is a great hardship.

We have before alluded to insanity being a well recognised disease, having distinct exacerbations. In some overwrought brains the attack is acute in its nature, and if carefully and judiciously treated it will not pass on to that chronic form of the disease which is so apt to be permanent, or, at best, be attended by a lengthened attack of mental alienation. Why then place the pauper lunatic under a condition of such extreme misery that in his lucid moments he must feel himself abandoned and forgotten by his fellow man; an outcast from society; not fit even to herd with swine; cast off, shut up in a loathsome cell of a prison house—deprived of his freedom and denied the light of day, except that which struggles through the grated and barred window of his apartment.

Looking on this subject from an economic point of view, we would ask, is there wisdom in this course of action? Insanity is a disease, granted, it is an acute disease, and that period, like in all acute diseases, most amenable to treatment is at the outset of the attack. Allow that period to pass unnoticed or maltreated, and what is the result? A confirmed and settled madness, and, as a consequence, an unfortunate fellow mortal thrown upon the country for care and support during the continuance of his natural life. This is the case of the pauper lunatic. The lunatic who has friends willing and able to succour him in his distress is placed under very different circumstances. His disease is recognised at the outset; he is at once placed under judicious treatment; isolation and removal from all sources of worry and annoyance are at once adopted, and in the majority of cases he is enabled to return to the bosom of his family and to his industrial occupation after the lapse of a few weeks or months.

This is no garbled statement nor overdrawn picture. There are many cases that could be cited even in our city, with its hurry and excitement where men striving to become rich, and labouring by night and day their over-taxed mental faculties gave way and tem-