

This is under date 6th July, 1864. We do not think that in this the proprietors are altogether blameable; they have no alternative, they are forced to receive lunatics, who are remaining in the prison houses, or who are at large. We desire to point out the suicidal policy of our Government, the gross wrong done not alone to the inmates of these institutions, but to the whole country. All authorities concur in the opinion, that insanity, to be treated with the hope of success, must be treated early in the attack. It is certainly more than a retrograde step for us in Canada to start a plan of our own, and ignore the experience and teaching of those who have made this subject a study in the mother country. We have before shewn that a poor man in Lower Canada, at least in the District of Montreal, requires from six weeks to six months' experience of prison life in the cells of our common gaol before he can be admitted even into the "miserable make-shift at St. Johns," or into the Beauport Lunatic Asylum. Six weeks' incarceration in these cells, is quite sufficient to drive any sane man mad; the care they receive, the "medical comforts," if any, are not calculated to relieve a patient suffering from an attack of acute mania. In writing this, we do not desire to say one word against the management of our gaol, which we are willing to believe is in every respect a model institution of its kind; we simply wish to intimate that it is not a Lunatic Asylum, and therefore is a place totally unfit to receive persons mentally deranged.

The consequence of this system of *laissez faire*, this do-nothing policy, on the principle as our friend Dr. Douglas suggests, "that he who wishes to sit easy should sit still," is in reality a policy which, laying aside the moral obligations to our fellow beings, is calculated, before many years, of throwing on the country for support a host of incurable cases of insanity: each pauper inmate of the Beauport Asylum costs the country some \$3 per week.

In a letter which appeared in the *Quebec Mercury*, under date, 15th July, 1865, Dr. Douglas says, in reference to the article in our last number, "The statements about cubic space are *utter bosh*, and are untrue. The statements about consequent sickness and deaths are equally so." The statements about the cubic space were, that the patients of the Beauport Lunatic Asylum were limited to 300 cubic feet. This is fully borne out by the Reports of the Commissioners; indeed they say some of the cells do not contain 300 cubic feet of space, and that "they are occupied by dirty patients."

In the July number of the *American Journal of Insanity*, at page 50, in the report of the proceedings of the Association of Medical Superin-