

protection, a record to show the world at large why the patient should be deprived of liberty, and a defence for themselves should this opinion be doubted. Many physicians make out their certificates to satisfy *themselves* rather than others. The "general conversation" they refer to conveyed the idea of insanity to them, because it contained the facts on which they founded their opinion, they forgot to make the nature of this general conversation plain to others.

In the ordinary case of insanity it is such a simple matter to make the facts plainly understood that it should never be neglected, and it is better to be long winded than delightfully brief. On several occasions I have seen physicians in the witness box made absolutely ridiculous to the Court, because they had unfortunately dealt in general statements in certificates instead of facts. The criticism "what fools these mortals be" was universally made, but I knew that these physicians were right in their general opinions, and it was not to be wondered at if in the hurly burly of busy practice they had forgotten their facts. The only criticism I could make was that they were foolish to trust to memory for their facts. If they had stated them in the certificates at the time of examination there would have been no trouble, no hesitation, no laugh by the crowd when the very clever lawyer brought the blush to the cheek of our medical friend, when he found it impossible to back up his own opinion so awkwardly expressed in years gone by. If this paper did nothing more than impress on you the desirability of making your facts put down in certificates plain to others as well as to yourselves it would have accomplished something. Of course I have been taking it for granted up to the present that we are considering cases where insanity is patent and no difficulty exists in regard to the making of a certificate. Frequently trouble will arise, and at times it is really a very delicate not to say difficult task to certify to the insanity of a patient, even if you are satisfied that the person is dangerously insane.

Possibly the simplest way of dealing with this question is to lay down a few general rules to be considered in the examination of a person supposed to be suffering from insanity.

The first question to be considered is whether the patient is insane and irresponsible in the eyes of the law. Next—if insane, what form of insanity is he suffering from, whether it is functional or organic, otherwise curable or incurable? Shall the treatment be conducted at home or in an Hospital? If the latter treatment is decided on, then, the question of a certificate comes up and the examination