

A medical certificate to the effect that the applicant was capable of making the request for treatment, and was in need of it, countersigned by a magistrate, should be sufficient to protect the procedure from abuse.

The poor, much more than the well-to-do, suffer from the want of appropriate means of treatment in the early stages of mental ill-health preceding the stage of certifiable insanity, and are consequently much more in need of voluntary boarding.

The Parliamentary Committee of the Association, which is doing such good work in bringing to the attention of the Lord Chancellor the various legislative reforms that are so much needed, may be trusted to urge this amongst the foremost of the possible improvements in the treatment of mental disease.

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*The Inadequate Lunacy Commission.*

Lunacy legislation in the present Parliament is again conspicuous by its absence, but before this reaches the eyes of our readers there will probably have been some discussion in the House on the insufficient number of medical men on the Lunacy Commission.

The proofs of this insufficiency are so well known to the members of this specialty, and have been so often urged, that no repetition of them is needed here; but interest must be felt in regard to the effect on the House of Commons of a statement of the facts of the case.

The Parliament that hears with comparative indifference of the destruction of £150,000 worth of tinned food, and of the distribution amongst the population of fifteen thousand blankets (possibly infectious), is not likely to be greatly perturbed by being informed that the welfare of a hundred thousand insane patients is being neglected.

A cynic would say that the insane have no votes and consequently cannot expect consideration, but the truth probably lies in the fact that Parliament is more interested in things which concern party rather than the State. National health is as yet a question that is not within the range of practical politics, and lunacy matters must, therefore, for the present, remain in their condition of muddle.