

sending covering letters for orders of books, photostats, annual reports and so forth. All of the old niceties—"we are pleased to have been of service to you; you will find enclosed; we hope that the information on the enclosed form will prove useful"—all that has gone the way of the solarium, the upstairs maid and the liveried butler. Their memory lingers on.

Even where some kind of reply is necessary we have omitted the amenities and substituted forms for letters in as many cases as possible. For the former courteous replies to requests for information about the hours we keep, the services we render, we have substituted Form 1 which only pallidly resembles a civilized communication, and for a request for records we have devised a reply (Form No. 2) which in its one page may be a denial that we have records or a list of what we have and the price for photographic copies. No doubt, now that we are launched on this way, we shall devise other forms—Form No. 3, Form No. 4 and so forth. We are perhaps the last archival institution to adopt this way of life. I submit the two forms we now use for your consideration. Perhaps we have not gone so far that there is no turning back.

FORM NO. 1

"The Hall of Records has in its custody a large collection of records which are invaluable for researchers in genealogy and local history. These records are primarily of governmental origin—State, county and municipal—and they include probate, land, court and church materials. Visitors are welcome to study these records in the public search room which is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays.

We are glad to search our indexes for names of individuals but, with some exceptions, we cannot do so unless we know the full name, the county or parish of residence, the type of record wanted, and its approximate date. We cannot furnish every reference to a family name which appears in the indexes, nor can we search the large number of records which are unindexed. We never attempt to trace families, nor can we determine ancestry.

We do not recommend genealogists, but we refer requests for professional help to the Maryland Historical Society, 201 West