

The average number of men under restraint was two; of women, four. The average number of men in seclusion was five; of women, eight.

The foregoing are the principal points of interest referred to in the Report.

There are probably some of our readers who are wont to regard the Dutch as a people

"That always ply the pump, and never think  
They can be safe, but at the rate they sink,  
That feed like cannibals on other Ashes,  
And serve their cousin-germans up in dishes!"—*Hudibras*

This, however, is but a travesty; and that the Dutch are capable of high emotions and benevolent designs they have proved, by the means they have taken to provide for the care and the cure of their insane population.

D. H. TUKE.

#### *Sulphuric Acid, v. Urine.*

My dear Sir,—If you think that the use of sulphuric acid diluted with water, as a chemical agent for disimpregnating floor, or other boards saturated with urine, is not as well known to the superintendents of asylums generally as to myself, may I ask you to give a place to this letter in the next number of our *Journal*.

It is of course very desirable to have wooden in preference to other floors; but often in wet and dirty, and occasionally also in other wards, these become in the course of time partially saturated with urine, much discolored, and very offensive. No scrubbing or scalding will effect more than a temporary improvement in such floors, for the wood has absorbed and holds much, becoming a reservoir for the perpetual exhalation of the volatile ammonia.

Let such a stained floor have poured over it a mixture of one fluid ounce of sulphuric acid with twenty or twenty-four ounces of water; let the liquor be diffused in an even stratum, and lie for twenty-four hours.

The first effect of the application will be effervescence, then the evolution of a strong urinous odour (soon disappearing), and lastly, in the course of the drying up, the deposition of a white film (sulphate of ammonia) all over the area treated, varying in amount in different parts, according to the depth of stain.

Lastly, let the salt be washed off, and if the boards be not restored to something like the color of clean deal, this may be obtained by a second or third repetition of the process. All odour of urine will be gone and the room rendered sweet.

I do not find the use of the acid on similarly stained floor-stones so successful. The action is unequal; some parts resisting it, as if protected by something greasy. A further trial, however, on stone, will be worth making, after well cleansing the surface with a strong solution of washing-soda. The acid may be applied to urine-stained crib-bedsteads, or in any situation to wood.

The principle, that of converting a volatile into a fixed salt, which may be removed, appears sufficiently good, and I beg to assure you that the effect is very gratifying in practice.

There is nothing novel in the idea, which, as far as I know, and as regards this sort of application of it, is due to my friend and teacher, Dr. Hitch. It can be

considered as no more than an extension of its use in pillows containing bran, to catch the urine from persons confined to bed with sore, which he communicated to the *Lancet*, I believe, some years since.

I remain, your obedient servant,

JAMES E. HUXLEY.

County Lunatic Asylum, Maidstone, October 10, 1854.

#### *Treatment of Cholera.*

Essex Lunatic Asylum, Nov. 6th, 1854.

My dear Sir,—In compliance with your request, I send you a short statement regarding the cholera cases which have taken place in this asylum.

The disease first appeared on the 8th day of September last, and has caused considerable mortality among the unfortunate lunatics.

Two wards, one on the male, and another on the female side of the house, were immediately set apart for those attacked, and attendants were appointed, whose duty it was to attend entirely upon the cholera cases.

The epidemic, however, spread, and from the day of its first appearance up to the 15th October, nineteen cases of Asiatic cholera and ten cases of choleraic diarrhoea took place; of these, twelve recovered and seventeen died. During the same period, about seventy cases of diarrhoea without collapse were under treatment.

My treatment of cholera was to give two grains of calomel every fifteen minutes for the first five hours, then two grains every half hour for three hours, and afterwards two grains every hour for from twelve to fifteen hours, with cold spring water to drink. Mustard sinapisms were applied to the extremities and abdomen, and friction was also used. In four of the cases stimulants were administered, which seemed to aggravate the symptoms.

Having had considerable experience when in India in treating the disease, the mode which I then considered and found most successful was calomel in small doses frequently repeated, and although the deaths have been large here in proportion to the number attacked, this circumstance arises in a great measure from the weak state of many of the patients previous to the attack.

I have no hesitation in saying, that I would again adopt the same mode of treating the disease, should this institution be again unfortunately visited by cholera.

Yours faithfully,

D. C. CAMPBELL.

[We are informed that there has been a severe outbreak of cholera in the Hoxton Asylum. All the cases, with one exception, happened during the first week in October. Nineteen male and seven female patients died. We do not know that the pestilence has hitherto invaded any other asylum.—Ed.]

#### *Inquest at the Norfolk County Asylum.*

On the 23rd ult. an inquest was held at Thorpe, before Mr. Pilgrim, one of the county coroners, on the body of William Sizer, a man aged 36, who died suddenly that morning, in the County Lunatic Asylum. Evidence was adduced to the effect that the deceased was admitted on the 15th of July last; that