

The patient was treated with 150 grains of chloral, and one half-grain of morphia hypodermically, in addition to 20 minims and four ounces of whiskey, by the mouth, between 6.50 and 10.45 a.m. After the last dose, it is said, "within a few moments the patient fell into a quiet slumber," out of which he never came, dying at 9.40 p.m. There was no autopsy. The report says:—"The reply of another witness to the question, to which of these drugs, the morphia or the chloral, would you attribute the profound stupor of the patient? was quick and emphatic. 'I do not believe either had anything to do with it.' As to the propriety of the treatment adopted, the testimony was unanimous that it is abundantly justified by precedent, and by high medical authority, that the emergency was very great, and that no censure could attach to the adoption of heroic measures to save the life of the injured man." It concludes with the following remarks—

In the course of our inquiry, however, some other facts bearing upon the general management of the hospital came to our knowledge, to which we feel bound to allude.

The use of chloral-hydrate, to produce sleep at night, common, as we are informed, in the majority of hospitals, is carried to a considerable extent at Elgin. The night list of medicines administered, shows that about sixty patients, on an average, take chloral every night; the average dose being from thirty to thirty-five grains, in combination with whiskey, opium, or fluid extract of hyocyanus.

Mechanical restraints are also employed, viz. :—The camisole, the muff, and the crib. The camisole is a stout jacket, with long sleeves, for confining the arms and hands; the muff is a leather contrivance for the same purpose; the crib is a strong bedstead, with mattress and bedding, the same as in other beds, and enclosed on the sides and top by a stout open cover to prevent the patient from sitting up or making his escape from the bed. The camisoles and muffs are kept in the wards; but the attendants have instructions not to use them without the physician's orders. No record, however, is kept of individual instances of restraint, an omission which we think it advisable to remedy in future. The crib-bedstead is in use only in exceptional cases and at night, unless in acute delirium, or other illness requiring its employment in the day time, which is of rare occurrence. The night-watch has instructions to visit patients sleeping in cribs, and see that they are cared for properly, and if soiling of the bed should occur, it is his duty to attend to the cleaning of the bed, and of the patient who occupies it.

None of these mechanical restraints are used for purposes of punishment or discipline, but simply to prevent patients from injuring themselves or others.

Attendants are not allowed to strike patients, except in self-defence, and to protect other patients from dangerous assaults. In the violent and excited wards this is sometimes necessary, and cannot be avoided. The fact that striking does occasionally occur was admitted by all the attendants, and justified, in case of necessity, both by them, and by the officers of the hospital. One attendant admitted that he had struck patients without reporting the fact to the Superintendent, as he is required to do by the bye-laws. We recommended his discharge, and also that of Mr. Craue. We understand that this has since been done.

As to the general efficiency, humanity, and success of the institution, nothing was developed by the testimony which would bring it into question.

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#### THE LIABILITY OF A HUSBAND FOR DEBTS CONTRACTED BY HIS WIFE WHILE HE WAS INSANE.

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SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE, NOVEMBER 23.

COURT OF APPEAL.

(Sittings at Westminster, before Lords Justices BRAMWELL, BRETT, and COTTON.)

SWIFT v. NUNN.

This action was against the same defendant as the case of "Drew v. Nunn," which came before the Court yesterday. It was an action by a butcher for the amount of his account for meat sold and delivered to the defendant's wife at the time when the defendant was in confinement as a lunatic. The defence was that the wife had no authority to pledge the husband's credit, and that she had a sufficient income during her husband's lunacy to prevent the necessity of