



## Our Foreign Letter.

### LETTER FROM HOLLAND.

It is Sunday. I look out of my window. In our silent street reigns an unusual bustle and noise. Men, women and children, most of them with an anxious expression on their faces, hasten to see their dear ones who are in the great building, the walls of which are the mute witnesses of so much sorrow and suffering—the new-built Wilhelmina Hospital—a municipal institution on which Amsterdam may bear pride. It is the general visiting day, and all who have relations or friends nursed there are longing to clasp hands with them, and rejoice in their recovery, or to speak a few words of comfort and sympathy to those who have already been touched by the wings of the Angel of death.

While staring at the multitude entering the main entrance of the Hospital, I feel my heart overwhelmed with emotion. Before my mental eyes rises the figure of a mother, whose pale, haggard face is brightened by a happy smile when she looks at her husband and children gathered round her bed. Here lies a little patient made glad by an orange or some toy, perhaps bought at the cost of a great pecuniary sacrifice, for the greater part of those who find a shelter in the Hospital are poor. . . . But I will not worry my kind readers with my philosophical meditations on so large, and nearly inexhaustible, a topic. I will rather ask their permission to lead them round the Hospital, at the erecting of which the pavilion system has been predominant.

We begin with the administration building, in the midst of which we see a large passage, through which carriages may ride in order to reach all the underparts of the great whole. At our right and at our left hand, are two long corridors. At the right side, we find on the ground floor a meeting hall for the hospital committee; the office and parlour of the medical superintendent; the ditto of the adjunct-manager, and other rooms, destined for the settlement of all matters concerning the management of the hospital. On the first floor are the dining, sitting, and bed rooms of the four physicians, as well as those of the superintendents. On the second floor, we see the rooms for the male nurses, the door-keepers, and the bedrooms of the other male servants. At the left side of the large passage, we find an accident ward, an out-patient's consulting and waiting room; the office, parlour, sitting and bed room of the lady superintendent, and the cozy, comfortable conversation-hall of the sisters. On the first floor are the nurses' rooms, and on the second one the probationers' rooms and the bedrooms of the female servants.

In the right and left aisle of the administrative

building, are bed and sitting rooms with adjoining kitchens, bathing rooms, and closets, for paying patients. Along these rooms we find terraces and verandahs.

All those precautions that are necessary to prevent the danger of fire, have been taken. So there are a great number of outlets; the corridors, kitchens, closets, etc., are of granite; the stairs are all made of stone.

On leaving the administration-building—which contains 113 rooms—by the back door, we see before us, in a perpendicular direction, three pavilions; one for male patients, one for female patients, and one for the sufferers from nervous diseases. Those pavilions are built in a north-south direction, so that the wards are warmed in the morning at the east side, and in the afternoon at the west side by the sun. The pavilions for male and female patients—not that where are nursed the unhappy victims of neuroses and psychoses—are surrounded at the west side by verandahs, covered with glass, which communicate by means of glass doors with the wards. Convalescents, who are not well enough to walk in the garden, are transported there to rejoice of the fresh, reviving air and the cherishing warmth of the sun.

The wards are spacious and lofty; the walls are decorated with pictures and engravings—thanks to the benevolent care of the same ladies who cheer the sad aspect of those scenes of so much sorrow and misery, by the presence of ferns and flowers.

The pavilion for the sufferers from nervous diseases consists of a middle-building of two storeys, flanked at the right and the left by two congruent aisles of three storeys. On entering the vestibule we find at our right hand a waiting room for those who come to see their relatives and friends nursed there; at our left hand is a parlour. On the first floor are the sitting and bed rooms of the two Superintendents. In the middle of this building is the auditory, also used as a church. Moreover, we find there a kitchen, a bathing room, isolating cells, and two observation rooms. Parallel with the administration building is the household building, which contains the dispensary, the magazines of linen, clothes, etc., the laundry, the kitchen, the caloriferes, a disinfecting room, a mangling and ironing room, etc.

At the west side of the ground, on which the Wilhelmina Hospital is built, are four barracks, destined for the sufferers of infectious diseases. After having cast a look at the pretty villa of the medical superintendent we inspect the pathological-anatomical laboratory, where also the dead bodies are exposed, on behalf of the friends and relatives of the deceased, before the funeral takes place.

Before finishing this letter I will mention to my kind and patient reader, with a single word, the storm of indignation that has been roused in our whole country by the resolutions taken by the Dutch Association for Treatment of the Sick in its meeting of the 19th December of last year. The stumbling block is the three years' training in *one and the same* Hospital, and also the condition that the Hospital, where the Probationer receives her training, must contain *at least forty* beds.

In a following letter I hope to be able to give a report of the next meeting of the Association, which is soon to be held.

HOLLANDIA.

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