

been relieved by the transfers to Youghal, but it is almost impossible to cope with the increasing numbers on the female side. As regards the superintendence of the Auxiliary Asylum at Youghal, the Rev. Dr. Brown, Bishop of Cloyne, seems determined, if he possibly can, to throw aside all medical superintendence of the Youghal Asylum, though an integral part of the Cork Asylum, and leave the management entirely in the hands of a community of nuns who are to be responsible to the Committee, the chaplain of the Auxiliary Asylum to come to Cork to represent the matron and lay all matters of business and small accounts before the Committee. It may be remembered that some time ago in opposition to the desire of the medical profession in Cork, the Committee appointed a visiting medical man to the Youghal institution, where 383 patients are housed, and now Bishop Brown wishes further to set aside the superintendence of the Resident Medical Superintendent at Cork. In speaking at the meeting his lordship defines the duties of the Cork Medical Superintendent as those of merely admitting or removing patients, and goes on to say 'it was not essential that the manager of a lunatic asylum should be a doctor, but the fact of his being a doctor was no disqualification.' Fortunately the Lord Lieutenant is not of the same opinion as the Bishop, for he states in a letter which accompanied receipt of rules:

"The Resident Medical Superintendent of the Cork District Asylum is charged with the superintendence and regulation of this auxiliary asylum, it being a department of the Cork Asylum, and there is no power to transfer or to impose on any of the officers duties which appertain to the Resident Medical Superintendent, and which he is legally bound to discharge.'

"To meet this difficulty the Bishop proposed the following resolution:

"That whereas the Lord-Lieutenant by letter dated March 22nd, 1901, sanctioned the arrangement that the Manager of the Youghal Auxiliary Asylum need not be a medical practitioner, we insist on our right to continue that system (according to the resolution unanimously adopted for this purpose), by which the matron is made responsible for the discipline and domestic management of the Auxiliary Asylum, without supervision from the Superintendent of the Cork District Asylum or other medical officer.'

"And to make his resolution doubly sure his lordship proposed a second one:

"That we further request the Lord Lieutenant to alter the rules and regulations of the Committee of the Cork District Lunatic Asylum so as to give effect to the above resolution by introducing the following rule:—That the matron of the Youghal Auxiliary Asylum is to be responsible to the Committee of Management for the discipline and domestic management of the Auxiliary Asylum, and to modify any existing regulation as far as may be necessary.'

CHRISTMAS EVE FESTIVITIES.

From our contemporary the *Dublin Daily Express* of December 27th, 1904, we quote the following tit-bit:

"Mr. J. Fitzgerald, solicitor, coroner, held an inquest at Sligo District Lunatic Asylum yesterday morning touching the death of an inmate of that institution named Michael Ward, which took place under peculiar circumstances at a late hour on Saturday night last.

"From the evidence adduced it appeared that the deceased was an ex-school teacher, aged about 60 years, and a native of Doonara, co. Leitrim. He was committed to the asylum as a dangerous lunatic in December, 1890, but owing to his good conduct within recent times he was employed as a "liberty" patient to do messages. On Saturday evening last he went into Sligo, and returned to the institution about 8.30. Night Attendants Cullen and Kelly both saw him when he returned at that time, but neither saw anything unusual in his demeanour. However, about a quarter to twelve that night Attendant Kelly informed Cullen that Ward was lying on the hospital floor, and was dying. Both Kelly and Cullen went into the hospital, but it was alleged that, although they found the deceased as above stated, they did not send for the doctor, who was then in the institution,

until about ten minutes later, nor did they do anything for the deceased. Another keeper named Leddy, however, arrived on the scene, and went for the doctor, and on the arrival of the latter about three minutes later he found Ward lying dead. Dr. Roantree, who afterwards made a post-mortem examination of the body of the deceased, certified that the cause of death was fatty degeneration of the heart, accelerated by acute alcoholic poisoning. Dr. Gilcriest, Acting Resident Medical Superintendent of the institution, after finding life extinct in the body of the deceased, questioned the keepers, with the result that he charged both of them with being drunk while on duty. Kelly admitted having taken three or four bottles of stout that evening, but Cullen denied it.

"Chief Attendant Feeney swore that Cullen's breath smelt of drink, but he had no other appearance of drink on that evening.

"The jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased died from alcoholic poisoning, and added a rider that they found the attendance and supervision in the institution bad."

The management of the Sligo Asylum called for some comment from us a few years ago when the Committee were anxious to reinstate in charge of the insane an attendant who had just served a period in jail for an assault on a patient. It is understood that that devoted and heroic public servant, for whom his kindly and appreciative Committee had such sympathy, would have complied with their generous desire and returned to exercise his gentle sway over the patients in the Sligo Asylum, had it not been for the untoward circumstance that he was "wanted" for some other offence by those oppressive guardians of public order, the Royal Irish Constabulary, and found it judicious to retire into private life for a time. That whiskey should get into an Irish asylum at Christmas time does not surprise us, but we must admire the ingenuity of employing a patient, if this were done, as purveyor of drink. Death of an asylum patient by acute alcoholic poisoning is startlingly original—absolutely unique in fact. It quite puts in the shade the mere old-fashioned exploits of beating patients, breaking their ribs, noses, etc. Perhaps it falls under the term so often referred to in modern Irish life—"Killing with Kindness."

MONAGHAN ASYLUM COMMITTEE AND THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.

According to a very detailed report which appears in the *Anglo-Celt* newspaper of Cavan, under date December 17th, 1904, the proceedings at the monthly meeting of the asylum for the counties of Monaghan and Cavan at Monaghan, held on the 15th December, must have been of that lively, original, and truly Hibernian character which the mere Saxon never can understand. It would appear that General Clifford, one of the Committee, moved the following motion:—"That the Lord Lieutenant be requested to direct that Dr. Taylor be subjected to expert medical examination with a view to ascertaining whether, in the present state of his eyesight, he is capable of performing his duties as Resident Medical Superintendent."

Dr. Taylor is reported to have thereupon requested to be heard through his solicitor. The latter gentleman, not being familiar, as it would seem, with the methods of Irish asylum committees, did not content himself with pointing out that the proposed action of the Committee was *ultra vires* and that the Lord Lieutenant was unlikely to venture on a course which the Czar would be afraid and the Sultan ashamed of, but went on to endeavour to awaken the conscience of the Committee to what he called the "persistent persecution" to which Dr. Taylor has been subjected. He said that the object of the motion was to worry and annoy Dr. Taylor in the hope that he would consequently hand in his resignation and make a vacancy. As might have been expected, this kind of talk merely led to further recrimination, chiefly interesting as showing the methods which the Irish adopt in dealing with public servants. Attempting to justify his resolution by stating that Dr. Taylor's eyesight was too bad to enable that officer to discharge