

unbounded sympathy with the 'poor country boy' who was fined £5 for striking a raving, pinioned lunatic a blow that would fell an ox, and which scattered the poor wretch's blood about the floor, as if a bull were bled on it.

"The 'poor country boy' striking a roped-up lunatic and smashing his nose is truly an object for refined sympathy! A 'poor boy' six foot eight inches in height, within a few paces of other attendants and a whistle in his pocket, smashing down on the face of a man whose arms were pinioned. We say that the 'poor boy' ought to have been tried by a jury and got penal servitude, but then religion so refines human feeling!

"If ratepayers, whose friends may be afflicted and seek protection at this institution, find that wanton brutality is condoned by religion, we should like to know with what feelings of security they consign their friends to lunatic shambles, if they are to earn that name. We should like to know what they pay rates for? Isn't the 'poor boy' paid for his 'risks,' just as a soldier or policeman is paid, and is he to murder a man if he suspects danger of any sort?

"We think Father Begley ought to ease the mind of this county on this point. He is elected to protect the poor and afflicted and helpless. He is entitled to give assurance that they shall be protected for the money paid. He is not entitled to shake public confidence in this great institution by one breath of sympathy with wanton, cowardly blackguardism.

"The one thing we see in the case is that the magistrates utterly failed to do their duty in inflicting a fine."

The language of this extract is possibly stronger than we are accustomed to, and it certainly loses force by being so personal, but we are inclined to agree with the last sentence. It must be remembered, however, that in another asylum in the West of Ireland some time ago the Committee decided to retain the services of an attendant who had got two or three months in gaol for a savage assault upon a patient.

BALLINASLOE ONCE MORE: COMIC RELIEF.

The Irish are a singular people. There was a time when their gaiety was supposed to be irrepressible, but Thackeray discovered that in truth their character is fundamentally melancholy and their joviality a mere blind. It was a pleasant quality, and he who has to deal with Irishmen now may regret that it appears to have been almost burned out by the fires of controversy, political and other. Appropriately enough the little fun that is yet remaining in the land seems to find refuge in asylums. That agreeable facility for raising a laugh, even at his own expense, which characterised the Irishman of Sam Lover and Charles Lever, is hardly to be found anywhere else. We had occasion not long ago to comment on the uncrowned buttons of the Cork Asylum. Ballinasloe Asylum, though handicapped by a late start, has won in this race by a whole length, for that institution, we learn from the *Dublin Daily Express* of June 22nd, has not only discharged "the round and top of sovereignty" from its buttons, but has dismissed "On His Majesty's Service" from the outside of most of its envelopes. A few which are designed to cover communications addressed to the Inspectors are still to retain the Royal superscription. There must be some complicated joke here which we fail to appreciate. Why a letter to a patient's friends announcing his death or discharge should be "On the People's Service," while a similar letter to the Inspectors should be "On His Majesty's Service," is only to be understood if we admit with the late Mr. Robert Montgomery that God made the thunder, but the lightning made itself. According to a report furnished by an interviewer to the *Irish Times* of June 23rd these changes were suggested by the new medical superintendent. There is a curious conservatism about retaining on modern envelopes any unmeaning representative of the old system of franking letters. The Committee were also very angry because the Inspectors in writing to them addressed them as "Gentlemen" instead of "Lords and Gentlemen." This shows another inconvenience that arises from following antiquated custom. Surely even in

Ireland official letters are usually written in the third person. But the whole of these dignified proceedings suggests too great respect for antiquity. In all modern theatrical performances the farce comes first and then the serious piece. Why is this order reversed in Connaught? Why should this comic *bonne bouche* follow instead of preceding the much more serious pieces that have lately been played on the same stage?

LUNACY LEGISLATION.

The following is the text of the Bill to amend the Lunacy Acts introduced into the House of Commons on May 18th by the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General:

A BILL to amend the Lunacy Acts.

BE IT ENACTED by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. *Visits to licensed houses.*—Notwithstanding anything in section one hundred and ninety-one of the Lunacy Act, 1890 (hereinafter referred to as the principal Act), the Commissioners may by order direct that until further order any licensed house, whether licensed by them or by justices, and not authorised by the licence to receive more than ten patients, may be visited by one Commissioner.

2. *Temporary care of incipient lunatics.*—(1) If a medical practitioner certifies that a person is suffering from mental disease, but that the disease is not confirmed, and that it is expedient, with a view to his recovery, that he be placed under the care of a person whose name and address are stated in the certificate for a period therein stated, not exceeding *six months*, then during that period the provisions of section three hundred and fifteen of the principal Act shall not apply.

(2) The certificate must not be signed by the person under whose care the patient is to be placed.

(3) Where a medical practitioner signs any such certificate he shall, within one clear day after signing it, send a copy of it to the Commissioners, and the Commissioners may visit the patient to whom the certificate refers.

(4) The person who receives a patient under any such certificate shall, within one clear day after receiving the patient, give notice to the Commissioners of his reception, and if the patient dies, or the residence of the person receiving him is changed, within the period mentioned in the certificate, shall within two clear days give notice of the death or change of residence to the Commissioners.

(5) He shall also, within two clear days after the expiration of the period mentioned in the certificate, or if he ceases to have the care of the patient at an earlier date then within two clear days after that earlier date, send a report to the Commissioners stating whether the patient recovered, and, if not, in what manner he was dealt with when the person making the report ceased to have the care of him under the certificate.

(6) If default is made in sending any notice or report required by this section, the person in default shall be guilty of a misdemeanour and be liable to a penalty not exceeding *fifty pounds*.

(7) No person shall under this section receive more than one patient at the same time.

(8) After the expiration of the period mentioned in the certificate another certificate under this section in respect of the same patient shall not be given within *two years* from the date of the expiration.

3. *Amendment of s. 116 (1) (d) of principal Act.*—Section one hundred and sixteen of the principal Act (which relates to the administrative powers of the Judge in Lunacy) shall have effect as if in paragraph (d) of sub-section one the words "or arrest of mental development" were inserted after the word "age."

4. *Jurisdiction of Masters in Lunacy.*—Subject to rules of court, the jurisdiction of the Judge in Lunacy (including power to make orders in lunacy and such orders as can be made in the Chancery Division of the High Court) may be exercised by