

rapidly, but regularly over to the end, then recommencing the same operation. The keepers, as far as a casual visit of the kind enabled me to judge, appeared kindly disposed to the unfortunate people under their charge; though perhaps not altogether so much aware as they ought to be, of their state being, in many instances, the effect of disease which might pass away. The female keeper was evidently very uneasy at the unmanageable violence of some of those committed to her charge, and spoke of them with fear.

The asylum is visited in course twice a week by the physician of the infirmary.

The Inspector-General of the prisons made the following report upon this asylum, a few years prior to my visit. "I again visited the old gaol at Roscommon, which is used for the county lunatics. It was very gratifying to see these helpless creatures provided with food, fuel, lodging and raiment, by the benevolence of the Grand Jury. The keeper appears a correct man, and I believe no undue restraint or coercion is used."

A plan was under discussion, whilst I remained in Roscommon, for the establishment of a general lunatic asylum for the province of Connaught; and Ballinasloe, on the confines of the two counties of Roscommon and Galway, had been designated as a place suitable for the purpose. Few greater benefits can be conferred on families, more especially those of the lower orders, who are so unfortunate as to have amongst their numbers persons suffering under this awful visitation of providence, than the institution of a receptacle for the insane, whereby they may be relieved from a charge, which not only occasions constant anxiety, but in se-

veral instances utterly incapacitates them from pursuing the ordinary vocations on which the daily bread of the family depends. If there are children, and many, the case is still worse; the hours of repose are liable to interruption, and alarms excited when sleep ought to be shedding its refreshing influence. Besides, in large establishments purposely constructed for the reception of lunatics, arrangements can be made, in every respect more suitable for their treatment, and for the trial of those remedies which may be deemed likely to conduce to the restoration of the understanding. Repose and privacy are of the first importance.* But in a place like the old gaol of Roscommon, with windows looking to the public streets, and persons passing in and out frequently through the day, the patients are always liable to be disturbed. The custom which so commonly prevailed in former times, of placing gaols and hospitals in the public streets, was every way objectionable, whether in reference to those within or to those without. What more distressing to peaceable inhabitants than the shrieks and cries of maniacs within hearing, except it be the sight of public executions, within full view of the windows of their dwellings? The drop, where criminals paid the forfeit of their lives, in front of the gaol, used to be in full sight of the best houses of the town.

The County Infirmary stands in the same street with the court-house, or rather on the road in conti-

* I have often heard my late and lamented brother-in-law, Dr. James Cleghorn, who, as State Physician, was a governor and visitor of Swift's Hospital in Dublin, observe, that he could always tell at his first entrance, by the excited state of the patients, whether a stranger had passed through the hospital, previously to his arrival.