

R. V. FLETCHER.

Many members will have heard with regret of the death of Dr. Fletcher, who had been Superintendent of the Ballinasloe Asylum for close on thirty years. His student days were spent in Steevens' Hospital, where, as Resident Pupil, the many friendships which he formed with men who afterwards became eminent in other specialties stimulated throughout life his interest in professional subjects not directly connected with his own work. After qualifying he spent some time as physician to the Hon. David Plunkett, one of whose nieces he subsequently married. When Down Asylum was opened in 1870 he was appointed as Assistant to the late Dr. Tyner, being the first Assistant appointed to an Irish asylum.

After a few years there he was selected by the Government for the Superintendentship of the Waterford Asylum, where he found a well-stocked arsenal of obsolete armaments for the cure of disordered minds; and after a short period, made a bonfire of straight-waistcoats, anklets, and other therapeutic instruments. His action was the subject of admonition, protest, and warning from asylum officials and lay governors, who in a short time handsomely recognised the improvement he had effected. His good work had its reward in 1874 in his promotion by Government to the larger and more important District Asylum of the counties of Galway and Roscommon. Here he quickly formed hosts of friends, and in a short time his keen judgment, wide experience, and intuitive insight were so thoroughly trusted by the then Board of Governors that his advice was eagerly sought and confidently followed in all matters affecting the institution. Coming to an asylum which was then old as asylums go, he found many things to remedy, and effected many improvements. For several years he agitated on the subject of employment as a curative measure, and persuaded almost against their will the Governors to purchase a large farm adjoining, the management of which he carried out with much profit and benefit to the institution.

He then began to claim the provision of a modern hospital for the acute and sick. After much misgiving the claim was conceded and provision made in a manner satisfying the most exacting requirements and equal to anything to be found elsewhere. Socially he was a type of a kindly courtly gentleman, good natured, pleasant, and much sought after, with a keen sense of humour and a large fund of stories. Some years ago he was one of the best shots in the west of Ireland and an authority on all sporting matters. In the hierarchy of the Masonic order he held a high place. On the occasion of his silver wedding in 1897 he received a presentation of plate from his colleagues and the staff, with whom he was always most popular. Since the death of his wife, to whom he was much attached, he has gone but little into society, and after a lingering illness, he died on December 17th last, at the age of sixty-three; his old friends, Dr. Little, of Dublin, and Dr. Rutherford, and his senior assistant, Dr. Mills, attended him.

He leaves one daughter, married to P. S. Golding, Esq., Ballinasloe, who received from all public bodies in the district, resolutions of sympathy.

By his colleagues, to whom he was always a kind and trusted friend, he is much regretted, and he has left behind a memory of constant thoughtfulness for others and unfailing courtesy in all relations of life.

JOSEPH PEEKE RICHARDS.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Joseph Peeke Richards, formerly superintendent of Hanwell Asylum. An obituary notice will appear in our next issue.

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