

quite inconsistent with each other, she was charged with murder, but at the instance of the judge the charge was reduced to one of manslaughter. The jury found the prisoner guilty.—Shrewsbury Assizes, July 16th, Mr. Justice Day.—*Manchester Guardian*, July 17th.

This case recalls vividly the Road murder which caused so much excitement in the country nearly thirty years ago. In that case the criminal, a sister of the victim, was 16 years of age. These apparently motiveless crimes committed by girls about the age of puberty form a very well characterised class. Sometimes, as in this case, the crime is that of homicide. Often it is incendiarism. Occasionally it takes the form of sexual tamperings with younger children. In this case the evidence against the prisoner was very indirect, and there is no doubt of the wisdom of the discretion exercised by the judge. Indeed, it is rather surprising that a conviction was secured even upon the lesser charge. The plea of insanity was not raised, counsel hoping, no doubt, for a general acquittal, but the case was certainly a legitimate one for urging mental unsoundness in mitigation of punishment, having regard to the age of the prisoner, and the circumstances of the crime. Unfortunately the report to hand does not record the sentence.

Colclough v. Ollivant.

A breach of promise case, the plaintiff being a widow over 40, the defendant a weak-minded man of 25. The formal defence was a denial of the promise, but practically the matter resolved itself into the question whether the plaintiff took advantage of the defendant's weakness of mind to entrap him into an offer.—Verdict for the defendant.—*Manchester Guardian*, July 25th.

ASYLUM NEWS.

Aberdeen Royal Asylum.—Extensive damage was caused by fire breaking out in the roof of the succursal asylum at Glack, which is some twenty miles from Aberdeen. About 100 patients are accommodated there, mostly of the quiet class, who are employed on the estate, which was acquired some ten years ago. Fortunately the water supply was ample, and the safety of the patients having been secured, the lower storey was saved from destruction. The staff earned high commendation in having dealt so efficiently with the catastrophe. We trust that the chapter of accidents from fire in the Aberdeen Asylum is now closed. It has been most unfortunate of late years in this respect.

Forfarshire Asylums.—For years past there has been an agitation going on in Forfarshire in connection with the asylums of the county. The parochial authorities of Dundee have been urgent in claiming that they should have the management of the insane, because they represent the ratepayers. The town clerk of Dundee attributed their desire to a lust of administration, and made short work of their arguments. The agitation has been fostered and has spread to other parts of the county, and the local newspapers have printed long reports of meetings convened to reorganise the system of lunacy administration. It does not appear that the difficulties are insuperable, if the parties in the dispute are willing to modify their extreme demands. The directorate of the Dumfries Royal Asylum was lately reorganised by Act of Parliament, and popular representation was granted, without having impaired the efficiency of the institution. Similarly, the Forfarshire Asylums might be relieved from the uncertainties and irritation of this long-continued agitation, and might continue their beneficent work unmolested. It is unfortunate for the insane belonging to the extreme north of Scotland that they should still require to seek treatment in asylums so distant as Montrose and Edinburgh. The question of their retention in Montrose has been raised, and will no doubt have most serious attention in the near future, for it is evident that lunacy affairs in Forfarshire cannot be allowed to drift in the present entanglement much longer.

Northampton County Asylum.—The authorities of the Northampton County Asylum announce that arrangements have been made to afford free consultation with the doctors at the asylum to those whose symptoms suggest incipient mental

disease. The person applying will be regarded as an out-patient of the asylum, and the only charge will be the cost price of any medicine the medical staff may think desirable to supply. This has been done on the initiative of the Duke of Grafton, who is on the Committee of Visitors. While expert advice should be freely tendered to the poorer classes by the medical staffs of our asylums, it seems to us a doubtful policy to supply medicines at cost price. Nourishing food and other medical comforts are just as often required as medicines; and it is important to enlist the co-operation of the general practitioners, who are more constantly in touch with such patients than the asylum physicians can be. For obvious reasons, we should have preferred to have learned that the place of consultation had been fixed at the local hospital, as has proved so successful in other places. The arrangements now made may, however, develop in that direction; and we heartily support the principle of assistance to incipient cases at the hands of physicians exceptionally well qualified to give the aid so much required.

Down District Asylum.—A new wing has been opened at this asylum. It has been designed as a male infirmary, equivalent to the similar wing for women which has been for some time in occupation. The male infirmary can now accommodate fifty-six patients instead of fifteen as before—that is equal to 20 per cent. of the whole male division. Very considerable additions and improvements have also been made in the administrative parts of the building. At the last meeting of the Board of Governors, now replaced under the new *régime*, Dr. Nolan and Dr. Clark had the honour of being specially thanked in a complimentary minute.

Utica State Hospital.—This historic institution has lost the distinguished services of Dr. Alder Blumer. His many friends on this side will learn with interest that he has accepted the appointment of Physician-Superintendent to the Butler Hospital for the Insane, at Providence, R.I. On taking his farewell, Dr. Blumer said that, on being offered the appointment to a hospital held in such high esteem and famous since the days of Isaac Ray, he had to carefully consider the sacrifice he made in leaving Utica. He felt bound to go in his own interests and those of his family. Dr. Blumer concluded with an eloquent survey of the period of his service in New York State, and expressed his thanks to the managers for their rich sympathy and strong support. The managers accepted Dr. Blumer's resignation with great reluctance, and recorded their feeling that he had proved an ideal superintendent. We congratulate the Butler Hospital on having secured the services of one who is so highly esteemed at home and abroad, and hope that Dr. Blumer will see many and happy years of service in his new appointment.

THE EMPLOYMENT OF EPILEPTICS.

The Duke and Duchess of York visited Chalfont St. Peter, on the 23rd June last, to open four new homes at the Colony of the Society for the Employment of Epileptics, of which his Royal Highness is president. These new homes increase the existing accommodation by nearly 100 beds. The Duke of York having declared them open, reviewed the history of the Society, and recounted what had been done elsewhere. The donors were thanked on the motion of Sir William Broadbent, and Mr. J. Passmore-Edwards replied.

THE CARE OF THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

This important development of philanthropy is making headway in a very remarkable manner. The Lancashire and Cheshire Society for the Permanent Care of the Feeble-minded met in Manchester in May, when Miss Dendy, who has given great impetus to this particular association, addressed those present in a long, interesting speech, which was fully reported in the *Manchester Guardian*. Miss