

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.

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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