

been respited, and thus both Dr. Ley and Dr. Mould are justified in their opinions, the first by the conviction of the prisoner, and the second by his respite; and what is, perhaps, as important, substantial justice is done both to the prisoner and to the community which he had so grievously wronged.

#### KLEPTOMANIA.

The wealthy American lady, Mrs. Castle, recently tried at Clerkenwell, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment in spite of Sir Edward Clarke's defence, has been set at liberty, but at what cost of mental anxiety to herself and to her unhappy friends. At the trial it was conclusively proved that she had no need for the articles stolen, and that her past history showed similar aberrations. Drs. Savage and Gabriel are reported to have stated in court, *after she pleaded guilty*, that "she was suffering from disorders which had so mentally affected her as to render her not responsible for her actions." Is there not something very much amiss in this procedure? Is it seemly that any person should be found "guilty," and immediately thereafter, evidence should be led to mitigate or nullify the sentence? The late Committee on Criminal Responsibility appointed by the Medico-Psychological Association excluded minor offences from their consideration; but the matter cannot rest while such cases as this recur from time to time. Is there any reason why the victims of mental disease should not be dealt with as insane offenders, why some such procedure as is prescribed by the Scottish Lunacy Act for 1862 (Sect. 15), should not be made generally applicable? By that enactment the Sheriff can, if satisfied, order the delivery of the sufferer to a friend or relative for the purpose of proper care and treatment; and thus in open court or *in camera* obviate the scandals following upon such incidents as we now mention.

#### INSURANCE AND SUICIDE.

An important case was tried in the Court of Session in June. The questions at issue were whether the late Captain Sangster met his death accidentally, whether he had failed to use due diligence for his personal safety and protection. From the evidence it appeared that he had gone to Crieff Hydropathic for a change, and that he had proceeded to Loch Earn, where he was seen rowing about in a boat on the evening of the 30th April, 1895. Next day his clothes were found neatly folded up in the drifting boat. The Insurance Company refused to pay the policy of £1,000, averring that Captain Sangster had committed suicide, or that he had failed to take proper care of himself.

From the medical point of view it was stated for the Insurance Company by Dr. Gillespie that he did not think the fact of the clothes having been found in the boat displaced the theory of suicide. Suicides were often secretive. He knew of a case of suicide from drowning in which the person had stripped himself of his clothes.

Dr. Urquhart was of the same opinion. The fact that no signs of melancholia had been observed did not exclude the possibility of suicide. If the person did not intend to commit suicide he ran a very grave danger by bathing under the circumstances mentioned.

Dr. Clouston concurred, and laid stress upon the circumstance that Captain Sangster should have suddenly resigned his position as Marine Superintendent without conferring with his employers.

Lord Stormonth-Darling, in giving judgment, said—(1) that Captain Sangster was drowned in Loch Earn on the evening of 30th April, 1895; (2) that he died by accident, and not by suicide; and (3) that there was not on his part such want of diligence for his personal safety, or such wilful, wanton, or negligent exposure