not have been devoid of influence, although the jury might realize that there would be a strong probability of the death sentence being commuted.

Rex *v.* Frederick George Taylor.

This case was tried at Worcester Assizes on October 23, 1929, before Mr. Justice Acton.

The accused, æt. 32, was a metal caster. He was described, in the evidence, as having been an excellent husband and father, and as of exemplary character in all other respects. In the early morning of October 17 he attacked his wife and his two children with a chopper, and inflicted such severe injuries that they died soon after. He then telephoned to the police station, asking that an ambulance should be sent to his house, with a doctor "to put them out of their misery," adding, "I did not think they could live; I thought I had put them out first hit; I did not mean them to suffer at all." The facts were not disputed, and the defence was that of insanity.

Evidence was given that the accused had been depressed for some time before the occurrence, that he had complained of insomnia, and had worried, without any occasion, about not doing his work properly.

Dr. Edward Graham, medical officer of Gloucester Prison, said that Taylor appeared to have worried over a habit of masturbation, in which he had once indulged, and had the idea that he had contracted some form of venereal disease, which had caused him to lose his manhood, and had rendered him of no further use in the world. He also believed that he had infected his wife and children with the disease, that this would occasion intense suffering to them, and would cause them to be despised by other people. He took the view that "he was being punished for a very grievous sin." There was no evidence that he had ever suffered from any form of venereal disease. Dr. M. Hamblin Smith, medical officer of Birmingham Prison, stated that he had examined Taylor, and entirely agreed with Dr. Graham's findings. Both witnesses took the view that Taylor "knew the nature and quality of his act," but did not "know that the act was wrong."

The judge, in his summing-up, held that all the evidence pointed to the existence of insanity at the time of the act. A verdict of "Guilty but Insane" was returned, and the usual order for detention was made.

Rex *v.* Maggie Alexander.

This case was tried at Winchester Assizes on November 27, 1929, before Mr. Justice Charles.

The accused woman lived with her parents. She was charged with the murder of her child, by cutting his throat with a razor. When asked by her mother why she had killed the child, the accused said that she "thought he would be better off." That she had

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