time the temperature in the wards had been about the same since the electric light was introduced as when gas was used, but that might be to a very great extent owing to the recent warm weather.

METROPOLITAN COUNTIES BRANCH: SOUTH LONDON DISTRICT.

The first meeting of the session was held at St. Thomas's Hospital, on Oct. 24th: Dr. C. J. HARE, President of the Metropolitan Counties Branch, in the chair.

Dr. BRISTOWE read a paper on Masked Cerebral Tuberculosis.

Dr. G. H. SAVAGE read a paper on the case of Gouldstone, and on the Evidence of Insanity in Criminal Cases.

In the debate to which it gave rise, Drs. R. Fowler, Hack Tuke, Nicolson, and Bucknill, and Mr. S. Benton took part.

Dr. NICOLSON described the present condition of Gouldstone, who is now in Broadmoor, and confirmed the opinion formed by the writer of the paper. No doubt he was insane.

Dr. HACK TUKE said that he hoped some practical good would result from the paper, and the discussion, and to this end he should conclude with moving a resolution. Nothing could more clearly prove the necessity of some reform in the mode of examining prisoners in regard to whom the question of insanity arose. What could be more absurd and unsatisfactory than that the examination of the murderer should have been made by the principal medical witness at the eleventh hour, and for only twenty minutes. What had been done after the trial should have been done before. He had brought this subject under the notice of the Medico-Psychological Association several years ago, and made a proposal in accordance with this view, which was warmly supported, but nothing had yet been practically done to remedy the evil. At the last annual meeting, however, in August, the President, Dr. Orange, had revived the question, and a resolution had been unanimously passed advocating a change. He should now propose a resolution almost identical with it, and he hoped to obtain the support of this branch of the British Medical Association. It was as follows:—"That persons charged with crime, respecting whom there is any suspicion of insanity, shall be examined at the expense of the Treasury, by three medical men—namely, the prison surgeon, the superintendent of the asylum in the neighbourhood, and a medical man of repute practising in the vicinity, and that their joint report shall be handed to the counsel for the prosecution."

Mr. S. BENTON seconded it, and it was supported by other speakers.

Dr. BUCKNILL was not able to support the resolution. He thought that the course pursued in the United States was preferable. With regard to the case of Gouldstone, he sympathized with Dr. Savage, in having to give an opinion after such limited opportunities of observation. He demurred to making use of the fact that he had insane ancestors or relatives, as an argument in favour of his insanity. If that was a cause, all his brothers and sisters ought to have been insane. The question is not, are a man's parents insane, but is the man himself insane? He (Dr. Bucknill) had hoped to hear from Dr. Nicholson more than a confirmation of Dr. Savage's opinion, for he had not mentioned any facts which proved him to be insane at the present time. He should very much like to see Dr. Orange's report. It was due to the public that these reports should be published.

Dr. SAVAGE, in briefly replying, said he was quite satisfied with the discussion his remarks had elicited. He would support Dr. Tuke's resolution. The present state of things was most anomalous. With regard to what Dr. Bucknill had said on insane inheritance, he would reply that if a man had webbed fingers and had a family, although only one child had webbed fingers he should consider the two facts stood in causal relation and not coincidentally. He

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thanked the members for the attention with which they had listened to his paper.

The Resolution was then put by the President, and was carried.

WILLIAM GOULDSTONE.

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT, SEPT. 14, 1883.

(*Before* MR. JUSTICE DAY.)

[*Times*, Sept. 15, 1883.]

William Gouldstone, 26, blacksmith, was placed upon his trial upon an indictment charging him with the wilful murder of his five children—Charles, Herbert, and Frederick Gouldstone, and two male infants, on August 8.

The prisoner pleaded "Not Guilty."

Mr. Poland and Mr. Montagu Williams conducted the prosecution for the Crown; Mr. Grain and Mr. Elliot were counsel for the defence.

The prisoner was first tried upon the indictment charging him with the wilful murder of his eldest child, Charles Gouldstone.

Mr. Poland, in opening the case, said the prisoner, William Gouldstone, was charged in this indictment with the wilful murder of Charles Gouldstone, his son. The prisoner had been for five years in the service of a firm in Lower Thames street. He had been living for ten weeks at Walthamstow with his wife and three children—the eldest, the subject of the indictment, Charles, being three-and-a-half years, Herbert two-and-a-half years, and Frederick 16 months old. On the 1st August his wife, at the place where they were then living, was confined of twins. The prisoner was by all accounts a sober, hard-working man, and had been maintaining his wife and children by his daily labour. There was no doubt, receiving as he did about 25s. per week, that he regretted that his wife was confined of twins so as to add so seriously, as he thought, to the number of his children. Up to that time, the learned counsel repeated, the prisoner had been sober and industrious. On the day of the confinement and on the following night the landlady, for the first time, saw that he was somewhat the worse for drink. As he (Mr. Poland) gathered from the evidence, the prisoner continued at his work until the Friday before Bank Holiday, Monday, August 6th. On the Monday following—Bank Holiday—the prisoner was, of course, not at work, neither did he go to his employment on Tuesday, 7th, or Wednesday, 8th August, although he did not remain at home on those days. On the 8th August he came home at half-past 5 in the evening, his usual time for returning being half-past 7. When he came home, the two eldest children were playing in the kitchen, and in the bedroom on the same floor was his wife, the third child Frederick, and the two babies, which were being suckled by the mother. Mrs. Hamilton, a lodger who had kindly attended Mrs. Gouldstone during her confinement, was also in the room washing the children. The jury would have evidence that the prisoner, who was then apparently sober, took from the bedroom into the kitchen the child Frederick, and they would find that after going backwards and forwards into the room, he went into the kitchen, moved the perambulator, and placed a chair near the cistern. It would be proved beyond all question that the prisoner drowned the three eldest children in the cistern, and a piece of cord was subsequently found tied round the neck of one. Having thus destroyed the lives of these three children, the prisoner went into the bedroom where his wife was. Mrs. Hamilton, thinking he wanted to speak privately to his wife, left the room, leaving him alone with his wife and the two babies. The prisoner locked the door, and Mrs. Hamilton then heard screams of "murder" coming from Mrs. Gouldstone, who called out that the prisoner was murdering her children. Mrs. Hamilton, in company with the landlady of the house, endeavoured to

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