Rex *v.* John Sumpster Milner.

This case was tried at Perth on April 19 and 20. The accused was a farm labourer, and was charged with the murder, on February 28, of a girl, æt. 11. She had been sexually outraged, and then murdered with a shot-gun. Suspicion fell upon the accused, who was noticed to have blood on his hands and clothing. He first attempted to explain the presence of this blood by a tale about a fight with some Italians; later he altered this to one of having killed a kangaroo; still later he made a confession, and took the police to the place where the crime had been committed. While in prison, awaiting trial, he disclaimed any memory for the events at the time of the crime.

The facts were not disputed, and the defence was that of "moral insanity." No medical evidence in support of this defence was adduced. The farmer who had employed Milner for the past eight years stated that his conduct, at first exemplary, had deteriorated; he would tell tales of a fantastic nature, for which there was no foundation in fact; he was restless, and would absent himself from the farm for days at a time. The witness had, prior to the crime, considered the propriety of having Milner's mentality investigated.

Drs. Bentley and Kerr, who gave evidence in the previous case, furnished rebutting testimony. They stated that they had found no evidence of insanity in Milner. Dr. Kerr said that he was not prepared to make a clear distinction between moral insanity and moral depravity.

The summing-up appears to have been based upon the McNaghton criteria. But the judge is reported as ruling that loss, on the part of the accused, of "capacity to control his actions" would, if established, justify a verdict of insanity. The jury found the accused guilty of wilful murder, he was sentenced to death, and has been hanged.

A UNIQUE INCIDENT IN LUNACY ADMINISTRATION.

The following case, related by the Hon. O. T. J. Alpers in his *Cheerful Yesterdays*,* presents features of such extraordinary interest as would seem to make it worthy of record in a psychiatric journal. Such events are, to say the least of them, unusual, if not unique, in the history of lunacy administration.

* John Murray, Albermarle Street, London, W. 1. 15*s*. net, postage 6*d*.

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