placing at my disposal various documents from which this report was compiled, and for permission to publish his evidence.

W. S. DAWSON.

REX *v.* HETTY JOHNS.

This case was tried at the Central Criminal Court on September 11, before Mr. Justice Finlay. The accused, æt. 16, was charged with arson, and surrendered to her bail. She had been employed as a domestic servant at a house in Regent's Park from December 24 to 31, 1929. During this short period no less than four fires occurred in the house. In May of the present year she was engaged as a domestic servant at a flat in Marylebone. Early in the morning of May 23 she came into her employer's bedroom, and announced that there had been burglars in the flat. She also said, " It is all smoke in the sitting-room." The sitting-room was found to be on fire.

The jury found the prisoner " Guilty " on all the counts, but strongly recommended her to mercy as, in their opinion, she did not realize the seriousness of what she was doing.

The judge said that investigation of the accused's mental condition should certainly be undertaken; and he sentenced her to nine months' imprisonment in the second division, as this would give an opportunity for medical examination to be made.

The result of this trial furnishes an illustration of the disadvantage of giving bail in cases of this kind. Fire-raising is an offence which should always occasion suspicion as to the mentality of the accused person, and adequate medical investigation should always be made before the trial. Prison may not be the ideal place for such examination. But it is at least better that examination should be made in prison than that there should have been no examination at all, as, to judge from the published report, happened in this case.

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