

MATRICIDE NEAR FOOTSCRAY.

A man named John O'Neil, aged about thirty years, was arrested by Senior-Constable Fowler, on Tuesday, 26th June, on a charge of the wilful murder of his mother, aged about sixty years. They lived together in a small two-roomed house at Maidstone. About five o'clock on Monday evening he came home from his work at Braybrook, and very shortly afterwards the neighbours saw and heard him knocking, kicking, and dragging her about, but they were afraid to interfere on account of the man's violent disposition. In a little time all appeared quiet, and they thinking something had occurred, sent a messenger to Fowler, at Footscray. Upon his arrival at the house, prisoner came out and allowed the constable to enter. He then saw the woman with a number of stabs and cuts about her. Her clothes were partly disarranged, and a great portion of them burnt, it appearing as if prisoner had endeavoured to burn the body, but being unsuccessful, had thrown a quantity of water upon deceased. Prisoner was taken into custody, and conveyed to the Footscray lock-up. Prisoner maintained the most dogged silence, and did not appear in any way moved by the act he had committed.—*Telegraph.*

The Federal Advocate, New South Wales,
says the mortality amongst sheep is con-

consequence of the late protracted drought, is something fearful. In many places it is said to be impossible to travel half a mile without coming on groups of carcasses—and it is reported that one large station alone had lost 30,000 sheep.

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The Footscray Murder.

MURDER OF A MOTHER BY HER SON.

Today at noon, before Dr Maclean and a jury of fifteen, at 8 o'clock, Court House Hotel, Nicholson street, Footscray, an adjourned inquiry was held touching the death of Catherine O'Neill, an aged woman, who was found brutally murdered at her house in Madderstone, near Footscray, on the night of the 23rd inst. Deceased's son, John O'Neill, was present in custody, having been arrested on the night of the said occurrence, at his mother's residence. The prisoner had occasionally been in the habit of staying with his mother when he was out of employment, or was engaged in the erection of stone fences, which are very numerous for miles around the district. Some six or seven years since he was engaged in a contract which amounted to some £200, and when it was finished, through some circumstances connected with his employer, it is stated that prisoner went out of his mind, and was placed in the Kew Asylum for a short time. Through the exertions of his deceased mother, who frequently went to see him, he was liberated, and since that time has been obtaining employment at any laboring work available between Footscray and the Werribee. Some three or four months ago he was generally well, but generally when he returned, it was noticed by the neighbors that he was in the habit of ill treating deceased, though they were afraid to interfere on account of his violent disposition. The deceased was of a very quiet nature, and resided on her own property, being mostly supported by a number of the tradesmen of Footscray, who looked upon her visits weekly as a regular thing, and were prepared to give her a few articles of grocery and meat when she called. Two daughters of deceased are comfortably married and settled down in Melbourne; a third daughter is engaged in her job. Generally when these daughters visited deceased they conveyed articles of clothing and other necessary things to conduce to her comfort. The house where the murder was committed is situated about 200 yards from the main Ballarat road, and there is no prison within three or four miles. The last work prisoner was employed at was the erection of a cow shed and stable for Mr. Dalwood at Madderstone.

found prisoner at the back door of the house. He invited the constable to enter and remarked to them: "Come in here; here's a nice thing." They found deceased under a table, covered with blood, and several slabs with blood oozing from them. The face and arms were completely covered with bruises, and the body had the appearance of having been burned. At the previous inquest, the evidence of the attending constable was taken, and the inquiry adjourned till to-day. Inspector Burton conducted the prosecution on behalf of the Crown. The following additional evidence was adduced:—

James Morton, on oath, said: I am a legally qualified medical practitioner, residing at Footscray. On the night of the 23rd inst. I received instructions from the police to make a post mortem examination of a body lying at Madderstone. On the following morning I proceeded, in company with Sheriff-Deputable Fowler, to the house of the deceased Mrs. O'Neill. On entering the house by the back door, I saw the deceased lying on her back on the floor partly under a table, her clothes in disorder and torn; the stockings were turned over as if they had been drawn over both at the same time; a chair, the seat of which had been broken into four pieces, the back and some of the splashes lying also under the table. The sacking which had answered as a carpet was torn and damaged, having the appearance of a struggle having taken place. Another chair was lying partly under the table, as though knocked over. On the table were the remains of a meal—about half a loaf of bread, and some meat in another plate. An open book bottle had been used as a spittoon, and a piece of candle that had been lit, and which had not been disturbed, and on our right, close to the door which we entered, stood a cupboard. About a foot farther on was a door, which opened into a bedroom. Nearly against this door the table stood, under which deceased lay, her head towards the fireplace, her feet pointing to the door which opened into the inner bedroom. Her face was smeared with mud and blood, the skin discoloured, and several small skin wounds in it about half an inch in length, and six smaller marks. The right

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called Alford, situated about three miles from the general's house. He was in the habit of going to her house regularly every evening for some few weeks past, and generally returned home in a drunken state. On the night named, he was heard to quarrel with his mother about her not allowing him to take a woman to her (deceased's) house who he had been in the habit of cohabiting with, and by whom some children had been born. Shortly after his arrival at the house some quarrelling was heard between deceased and prisoner, and one of the neighbors, named Lawson, thinking some serious result might happen, went to Edeberry and informed the senior-constable in charge of the district what was going on. Senior-constable Fowler immediately mounted his horse, and in company with a trooper went to the spot and found prisoner at the back door of the house.

eyebrow was cut to the bone, the cut being about one inch in length; the left eyebrow was burned off, as well as the eye-lashes of the left eye. There was a burn on the left cheek bone, below which the face was black and charred, and which extended to the nose, the tip of which was burned, the skin peeling readily off when touched. There was a contusion on the right side of the head, about two and a half inches in length; a wound below the eye, running towards the ear, one and a half inches in length, through the skin. The lip was split through for about half an inch, and had two smaller wounds upon it, which looked as if they had

been done by a stick. Both arms were discolored above the wrists. The hands were

his mother and called her names. His
she asked her for a shilling, when
Johny. I then left, as I thought they
might have had words. Could not say
whether Mrs Campbell left with me or not,
but I saw her a few minutes after
wounds.

(Case proceeding.)

colored above the wrists. The hands were
covered with mud. A few hairs
were found in her right hand, matted
in her fingers. The left arm, which
rested on the chest, was elevated on the
inner surface and edge from the elbow to
the wrist, some of the hairs above still
adhering. On the right side of the
abdomen was a wound, which extended
through to the intestines which are partially
visible. On the left thigh, outer side there
was a punctured wound extending through
the skin, but not to the muscle, about
three quarter inches long as though produced
by a nail. The legs from the knees
down, were smeared with mud and blood,
bruised, scratched and discolored. Her
clothes were saturated with water about the
body, the left side of which had been burned
through to the skin. On turning the body on
its face, the back part of the hair was ma-
tated with blood from a cut on the scalp,
extending through to the right parietal bone,
and which might have been some object
a sharp-edged stone. The back of the right
side of the chest from the left shoulder was
discolored, as was also the back part of the
thigh. There was extravasated blood
beneath the scalp, corresponding with the
external contusions and wounds. The lungs
and membranes were congested. The lungs
were inflamed, the right one having a wound
about one and a half inches long, and on
and a half inches deep, in the posterior
part, and which had evidently been per-
forated by one of the broken ribs. The sixth
rib was also broken. The seventh, eighth
and ninth ribs were each broken in two or
three places, in pieces from an inch and a
half long to about half an inch. The heart
was small and healthy, and the liver was
healthy. Fractured some small fragments of
the ribs. The fractures could have been
caused, and there was no doubt they were,
caused, by external violence. The wound
into the lungs was no doubt the immediate
cause of death, but any of the wounds would
eventually in these cases, death but not so
immediately. The wounds in the thigh
might have been caused by any sharp in-
strument, or a pointed piece of wood, it
being a fractured wound it could not
have been caused by a kick in any way. The
wound in the lower part of the abdomen
might be made through a severe kick.
Remembered some six or seven years having
seen the prisoner, but have not seen him
since. Deceased's death could not have
occurred through any inward ailment, but
must have been caused by the violence
received shortly before death.

Eliza Scarborough wife of Phillip Sears.

I am now separated from my husband, and live at Wexham I keep a small diary. I recollect the afternoon of 5th June, about 4 o'clock, and was in company with Mrs Campbell and prisoner at the Braybrook Hotel, Braybrook. I had no drink there, prisoner took 4 glasses of whiskey, and Mrs Campbell took one glass of ale. Prisoner was quite drunk and we left together, for the purpose of going to prisoner's home, which is about a mile from the hotel. Mrs Campbell was holding him up on one side. On arrival at the deceased's house we saw Mrs O'Neill standing at the door. Deceased asked us all in and shook hands with Mrs Campbell, prisoner and myself. She appeared to be quite friendly. We all sat down, when prisoner commenced abusing his mother, and called her names. He

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