

HORRIBLE MURDER AND SUICIDE IN TASMANIA.

The Chudleigh correspondent of the *Lancet* gives the following account of the tragedy reported by telegraph in *The Argus* of Thursday last:—

For some years back a man named John Lambert has resided in a two-roomed hut at Mole Creek, a few miles from Chudleigh, on a small farm belonging to the Messrs. Field, a portion of which is used by them as a calling place for cattle and drovers from Gad's-hill station. Lambert has frequently had someone or other living with him, but his morose and sometimes quarrelsome disposition generally caused them to leave him as soon as possible. For the last five months a man named Isaac Richards and his wife have been living with Lambert, but have had a great deal of trouble with him on account of his quarrelsome disposition, his last freak being to spread a report that they were trying to poison him. Richards was so annoyed by it that he informed Mr. James How, a neighbour, on Monday morning last, that he was then going to Deloraine to lodge an information against Lambert for spreading the report.

On Tuesday morning, as Mr. How, who resides some distance from the hut, on the Deloraine road, was driving a team along the road at 9 o'clock he saw, as he supposed, a man standing on a log fence a short distance from him under a wattle tree, but on driving a little further, he discovered to his horror that the man was hanging from the tree, with a rope round his neck, and apparently dead. He immediately went to a neighbouring farmer named David Rose, who went with him to the spot, and they identified the body as that of the man Lambert hanging by a small rope about the size of a clothes line, and quite dead. On looking towards the hut, a distance of about 300 yards, they saw that the door was closed and no smoke coming from the chimney, which aroused their suspicions that the worst was not yet known. They then left the body where it hung and entered the hut, and on going into the bedroom a horrible sight presented itself to their view. There lay the unfortunate woman Richards on the floor enveloped in the bedclothes, which were saturated with blood; a large pool of blood was also on the floor. On finding life extinct they left the hut, closing the door after them, and one kept watch while the other went to Deloraine and informed the police.

On the arrival of the police a further search was made, and the man Richards was found in a dying state on the bed, unable to speak. The instrument of death was a round bar of iron used as a poker—the injuries inflicted being of a most brutal nature. A bottle of laudanum was found on the table, a portion having been used. Richards, on being asked by the superintendent of police, if he knew him, answered in the affirmative, but nothing more could be elicited from him—although it might have been very different had medical aid been obtained. Neither of the medical men in Deloraine (for some reason or other) would go. It is much to be lamented that the only individual who could possibly throw any light on the subject is dying without medical attendance. One of the magistrates of the district also refused to accompany the superintendent of police to take any depositions that might have been given by the dying man. The man Lambert has been a notoriously bad character, having served six years at Port Arthur for cattle-stealing, and been twice arrested for the murder of a man during his sentence. The tragedy has caused a great sensation in the whole Deloraine district.

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An inquest was held on the body, when the jury returned a verdict to the effect that the woman Richards was murdered by Lambert, and that Lambert committed suicide. The man Richards was not dead, but his recovery was regarded as quite hopeless.