

SUICIDE BY SHOOTING.

An inquest touching the death of Edwin Alfred Liddle, whose body was found yesterday morning in Mr. C. Dearden's wood-yard, Charles-street, with a revolver lying by his side, was held at the River View Hotel, Lower Charles-street, yesterday afternoon, before Mr. E. Whitfeld, J.P., Coroner, and a jury of seven, of whom Mr. John Gunn was chosen foreman.

The following evidence was taken :—

Dr. Louis S. Holmes deposed he was called by the police to view the body of deceased at the Morgue about 10 a.m. yesterday, blood had evidently been running from the mouth and nostrils; *riga mortis* had set in and was persistent; he afterwards made a *post mortem* examination and on removing the scalp found a large coagula of blood between scalp and skull; at top of skull to the back of the centre of

the head the bone was splintered; he removed the splinters revealing a hole about a quarter of an inch in diameter; he probed with his fingers and found a small conical bullet (produced); he then probed the wound further in the direction the bullet had evidently taken and the probe came out at the roof of the mouth, about a quarter of an inch behind the upper middle front teeth; he examined the mouth as far as he could; none of the front teeth were broken or missing; he then examined the body and found no marks of violence.

To the Coroner — He saw no effects of powder, the jaws were clenched; the bullet was evidently fired into the mouth and lodged in the skull, and the injury could only be self-inflicted; the cause of death was injury to the brain caused by the bullet fired from some weapon.

Hon. John Scott, M.L.C., deposed he identified the body as that of his son-in-law, Edwin Alfred Liddle; he last saw deceased alive about 10 days ago; deceased had been suffering from incipient paralysis for two years, and had been under treatment by Dr. Beaney, of Melbourne, for a considerable time; deceased was 37 years old, and was a native of Melbourne, and was a lawyer's clerk; deceased's wife said he had been in low spirits the last few days, and complained of a pain at the back of his head; the handwriting of the sealed letter (produced) addressed "Hon. John Scott, M.L.C., Launceston," and marked private, was that of deceased.

To a juryman—Deceased was not in embarrassed circumstances, as he had sufficient to live on. After perusing the letter Mr. Scott said its contents were private, and would not assist the jury.

Frank Hart, senior, deposed he saw de-

ceased between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. on Tuesday; deceased went into witness's shop and asked for a revolver, which he had selected that morning; deceased showed witness where it was; it was in a box near the desk; witness took the revolver down and showed it to deceased, who then asked for a box of cartridges, and they were supplied with the revolver (produced); deceased paid for the articles with two sovereigns; witness gave deceased 16s change, and then left the shop; witness did not know deceased, and had not seen him before to his knowledge; deceased said he came from Hunter River, and asked if the revolver would kill at 20 yards; witness noticed nothing unusual about deceased; it was not an unusual thing for witness to sell revolvers; witness did not see deceased again until he had viewed the dead body.

To a jurymen—Deceased seemed to be

perfectly sober, otherwise he would not have supplied the revolver.

Charles Day deposed that deceased went into his shop in Brisbane-street about 6.30 p.m. on Tuesday evening; deceased said "What a miserable light you have got;" deceased then said he wanted toys for his two children; deceased bought two toys and paid 11s for them; deceased said he was nearly blind; deceased asked for pen, ink, and paper, saying "Must try and write a note, but am afraid I can't, as I am paralysed;" deceased wrote a note and gave it to witness, to be enclosed with the toys, which were to be sent to the hon. John Scott's; witness did not know deceased, except by sight; deceased did not give his name, nor did he write it on the note; deceased particularly asked the time, and witness told him it was a quarter to 7 o'clock; on the bottom of the note deceased wrote "6.30 p.m., 5/3/89. Farewell;"

deceased said he was unwell, paralysed, and nearly blind; witness bade him good night, and deceased did not reply.

To a juryman—Deceased seemed to be perfectly sober.

Mrs. Sarah Jane Hughes deposed she resided in Charles-street, close to Dearden's timber yard; between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Tuesday evening she was sitting in the back part of her house; she heard a report as of a bottle bursting; the noise seemed close, and made her look round; the window she looked through was 50 yards from where the body was found.

Thomas Cate deposed he was a drayman in Mr. C. Dearden's employ; he went to the timber yard yesterday morning about 7.25 a.m.; he saw deceased lying at the far end of the yard near some timber; witness called the attention of a young man and sent him to the police office to report; witness saw a revolver and a box of cartridges alongside the body.

Acting Sub-Inspector John B. Green deposed that owing to a report made to him at 7 35 a.m. yesterday morning he went to Dearden's timber yard in Charles-street, and saw the body of deceased lying at the end of a pile of timber about 25 yards from the Charles-street footpath ; the body was lying well over on the left side, the mouth and nose nearly touching the ground ; there was congealed blood about the mouth and nostrils, and a pool of blood on the ground which appeared to have come from the mouth ; the revolver produced was lying near the body ; the right hand was doubled over, and the back lying on the butt ; he examined the revolver and found one cartridge had been discharged, and there was another one not discharged ; the box of cartridges produced was lying on a piece of timber close to the body ; he searched the body, and in the inside pocket of coat he found two sealed letters, one addressed to the hon. John Scott, M.L.C.,

and the other addressed to "Thomas Griffiths, Tamar Brewery—take this at once;" between the two letters was half a sheet of note paper, with these words written—"I am, or was, Edwin Alfred Liddle; if dead, take my body to Morgue. 6/3/89, 6.15 p.m.;" he found 2s 9d in silver, a pipe, knife, tobacco pouch, matchbox, handkerchief with initials "T.L.;" the body was removed to the Morgue.

The Coroner, in summing up, said there was no doubt the suicide was premeditated, and had occurred at the time Mrs. Hughes spoke of the sound of a bottle bursting. If deceased meditated the act, then what state of mind was he in?

The jury, after a brief deliberation, returned—"That deceased committed suicide while in a state of unsound mind."