

THE MAGISTERIAL INQUIRY.

Mr. C. E. Oslear conducted a magisterial inquiry yesterday into the circumstances surrounding the unhappy occurrence, at the Court-house, when the following evidence was taken :—

James Ryan, baker, stated that he visited the river where his son was drowned on Saturday, and remained all the afternoon and until the boy's body was recovered by Thomas Swansborough; his son was 12 years and 3 months of age, and had left home with the intention of going hunting.

Margaret Hanbridge, wife of Arthur Hanbridge, said that the deceased, Albert Arthur Hanbridge, was 11 years and 3 months of age; she last saw him alive at 8.30 on Saturday, when he left home in the company of several playmates; witness heard about 3 o'clock that he had been drowned, and the body was brought home about 7.30 in the evening.

John Redhead, a boy 11 years of age, said that on Saturday last in company with other boys, including the deceased and Bob Smithies; he crossed the river in a boat to the Chinaman's Island; they came back to the river near the gas-works; only two of the boys could swim, and they tried to cross at that particular place because they had heard it was possible to cross on foot without using the boat; Patrick Ryan could not swim, but Hanbridge was a good swimmer; Hanbridge swam across the river and then returned; Ryan walked over once in the shallow place, and then attempted to go back again, when the current took him down; Ryan was by himself, and when he was washed away Hanbridge swam after him and caught him; Ryan clutched Hanbridge round the neck and they came up and sank several times, and finally they both went down together; no one was near Ryan when the current washed him away.

Robert Smithies, 9 years of age, said that when he returned with the other boys from the Chinaman's Island after going shooting, Ryan, Hanbridge and Redhead crossed the river to the town side; Ryan could not swim, and crossed on foot; Hanbridge was a good swimmer, and when Ryan got into deep water he tried to get him out at the other side; Hanbridge caught Ryan by the waist, and the latter took hold of Hanbridge by his leg; they sank several times and finally both went down together.

Thomas Swansborough said that in company with several others he was engaged diving in search of the two deceased on Saturday last; eventually he found Ryan's body close to the bank, in the weeds, and Hanbridge's body was about 10 or 12 yards away in about 10 feet deeper water; it was possible to walk across at the place pointed out to witness as the spot where the boys

The Police Magistrate found that the two boys were accidentally drowned in the Murrumbidgee River, on the 26th instant, while bathing.