"A DOUBLE TRAGEDY."

MURDER FOLLOWED BY THE SUICIDE OF THE PERPETRATOR.

Isaac Merrick Shoots His Adopted Daughter and Then Turns the Pistol Against Himself — Jealousy the Cause.

Fifteen-year-old Sallie Harrigan was shot and killed by Isaac Merrick, whose adopted daughter she was, in South Camden on Saturday afternoon. Immediately thereafter Merrick shot himself through the head and sank down upon the floor near the body of his victim. His wife, who was in the yard, heard the two reports of the pistol and rushed into the kitchen to find both the man and girl dead and the floor streaming with blood.

The scene of the tragedy was one of a cheerless looking row of four frame buildings known as Bogey row, on Milford street below Central avenue. It's a dismal neighborhood, inhabited by negroes and the poorest classes of whites. Isaac Merrick, the murderer and suicide, was about 40 years old. His wife is several years his senior and the couple have no children. About seven years ago they adopted Sallie Harrigan, whom they found in the Home of the Sisters of Charity at Eighteenth and Race streets, Thomas Harrigan, the father, giving his consent.

A Bad Reputation.

At that time Merrick was a grave-digger in the Catholic Cemetery in Camden. Although a temperate man, he had the reputation of being a bad character, and about a year ago was arrested on a serious charge preferred by a young girl whom, it was alleged, he had inveigled into the cemetery. Testimony of a most damaging nature was presented, but the prosecuting attorney was unable to secure conviction for anything more than simple assault, and the late Judge Reed sentenced Merrick to five months' imprisonment in the county jail, which he served. It has been common talk among the neighbors for some time that Merrick was paying undue attention to his pretty adopted daughter. They went to church band in hand, and wherever she went Merrick either accompanied her or followed her a short distance behind. So jealously did he guard her that he has been known to order her in from the street, where she was playing with other girls.

How the Murder Occurred.

It is said that Mrs. Merrick often remonstrated with her husband for his conduct towards the girl, but he was of a surly disposition and resented her interference. His disposition lately has been more crabbed than ever, as he has been out of work. Street-paving contractor Thomas A. Wilson, by whom he was employed, laid off a large number of men a few weeks ago, Merrick among the number, and the man has been despondent ever since. Sallie formerly worked at Croft & Priestley's mill, but lest two months ago to assist her foster mother in her household duties. About half-past two Saturday afternoon she was preparing to go out and was in the kitchen with her arms and hat on. The man was restlessly pacing up and down the room and seemed moody and disheartened, but watching the girl closely. Mrs. Merrick left the house for a few moments. She was about to return when the sharp crack of a pistol was heard, immediately followed by another report.

The woman rushed into the house to find Sallie lying in front of the fireplace, her rubber boots on and a shawl about her shoulders, while from a hole in her right temple slowly trickled a stream of blood. In the corner lay the dead body of her husband, in whose right hand was clasped a cheap 32-calibre revolver. Curiously enough, he was shot in about the same place as the girl, his right temple. The screams of the woman aroused the neighbors, who came in and found both man and girl dead, and the wife in a faint beside them.

Surmises as to the Cause.

The two bodies were removed to the Morgue, where a jury was impaneled. An inquest will be held to-day. It is supposed that Merrick made proposals to the girl, which were rejected, and that the shooting followed. Thomas Harrigan, the father of the murdered girl, lives at No. 618 South Eighth street, in this city. He said last night that his daughter wrote to him in December last that she wanted to see him. Knowing Merrick's previous record, he suspected that his reasons for sending the note, and when he saw her she confirmed his suspicions. He took her back to Philadelphia, but after two weeks, upon the urgent solicitation of Mrs. Merrick, he allowed her to return to their care.