

THE STAUGHTON VALE ALLEGED RAPE CASE.

[FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.]

GEELONG, SATURDAY.

This morning, at the police court, a married woman named Hannah Malcolm was charged at the instance of Mr. Joseph Kiddie with having committed wilful and corrupt perjury. A week since the accused swore that Mr. Kiddie had committed a criminal assault on her, but when the evidence was adduced it was shown by the testimony of another witness that her word was not to be relied on, and Mr. Kiddie was discharged, the bench intimating that he left the court without a stain on his character. At the outset of the case to-day, Mr. Whyte, the solicitor who appeared to prosecute, stated that he saw a difficulty in the way, as he was unable to prove perjury, there being only Mr. Kiddie's oath against that of Mrs. Malcolm. It was decided to proceed with the case, and Mr. Kiddie gave evidence to the effect that all that Mrs. Malcolm had said against himself was utterly untrue. He stated that he did not invite her into the buggy house, neither did he take her into an adjoining room, nor did he assault her. He further stated that he never left the buggy house from the time the woman entered it until she

left, and during that time a boy named M'Court was present. After making this statement Mr. Kiddie stated that he would withdraw the charge, his solicitor intimating that Mr. Kiddie had no malice towards the woman, but merely wished to obtain publicity through the court of his total denial of any truth whatever in the charge preferred against him by Mrs. Malcolm, who had been employed by him as a domestic servant. The prisoner was thereupon discharged.