

## PETER THE PAINTER.

IS HE IN AUSTRALIA?

AN ARREST IN THE WEST.

Perth, August 13.

For several weeks past detectives have been making secret investigations into a sensational statement that the Peter the Painter, who took part in the Houndsditch sensation last December, when three members of the London police were shot by burglars, was in the country working as a farm laborer. Yesterday three officers visited Kelleberin and arrested August Maren (26) a Russian student, and Fred Johnson (27) also a Russian, and a tailors' presser by calling, on a charge of having conspired to give false evidence against another Russian, Ernest Dreger, at Kelleberin, on April 20.

Principally on the evidence of the two accused Dreger was sentenced to three months' imprisonment on a charge of stealing a gun, and since his release Dreger has, it is alleged, asserted that Maren is identical with Peter the Painter, for whose arrest the British Government offered a reward of £500. Maren's description is said to tally almost in every detail with that of Peter the Painter, and the departmental officers are so confident of his identity that they are in communication with the London police authorities.

Inspector Connell, of the Criminal Investigation Department, is reticent about the matter, but he will not deny that his officers have been engaged on a special mission for several days past. It now remains to be seen whether the suspicions entertained by the department, which appear to be borne out by Maren's description, are correct. Maren can speak a few words of English, but Johnson knows hardly one word of the language. Both men have not been long in the State. It is not yet known whether Johnson is supposed to have been connected directly with the Houndsditch affair, but the investigations of the next few days will, it is believed, throw some light on the matter.