



CORONERS INQUESTS



Harry Gibbs, Infant

An inquest was held by Mr. Wilson, on Friday, the 9th inst., at the Council Chamber, on the body of Harry Gibbs, an infant, aged six days, who died from the effects of opium administered in its crude state, at the instance of Susan Edwards, who had attended as a midwife to the mother of the child. It appeared from the evidence of the father, that on the Monday preceding its birth he had called on Mrs. Edwards to say how his wife was going on, and happened to observe that the child was troubled with wind, she gave him a pill, which she directed to be divided, and half of it to be administered to the child, which was accordingly done. After taking the pill the child became perfectly quiet and slept heavily. Next morning the parents, being alarmed, sent for Mrs. Edwards, who assured them there was no cause for uneasiness; that she had often given children a similar dose, and that in a few hours the child would have its sleep out, but that they were not to rouse it. Mr. Winzar, the surgeon, who was visiting a patient near, was in the afternoon called in to see the child, and at once gave it as his opinion that it was under the influence of some powerful narcotic. Every effort was used to rouse the child and stimulate the system, but without success. Upon inquiring of Mrs. Edwards, she at once produced the other half of the pill, which was of crude opium, about half a grain, and professed her ignorance of the dangerous effects likely to be produced by such a dose. A post-mortem examination was ordered, and from the result and the evidence adduced the jury returned a verdict, "That the child was poisoned by opium ignorantly administered by Susan Edwards."

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