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INQUESTS.

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INQUESTS.

A Condemned Practice.

An inquest into the cause of the death of Eva Edith Campbell Shove was held at the residence of Francis Shove, Springfield Road, at 4 p.m. yesterday, before R. Beetham, Esq., Coroner. Mr Benjamin Bull was chosen foreman of the jury.

Francis Shove, sworn, said: He was the father of the deceased child, who was eight weeks old. The child was a sickly child from birth, and had had a cold, which she caught two days ago from one of the other children. She was crying considerably the day before yesterday. Yesterday, at half-past two, when she was put to bed, she had a good drink of milk, and had been given two drops of chlorodyne. About half-past eleven or twelve she was sleeping nicely, and witness put two bottles of hot water, one on each side of her, in the crib. At a quarter-past four in the morning witness saw the child, and found that she was dead. It was the first time that she had had any medicine of any sort. Mrs Barty, the nurse, had seen the child several times

since it was born. He had four children, and did not believe in any of them having any medicine.

Ellen Barty, sworn, said: She attended Mrs Shove when the child was born. It was an eight months child, and a very weakly one. Saw it about eight or ten days ago, and then thought it was improving.

William Deamer, sworn, said: He was a duly qualified medical man, practising in Christchurch. He attended the mother, and was of opinion that the child was a very weak, feeble one. The immediate cause of death appears to have been convulsions. The child having a cold would have a tendency to dry up any secretion there was, and cause a certain amount of congestion of the lungs. He did not think it was a desirable thing to give children chlorodyne, but it was very largely done, and the dose given by the father was the common dose given to children of that age. He did not think the dose was the direct cause of death, but he reprehended the practice strongly, except under direct medical supervision, as the strength of the chlorodyne was unknown. He thought that a post mortem examination would have been of no value in such a case.

The jury returned a verdict that "The child died from convulsions," and added "that the practice of administering chlorodyne to young children is a most reprehensible one unless given under medical supervision."

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