

Blanche Johnson

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NEWPORT

A SAD CASE. - An inquest was held by the Coroner (Mr. E. F. Blake), on Monday afternoon, at the Castle and Banner Inn, Newport, upon a woman, named Blanche Johnson, of Hunnyhill, who has been in delicate health for some time, was last week taken ill, and had to keep her bed. She complained of internal pain, and could take no food. On Saturday morning her little girl, aged 11, who gave her evidence in a remarkably intelligent manner, was sent to the chemist for castor oil, and later in the day for tincture of rhubarb. Deceased drank the whole of the tincture (sixpenny worth) at 7 in the evening, and half-an-hour later was found dead by her little daughter and an aged and feeble grandmother. Dr. Mellor, the parish doctor, was then sent for, but he understood the child to say her mother lived at Horsebridge-hill, and, owing to the mistake, and having other patients, he did not see the body until Sunday, having been requested to do so by Mr. Inspector Greenleaf. There was no one in the house to assist deceased but her feeble mother and her daughter. The Coroner said that it was a very sad case. The old woman was practically unable to look after deceased, and appeared now to be unable to move in bed herself. - Dr. Mellor said the body of deceased presented a natural appearance, with the exception of a little discolouration round the region of the heart. In his opinion death was arose from syncope, caused by weak action of the heart. The tincture of rhubarb taken might have caused nausea, and if that came on the woman would faint away, and the action of the heart would be too weak to recover. - William Burnage, assistant to Messrs. Pollard and Brown, chemists, deposed to selling the tincture - 1½ oz. - The Coroner, in summing up the evidence, said although it was the duty of a parish doctor to at once attend to an important message, still in this case no blame could be attributed to Dr. Mellor. This was one of the saddest cases he (the Coroner) had known for some time. - The jury returned a verdict of "Death from natural causes."

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