

PAINFULLY SUDDEN DEATH OF AN INFANT

An enquiry was held at the Star Hotel, on Monday afternoon, before the Deputy-Coroner (E.F. BLAKE, Esq), touching on the death of **Gerald George TAYLOR**, aged 2 ½ years, who died very suddenly early the same morning.

Ada Ruth TAYLOR deposed that she was the mother of deceased and wife of Frederick TAYLOR. They lived in Newport Street. They had had four children altogether, but two of them had died. The deceased had always been healthy. He had never received medical treatment since his birth. On Saturday he complained of feeling unwell, and slept nearly all day. Witness gave him some milk and biscuits. He was dressed as usual. On Sunday he went out. At tea time he had some bread and butter and tea. He complained of no pain, and he did not appear to have a cold. On Sunday night he slept with witness, only he wanted to sleep at the bottom of the bed. At a quarter to 5 on Monday morning he would not let witness nurse him, and she called her husband, who took him while she had a little sleep. At twenty minutes to 7 witness was called by her husband from the room in which she was sleeping to the baby, which was dead. Deceased was in bed with his father. Her husband then went for Dr. PLETTS directly.

By the Coroner. - I did not send for a doctor before because I did not think he was very ill. Had given him a powder on Saturday night.

The Foreman. - Did you not think you ought to have sent for a doctor?

Witness. - I did not think the child was so ill as it really was.

Frederick TAYLOR deposed that he was a tailor, living at Newport Street, and husband of last witness. The health of the child had been generally good. On Saturday there were symptoms of illness. At a quarter to 5 on Monday morning he first thought that the child was seriously ill. His wife had called him, and he had nursed the child and put him to sleep. He cried a little. He woke up about an hour afterwards, and witness thought he seemed better. About an hour later he noticed a great change, and called his wife, and they found that he was dead. Went for a doctor at once. Deceased was playing with the other children on Sunday.

Dr. J. Menham PLETTS stated that he was sent for shortly before 7 o'clock that morning. He found the deceased lying in bed, quite dead. Should have thought he had been dead an hour or more. There were no marks of violence about him. After a careful examination, which did not reveal the cause of death, he made a post mortem examination. Found the lungs highly congested, the result of inflammation. All the other organs were healthy. The body was not neglected.

The Coroner. - Does it depend on constitution as to whether congestion would cause death? How long would you have expected the symptoms to have shown?

Dr. PLETTS said he had no reason for thinking there was anything wrong. With children it was often very difficult to find out what was wrong.

The Coroner, in summing up, said this would no doubt be a lesson to the father and mother in future. No doubt they thought there was not sufficient illness to warrant their sending for a doctor, but he thought a slight caution would have a good effect upon them.

The jury strongly objected to any severe course being taken.

The verdict was "Death from natural causes," and Mrs TAYLOR was duly cautioned by the Coroner.
