

the nates. The enumerated symptoms continued until her death, this morning at 9½ A.M. Dr. Thorburn was of opinion that Mary Kerr came to her death from the effect of coal gas which she had inhaled.

When the jurymen had examined the body, it was at a very high temperature for a corpse, and some doubts were expressed as to whether or not the unfortunate girl was really dead. In reply to a question put by a jurymen, Dr. Thorburn stated that narcotic poisons for a certain time after death preserved a temperature nearly as high as that which would exist during life, in the bodies of those affected by them. This accounted for the heat noticed in the deceased. He had not the slightest doubt that Miss Kerr was dead. The other medical gentlemen present concurred in this view.

Dr. F. Wright, the first medical gentleman who had attended the deceased, said :— When I arrived I found the family suffering from the effects of coal gas poisoning. I at once administered stimulants. I had the windows opened, stove-pipe holes opened, fire-boards taken down, and fires put in every fireplace to promote ventilation. Drs. Agnew and Small soon arrived, and the stimulating treatment was continued. The servant, Miss McLean, and Mr. Henderson, were by this time resuscitated, and by Dr. Small's advice, all were removed to Mr. Helliwell's. From the first, I did not anticipate the recovery of the deceased, in consequence of the great prostration evidenced. Her countenance was flushed, her lips livid, breathing hurried and stertorous; eyes prominent and pupils fully dilated; pulse very weak and rapid. I tried to give her stimulants but could not; the powers of deglutition being very imperfect. I discontinued my efforts. I left the patients in the care of Drs. Small and Agnew. I returned soon afterwards, and found Drs. Agnew, Small, Rolph and others present, using every means for her recovery. My opinion is that the deceased came to her death by the inhalation of coal gas.

Dr. Small being recalled, stated that he accounted for the deceased having been affected to a greater extent than the others, from the fact that she had been lowest of all—on a mattress upon the floor, and had thus inhaled the heaviest and most poisonous gas. Carbonic oxyde is the active portion or poisonous part of gas and the heavier. This opinion was also endorsed by the medical witnesses and the Coroner.

The house, it appears, was not supplied with gas for the purposes of illumination, and evidence went to shew that it must have penetrated into the house, through the sewer, from a pipe or main in the street, from which, by some cause, it escaped.

Presuming that Dr. Small is correctly reported in what he said at the inquest, we cannot help remarking that we differ widely from him in his views, of the poisonous constituents of the coal gas, and the immediate cause of the poisoning in the present instance. Coal gas is admitted on all hands to be exceedingly complex in its composition, which doubtlessly varies with the coal from which it is manufactured. Besides several hydro-carburets of various elementary composition, it commonly contains carbonic oxyde, carbonic acid, hydrogen, nitrogen, sulphurous acid gas, sulphuretted hydrogen gas, and not unfrequently ammonia, in some one form or other of its compounds. We have ourselves repeatedly, detected in the gas supplied to this city, sulphuretted hydrogen, sulphurous acid gas, and carbonic acid in large proportions, far greater, in fact, than should be; while the odour, which is so characteristic of it, is due to naphtha or some of its compounds. The object of the purifying processes through which it is put, (usually effected, and imperfectly by lime,) is to deprive the coal gas of its carbonic acid, sulphuretted hydrogen, sulphurous acid, and ammoniacal compounds. But as we have observed, this is generally very imper-