

Coroner's Verdict.

Startling Testimony That Implicates Lute Collins.

Coroner C. H. Schenk has filed his verdict and inquest proceedings in the death of Malissie Smitley, whose sad death occurred Monday. The verdict reads as follows:

"I, C. H. Schenk, coroner of Adams county, having examined the body of Malissie Smitley and heard the testimony of the witnesses which said testimony is hereinunto attached do hereby find that said deceased came to her death at the home of her parents in Jefferson township on the first day of February 1904 from the effects of some drastic purgative drug taken or administered for the purpose of producing abortion. The said deceased being a female of the age of nineteen years, seven months and fourteen days. She was five feet, seven inches in height, black hair, brown eyes, dark complexion.

Signed, C. H. Schenk, Coroner. To this regular form is attached the evidence of several witnesses:

DR. R. S. WILSON.

First asked to prescribe for Malissie Smitley January 30, found her suffering from terrible drug effects, left medicine and directions for giving same with her nurse, Mr. Clark; was called back by telephone about 9:30 p.m. same day, reached there at 11:40, found her purging and prostrated, the nurse telling me that there had been something given her by Mr. Collins. I told patient and friends that she was poisoned and would die within thirty-six hours. She refused to allow me to make examination. Saw her next afternoon, condition worse, made examination, found her pregnant about three months. She admitted it, and said that she had taken something to procure abortion. I asked her who done it and she said "LUTE." I asked her who Lute was and she said "LUTE COLLINS." Saw her no more alive, refused to sign death certificate thus forcing them to call the coroner. The nurse told me when I was there that at one time Mr. Collins went into the room, raised the girl up in upright position and gave her something contrary to my orders. Mr. Collins said it was pop. Other statements were made to me but I don't want to divulge them unless compelled to do so."

W. A. CLARK.

Nursed Malissie, she was sick two days, first noticed her illness Friday evening. On Sunday she told me her condition and that Luther was responsible. Collins came to her room Saturday night and gave patient what he said was pop. She was very sick Sunday and died at two o'clock Monday morning.

MRS. VIRGINIA SMITLEY.

Mother of deceased girl, Malissie had been at home most of winter, I do not know that she was pregnant, took sick Friday, complained of camps, does not know of deceased taking any medicine before.

MRS. BERTHA FOREMAN.

Sister of deceased girl, she was sick three days. She told me of her condition and said Luther Collins was responsible. She did not tell me she had taken any medicine.

Following this evidence is a post mortem statement of Drs. R. S. Wilson and E. Franz, giving her exact condition and saying that death in their opinion was caused by a drug given her for abortion.

Sheriff Butler and Prosecutor Moran returned from Berne last evening. No one has yet filed an affidavit and until this is done no arrest can be made until an indictment is returned by the grand jury. It is believed that some one will

file the papers within a day or two.

CLAIMS INNOCENCE.

Luther Collins, the accused man, and who is the husband of the deceased girl's sister stoutly proclaims his innocence and says he can prove same. He telephoned the officers here from Chatanooga this morning saying he was not guilty and that whenever he was wanted he would come to Decatur and give himself up, without a requisition or any other unnecessary trouble.

A PECULIAR CASE.

The occurrence has some strange incidents attached to it and proves that some one has seemed determined to wreck the life of Malissie Smitley. This is the third time within three years that she had been pregnant and she charged her brother-in-law on her death bed and at other times, as the cause of her ruin. She leaves a child two years old and had previously suffered a miscarriage. Still Luther Collins proclaims his innocence and there are some who think that he may be the victim of some other perfidy.

Judge Erwin was busy Monday afternoon hearing exceptions to the final report of Aamda A. Cottrell, administratrix of General B. Cottrell estate. The attorneys in the case were C. J. Lutz, F. M. Cottrell, J. C. Moran and Schafer Peterson. Court convened this morning but adjourned immediately to allow attorneys and court officials to attend the funeral services of Mrs. Ernst.

Did you ever stop to think of the patience required by the editor of a country daily newspaper? Well you should try the business when every machine in the office begins to buck just at press time, and then when by a almost superhuman effort you get things started nicely and two or three belts break. Tis enough to make the most religious deacon forget his vows and its little wonder that on such occasions the air looks blue. When the papers are late remember that the editor hates it worse than you do.

"Almost all our customers are kicking like steers," said a local grocer last night "because of the flighty price of coffee." "It is true," he continued, "that the price of coffee is high, five cents higher than it was at this time last year, but it is no fault of ours. A small crop is the fault of it all. Some of the big growers of South America got so disgusted with the price of coffee when it was down that they stopped growing it and the consequence was a great shortage in the crop. There were only 850,000,000 sacks of coffee brought into this country this year compared with one hundred and thirty millions the year before and this decrease has caused the price of the beverage to soar.

The protracted services at the Methodist church are still on, it being announced at the meeting Sunday that they would continue until further notice. These meetings have been the means of much good in every way, a general revival of the Christian spirit being very much in evidence ever since the meetings began, several weeks ago. These services together with the many other duties of Pastor White has been very telling upon his usual robust health, but he has stood the strain manfully and perhaps will regret the close of the meetings more than any one else. This reminds us that in two months more the conference year closes, and with it the first year of the pastorate of Rev. John C. White. In that brief year he has clearly endeared himself to his congregation and to every one else in fact and demonstrated his ability as a speaker and a minister of the gospel. He has recognized ability and compares favorably with the most able minister of this or any other conference. There will be a united appeal for his return and this is as it should be. You can almost hear the cry of alarm that will predominate at the end of the five years, when the laws of the church will change him to another field in spite of the appeals and protests of those who would have him remain. Change the laws.

Jacob Atz, the well known harness and buggy dealer who has been in business on North Second street for several years has sold a half interest to Charles Steele, the new firm being known as Atz & Steele. Both are thorough business men and will take an earnest effort to secure their share of the business of this community. They will increase their stock of buggies, carriages and harness and will also put in stock a complete line of farming implements. They will handle the highest grade of goods and will appreciate a share of anyone's patronage.

W. E. Hale, who has been employed as General Manager by A. Tubman on the grading of the Fort Wayne and Springfield interurban railway has resigned his position and left Monday evening for Adrian, Mich., where he will engage in same business. While here Mr. Hale has made a great many friends who regret to see him go, but as the position he will accept is something better they all join in wishing him success. While here he has proven thorough, honest and reliable and those who had the business dealings with him very much regret his departure. Mont Fee, formerly day clerk at the Murray Hotel has accepted his position and will act in the same capacity.

Fred Scheiman the popular meat man, located on Madison street was united in marriage Sunday evening at 5:30 o'clock to Miss Lizzie Koeneman at the home of the bride's parents five and one half miles north west of this city. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Clausing, and was attended by only the immediate relatives and a few specially invited guests. After the ceremony a fine wedding supper was served. The newly married couple were the recipients of a number of handsome and useful presents. They will be at home to their many friends in their new home on North Third street. The Democrat joins with their many friends in wishing a happy married life.

Should the supreme court affirm the decision of Judge Artman and Judge Downey in declaring the apportionment law of Indiana unconstitutional, and it is generally conceded that the decisions of the lower court will be sustained, the apportionment law of 1897 will be in force. When asked if he anticipated calling an extra session of the Legislature to pass a new apportionment law in case the law of 1903 is declared bad, Governor Durbin emphatically said he did not intend to call the extra session according to the rules laid down of the construction of the calendar. The early date of Easter will no doubt in a measure detract from the popularity of the Easter bonnet, as the season will not be sufficiently advanced to warrant the wearing of summer headgear. Still the severe winter may result in an early spring and perfect an Easter day.

There was a very staff meeting of the Decatur section of the Fort Wayne District of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company here last Thursday in their new office in the Post Office building. The meeting was a pure and simple business one and one to offer some assistance to the new agents of the company. J. F. Conway, General Manager of the Fort Wayne District presided and offered some very good advice to the agents which if taken advantage of means more business to the company. W. E. Hixson of Bluffton, C. Walsh of Geneva and W. R. Neal and J. S. Peterson of this city were the onlookers who were striving to grasp this information so as to be able to do the business. This company is a very prosperous one and furthermore that he has never thought of such a thing. The matter has been suggested to the Governor by the politicians who have been building their fences on the apportionment of 1903. Declaring the law unconstitutional will make useless some of the work that has been done in the counties particularly affected by the apportionment.—Indianapolis News.

The case of Joseph D. Moser vs Sarah Hirsch, complaint to have the defendant declared of unsound mind, was heard by Judge Erwin Friday morning. Sarah is young lady who has just become of age and who has \$600 which has heretofore been under the care of Mr. Moser, her guardian. Sarah who is religiously inclined said on the witness stand that she wished to gain possession of her money that she might give to the poor and needy when she wanted to. Judge Erwin took the question under advisement. In justice to Mr. Moser, it should be stated that his motive in this case are of the purest. He does not want to be the guardian but believes that for her own good and future welfare she should be protected by a guardian appointed by the court. The exact sum of her wealth is \$611 and if she provides for herself in the future she will not be able to contribute much to the poor heathen as she expresses it.

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The Great SPREAD For Daily Bread Karo CORN SYRUP

The case of John S. Bowers vs the City of Decatur and the officials of same has been set for trial before Judge Smith of Portland on next Monday and is expected to go to trial at that time. This is the suit brought to collect payment for the construction of Elm street sewer about \$18,000 being involved. The plaintiff is represented by D. D. Heller & Son, R. S. Peterson, J. T. Merryman and Colerick and France of Fort Wayne. The case is very important one and the result will be awaited with interest.

Fred Koldeway, trustee of Union township brought in a fine load of hogs Thursday, nine in number which weighed just 3,030 pounds for which he received the neat sum of \$144.92. David Gerber purchased the same for the purpose of shipping them to an eastern market. Mr. Koldeway is very proud over his deal and does not think there are nine hogs in the county anywhere that could equal the ones he sold. Hogs are now selling at a fancy price and it certainly pays the farmer to take pride in raising the same.

The Lenten season begins unusually early this year. February 17 will be Ash Wednesday, and Easter Sunday comes on April 3. The date of Good Friday this year is April 1. The remainder of the movable feasts rests with Easter, which is always the first Sunday after the 14th day of the calendar moon, which days falls on or next after the 21st of March according to the rules laid down of the construction of the calendar. The early date of Easter will no doubt in a measure detract from the popularity of the Easter bonnet, as the season will not be sufficiently advanced to warrant the wearing of summer headgear. Still the severe winter may result in an early spring and perfect an Easter day.

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George Smitley, a brother of Malissa Smitley, appeared before Prosecuting Moran Monday morning and filed an affidavit against Luther Collins, charging him with having administered medicine and poison to said Malissa Smitley and in so doing caused her death. The affidavit covers four pages of legal cap paper and is in four counts, setting forth the following facts: "That George Smitley, upon oath swears that Luther Collins on the 25th day of January, 1904, at and in Adams county, Indiana, did then and there feloniously, unlawfully and willfully prescribe and administer to one Malissa Smitley, who was then and there in a delicate condition as the said Luther Collins then and there well knew, certain drugs, medicine, poisons and substance to this affidavit unknown with criminal intent such action not then and there being necessary to preserve the life of said Malissa Smitley, who was then and there in a delicate condition as the said Luther Collins then and there well knew, certain drugs, medicine, poisons and substance to this affidavit unknown with criminal intent such action not then and there being necessary to preserve the life of said Malissa Smitley, who was then and there in a delicate condition as the said Luther Collins then and 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