

to whether a physician or a lawyer would make the best coroner, implies that in either case there must be serious disadvantages. The point at issue here is the same as the question, Can a shoemaker make watches better than a watchmaker can make shoes?

In London, a settlement of the question has been attempted by selecting as far as possible coroners who have obtained both legal and medical qualifications. This plan of expecting the coroner to be a Jack-of-all-trades has not much to recommend it; and the fact that in London, in addition to the doubly-qualified coroner, there are the deputy coroners, who are obliged by law to be barristers, and all the medical expert work is done by outside medical men, shows that matters are not in any way simplified even by having the coroners who are at once both lawyers and physicians.

The only rational plan, and one whose advantages appear never to have been questioned, is that adopted on the Continent, as well as in those States which now are under the medical examiners system, of separating as far as possible the medical and legal side of the investigation, and entrusting these to physicians and lawyers respectively. Your Committee is just as firmly convinced that all legal questions should be left wholly to lawyers, as that all medical ones should be entrusted to medical men.

*The Abolition of the Office of Coroner.*—Your Committee finds that in those States where this has been done, the previous difficulties seem to have been promptly and permanently removed, and it does not appear to have been necessary in any instance to revive the office. The office of coroner was created in England while that country was in a lawless state, and when police regulations and courts of justice were almost non-existent. Since the development of the judicial and police system, the coroner's office has gradually come to fill the important function of fifth wheel to the car of justice. It has been retained through that conservative spirit which retains the cumbrous system of pounds, shillings and pence for the national currency. Many of the United States are still in that primitive and law-