

who often have to work for nothing and pay their own expenses, and when they are paid it is often grudgingly and after periods of time which place the accounts almost beyond the statute of limitations when collection is impossible. Even in legislation, which is the highest function of society, the doctor is discriminated against. In cases which come under the administration of justice, where the skilled knowledge of the medical specialist is called into requisition, he is dealt with in a parsimonious, niggardly way not at all in keeping with the importance of the momentous questions he is called upon to decide.

In determining whether a certain suspicious death has been produced by criminal means or not, the agency of a medical man of first-class qualifications is frequently required. The work required to be done under these circumstances is always most particular, frequently laborious, and often positively disgusting and nauseating. It is work, too, on which the safety of society depends, for upon the evidence of the medical man it rests whether the sleuth-hounds of the law shall be let loose and a criminal be pursued to his doom, or on the contrary, that no further steps are necessary and that justice is satisfied.

Let us see what is his reward. In Ontario, the premier province of the confederation, the fee for a *post-mortem* and evidence is ten dollars; in British Columbia and Quebec, which with Ontario are certainly the most intelligent portions of the Dominion, if we may judge from the fees paid, the amount is also ten dollars. In Nova Scotia it seems that five dollars is considered sufficient recompense for the amount of knowledge imparted by a medical man to a coroner and his jury after making a *post-mortem* examination, but we notice that the blue-nose legislature gives him five cents a mile for travelling expenses. This latter item speaks well for the abstemiousness of the average medical practitioner of Nova Scotia, for certainly five cents a mile allows him very little room for the indulgence of any expensive fancies unless everything else is on the cheap scale on which his services are reckoned. Even this very insignificant pittance seems to be grudged him, for he is to be allowed nothing at all unless he is called by the direction of the majority of the jury, and a certificate from the coroner that such an examina-

tion was required. In Prince Edward Island the same remarks are applicable as in the case of Nova Scotia, with the exception of the certificate of the coroner and the majority of the jury, which do not seem to be necessary. In New Brunswick fees are a little better than in the two last provinces mentioned, for eight dollars is the sum set down for a *post-mortem* and attendance there. It is remarked in the work from which we are quoting, "Boys on Coroners," that in Manitoba witnesses at coroners' inquests are seldom paid. If a medical witness is paid at all he is allowed four dollars a day. Comment on the foregoing is unnecessary. In the various charges, too, laid under the Act for the adulteration of food, medical practitioners with special knowledge are often summoned to give expert evidence in what may be called quasi-criminal cases, and it would appear from what transpired in the police court in Vancouver not long ago that a physician who can give expert evidence may be summoned and be compelled to testify without any recompense at all.

The following from a Vancouver newspaper, the *World* of Feb. 27th, speaks for itself. It was a case of alleged adulteration of milk, and after many witnesses of various kinds had been called in without eliciting very much definite information, Dr. Thomas, who has devoted himself for years to chemical analyses and is considered a good authority on the subject, was summoned to give his evidence. "He said that he knew nothing of the facts of the case and did not care to give expert testimony unless his fee were guaranteed.

"The magistrate said that he had no power.

"Mr. Russell for the defence said that he would give no undertaking on behalf of the defence.

"Mr. Hamersley asked if in a quasi-criminal case a witness could demand his fee.

"Dr. Thomas said he did not see why he should give gratis what had cost him time and money to acquire.

"The magistrate said he would look into the matter and requested the doctor to give his evidence."

We must cordially endorse Dr. Thomas' stand in the above matter and we feel certain that he will be backed up by the medical profession everywhere in the Dominion. It is a simple outrage