

system which would be in touch with all the various conditions of the different provinces.

Long and strong arguments could be made in favor of such an establishment, but we have said enough at present. Later on we will supplement these short remarks by others more convincing. We sincerely hope that the wishes of the majority of the medical men in Canada will be fulfilled by our Federal Government establishing a bureau somewhat after the lines laid down by Dr. Roome. Another matter for consideration in this connection would be the raising of the standard of medical education and examination of the other provinces to equal that of Ontario and make a Dominion Medical Council.

APPOINTMENT OF CORONERS.

Throughout Ontario the Government appoints certain men, generally of the medical profession, to represent them as judges in cases of sudden and suspicious deaths, and calls them coroners. In country places and the smaller towns, a considerable extent of country is covered by one jurisdiction, the nearest man being supposed to be called in, and sometimes the nearest is a long way off. In the larger towns and the cities, it is rather the multiplicity than the scarcity that is the trouble, although how, under existing political circumstances, this could be remedied is more than we could venture to say. Unfortunately, these drawbacks are not the only ones to be found in this official body, and oftentimes cause for complaint, not only in the interests of justice, but also in the interests of individual people, crops up in the many cases which, especially in cities, are being continually brought under their notice.

Where the number is legion, a race takes place for the privilege of being empowered to say whether an inquest is necessary or not, that depending on the first man to issue a warrant. To say the least of it, this is undignified, though such unseemly haste is often *en evidence* from the senior coroner of a city or county down to the very latest junior. Why this is so, it is hard to say, as the remuneration from the authorities is, in most cases, quite insufficient to properly remunerate any busy man. Perhaps it is the advertising in

the affair—a legitimate method, possibly, but certainly not ethical from a medical standpoint—which is looked on to pecuniarily equalize matters that is the catchy point. Even we ourselves might not squirm terribly or feel intensely shocked if some such notice as this appeared in the daily press regarding ourselves: "James Hodge fell down an elevator shaft and was killed instantly, and Coroner ——— was called in. On investigation, he decided that an inquest was not necessary." (This, by the way, entails the issue of a warrant and, naturally, a fee.) Or: "Robert Dodds was struck by a pile-driver on the head and killed instantly. Coroner ——— issued a warrant, called a jury together, and will hold an inquest at ——— Street at 8 p.m. Monday." Still, even if we are not squeamish, this is certainly a deplorable condition to find well-educated men indulging in.

If the whole "box and dice," as we heard a confrère express himself on some such matter, were even to end here, justice would neither be turned aside nor retarded in any way; but—with a capital B—such is not the case. Political influence abounds in the appointment of the men assigned to this duty, and, naturally, to those who know either Dominion or Ontario political bodies, this does not necessitate the appointment of the best man for the place, or, indeed, always even a good man. The very late addition to the staff of a city not more than one hundred miles from here gives a very fair instance of our point.

If the position be one of importance, most decidedly men of some standing, and especially understanding, should be appointed, and not every medical man to whom some party wire-puller, who has a strong pull, owes a large bill to or is a great friend of some such man.

By all means let us have men appointed who are fit to sit in a judicial chair. A coroner, from a medical standpoint, should stand on points in medical jurisprudence on the same basis as judges do from the standpoint of a lawyer.

Just recently a case has been aired where there seems, in the minds of the officers of the law, to be good reason for suspicion of foul play, which happened some two years ago. At that time a coroner was notified, and decided an inquest unnecessary. If these men were guilty, or even if there were the slightest reason to suspect them,