

CORONER'S INQUESTS.

We have before alluded to the glaringly absurd verdicts rendered by our coroner's courts in Canada, and we have again in the interest of public morality to call attention to this subject. The object of a coroner's court is to ascertain the actual cause of death when it occurs, under suspicious circumstances. No man has a right to deal with his own life any more than he has with that of his neighbour. In either case if he premeditates and carries out the destruction of another person, or of himself, it is murder in the first degree,—the greatest crime that can be inflicted against the laws both of God and man. The only punishment awarded to the self murderer in olden times was to deny him Christian burial; but in these strange times of ours, the man who dares to usher himself unsummoned into the presence of his maker is sure of exciting the sympathising charity of a pitying coroner's jury who return a verdict not in accordance with the facts as they are, but as they ought to be.

Whose is the fault? Is it the Government who refuse to expend the necessary amount to secure efficient and skilled evidence bearing on the case. Is it the Government official in the person of the coroner who burks investigation and suggests a verdict of death by the visitation of God? or is it the jury, who refuse to order the necessary post-mortem examination, and prefer returning a verdict which will at least satisfy a portion of the community, if it is not altogether in accord with the facts as they are.

The sale of poisons by druggists and apothecaries is prohibited by law, except when ordered in a physician's prescription. And furthermore when poisons are dispensed, a poison label should be pasted on the bottle with a death's head and cross bones. It is well known that this law is being constantly set at defiance and we should suppose that it becomes the duty of a coroner if he finds this law has been set at nought by any druggist or apothecary, to intimate the fact