

Dominion Medical Monthly.

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TORONTO, APRIL, 1895.

CORONERS.

We are glad to see that other medical journals are following our lead in this matter, and we should like to have the hearty co-operation of all the journals in remedying what is at present a very bad condition of affairs.

There has been much feeling aroused lately in the apportionment of the various inquests. There are two views to be taken of this matter. The first view is that, as the present law stands for the appointment of coroners and the regulation of their duties under the law, one coroner is as good as another, so that the medical man acting as coroner in a certain district, who considers that he should have the conduct of given inquests, has a perfect right, both morally and

legally, to feel aggrieved when he is over-ridden by officers of the Crown from which he himself holds his appointment. The other phase of the question is, as we pointed out before, the public interest, and there is no doubt, as the coroner holds not only an investigating, but a judicial position in relation to inquests, that the more experience a man has in this peculiar class of work, the more thoroughly he is acquainted with criminalology, the more thoroughly he is posted in all forms of procedure, the better will public interest be served. This matter comes up at the present time in connection with the statements we have heard regarding the number of inquests conducted by Arthur Jukes Johnston; notably, the Hyams and Dicks inquests, and also the fire inquest. Now it is undoubtedly apparent that in these cases the interest of the public will be better served by a gentleman of Dr. Johnston's skill and experience than by anyone else that could be mentioned in the city, and we say this with perfect knowledge that the statement cannot for a moment reflect upon the personal qualifications or attainments of any of the other medical men in this city. From all this it is apparent that something must be done in the matter, and we would suggest that the city could be divided up into districts, each under the charge of one man, with some gentleman as a presiding coroner over the whole city, the duties and remuneration of all being fixed. This plan might likewise be extended to other cities and counties in the Province.