

PREFACE

Experience has shown that nearly every one amongst those around dead persons, medical men, civic authorities, keepers of cemeteries and even attorneys at law are at a loss to know deaths which should be the subject of investigations from those which should not be.

Experience has shown that there are but few people, concerning themselves with the investigations upon death, who know exactly the reason and the end of such investigations.

Experience has shown that Coroners, in all countries in which new legislation on the duties of Coroners has been introduced, are often at a loss to know how to act in order to come to a decision as to summoning or not summoning jurors; that is, they do not know how to proceed in their preliminary enquiry or inquest without a jury.

Experience has shown, that even in the regular inquest with a jury, some Coroners — too many — are not cognizant of what they should do to meet various incidental occurrences.

These difficulties come from the fact that all the authors, who have written up to this date upon the Coroner's duties, (1) have contented themselves with speaking only generally and broadly of the principles, (2) have only spoken of principles directly established by law and jurisprudence, without extending the indirect consequences that these established principles bear on all the necessary doings in the procedure, and (3) they have — some entirely, others nearly altogether — neglected to deal with the result of the new modern legislation changing the old English law, and omitted to treat of preliminary enquiries or inquests without a jury.