

and true who were summoned to an air raid inquest sometimes returned a verdict of "Wilful murder" against the Kaiser, but the coroners very soon pointed out that to return such a verdict was useless and likely to bring the administration of the law into ridicule. It has been said that the coroner is functionless without his jury, and so he is. The converse of this is that the jury cannot decide until they have heard the coroner's summing up. It is marvellous how seldom he fails to keep them to the point and to compel them to decide according to the evidence. One recalls a case where there must (to say the least) have been some misapprehension. There had been an inquiry concerning the death of a man who had died in hospital. The verdict was "Death owing to the visitation of Providence accelerated by an injudicious *post mortem* examination."

STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS.

Events of importance calling for rapid treatment by the Legislature have caused the Government to give power to the executive to create a large number of statutory rules and orders. In effect many of the older Government departments, if not some of the new, have been given power to legislate on a small scale, and their "legislation" is being enforced every day. Various new "offences" have sprung into being.

Five years ago a dweller in these islands could have his house packed with food if he liked. Nowadays it is an offence to have a secret hoard of any kind. Owing, no doubt, to the fact that everyone fully recognizes the necessity for these sumptuary laws, their validity has not been seriously questioned, but in view of the drastic way in which the powers conferred by the Defence of the Realm Act have been exercised, it is more than likely that the Courts will be asked to interpret that measure before long.

THE BAR COUNCIL

The General Council of the Bar has recently published its annual report. This report generally contains a brief record of the proceedings of the Council for the past year.