

selves know it to be. Some indulge in this kind of bribery on a wholesale scale, and include, beside the coroner, nurses, doctors and anyone else whom it is possible to place in the category. It is certainly time some pronounced effort was made to put a stop to such proceedings not only in justice to the honest undertakers but also to the public generally."

It is little less than an outrage that an unsupported general charge of this sort should be made against any body of men. If any coroner has been guilty of such unprofessional and altogether reprehensible conduct, he should be publicly exposed, and the authorities should remove him from the position which he has disgraced. That the charge as applied to the coroners of Toronto, as a class, is absolutely false and without foundation, no one who knows the professional reputation and standing of many of these gentlemen, will for a moment doubt. We sincerely hope that some action will be taken by them to have the evidence upon which such an accusation is made thoroughly sifted. They owe it, not only to themselves, but also to their professional brethren and to the public, that the matter should not be passed over without the fullest investigation. It is surely humiliating to the medical profession that they should be lectured on matters of honor and ethics by members of the undertaking trade. That bribery, on a wholesale scale, has been indulged in, is only conceivable on the ground that the complainants are very willing, not to say anxious, victims. It is, indeed, rare that honest men are insulted by the offer of bribes.

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### SPINAL ANAESTHESIA.

During the past month medical journals on this continent have devoted much space to the discussion of the subject of spinal subarachnoid injections of cocaine for surgical anæsthesia in operations beneath the diaphragm, with the result that the limitations of the usefulness of this method are becoming pretty well defined. The number of cases in which it has been used has multiplied rapidly, with a remarkable absence of fatalities so far reported, although it has been freely hinted that these have been more frequent than reports of cases would indicate. The method has many obvious disadvantages and is quite unlikely to revolutionize anæsthetic methods to the extent predicted by some enthusiasts. Cocaine is a notoriously unsafe and uncertain drug, minimal doses often producing the most alarming symptoms. The onset and duration of the anæsthesia are both uncertain, and in many operations the necessity for a second injection would not only be inconvenient but practically impossible. The unconsciousness of the patient and consequent absence of