long as the inquiry is permitted to embrace, not merely the question of the cause of death, but the question of the guilt or innocence of the person causing death; while, on the other hand, we are inclined to think that the Coroner's jurisdiction needs reform, and that the question upon every inquest should merely be, Whether the death was occasioned by violence or by natural causes? The present state of the law is certainly anomalous and unsatisfactory, whether the jurisdiction to be exercised be the limited one suggested, or the more enlarged one actually existing; and, in any case, therefore, we hold that a reform is needed. An inquest may proceed for a considerable time without its appearing directly that any person is implicated; then a person appears to be implicated, but there is no specific charge—it may be murder, it may be manslaughter, it may be what you please or nothing at all. If the person implicated appears, he has, nevertheless, no legal right to insist on being heard by counsel or solicitor—he does not appear as a defendant, for there is no defendant at an inquest, nor as a witness, for that would be to compel him to convict himself—he has no legal right to be heard in self-defence, for he is not legally charged with crime, nor has he a legal right to copies of the depositions made. If he does not appear, and a finding be taken that he fled for the offence —*fugam fecit*, as it is called—it seems that the finding is conclusive against him, and not traversable, "quia c'est un auntient positive ley del corone." Whether he appears or not, it is the duty of the Coroner to bind over only those witnesses who prove any material fact against him, and not those who are called for the purpose of exculpating him; and, unlike the depositions of witnesses before the Grand Jury, the depositions at the Coroner's inquest of witnesses, who may die before the trial of the indictment, may be read against him. Upon this preliminary inquiry, which may or may not lead to an accusation—upon the evidence of witnesses who are not subjected to the rules of legal testimony—upon the verdict of a jury, or of the majority of a jury who, unlike the grand jury, although the inquiry be ex-parte, are not sworn to secrecy—and, upon the charge of a judge who is commonly not a lawyer, nor gifted with the "judicial mind" which, unless in rare instances, only a lengthened legal training and experience develope—the person inculpated by the finding of the "Crowner's 'quest" may be committed for trial, and convicted, or he may be outlawed and his goods forfeited. Nor do we think that the Court of Queen's Bench ever took upon itself to quash such an inquisition for the improper reception of evidence, or as being against evidence, nor would it be any reason for quashing it that the law had been improperly laid down. It really adds but little to these anomalies that the Coroner may, in his discretion, hold the inquiry in private, or exclude the person chiefly interested from Court, or that, as we now find, his presence may be directly impeded by the law officers of the Crown. And what, after all, is gained by this process? Even if there be an acquittal on the inquest, the accused, when committed by the magistrates, will not be released. A conviction for murder or manslaughter on a coroner's inquisition, without an indictment found by the grand jury, "the Grand Inquest," although there may have been a rare instance to the contrary, is virtually unknown in practice; if the magistrates have refused to send the case for trial, or the grand jury throws out the bill, an acquittal is almost invariably taken upon the inquisition, and, if the magistrate commits for trial, the trial is always upon the magistrate's committal, and not on the coroner's inquisition. Time and money are wasted, continual conflicts of jurisdiction are occasioned, and the interests of justice are in no way promoted. We must not be unreasonably attached to old institutions merely because they are old; the wisdom of our ancestors, too, thought fit to restrict the functions of the Coroner's office, for by Magna Charta it is declared that "no sheriff, constable, escheator, coroner, nor any other of our bailiffs, shall hold pleas of our Crown." And, even as they have been inhibited, of old, from holding pleas in which there is both accusation and answer by the accused, so now, it may well be that to those whose special duty it is to inquire into charges of violence, the exercise of this duty should be limited, based as it ever should be upon a distinct and specific charge, within a prescribed jurisdiction, and associated with all the formalities of