

political adherents; if political expediency, which too often foists miserable incompetency on the public, where the interests of society urgently demand the presence of thorough and able men, were set aside, and government were to turn a deaf ear to all selfish and interested representations, then would we see the great majority of Coroners selected from the ranks of the medical profession. For it requires no labored arguments to prove that they, by their education, and the nature of their studies, can, of all others, best appreciate the subjects connected with medico-legal enquiries. Indeed, as it is, coroners and juries are guided in their decision by, and usually find, in accordance with the testimony of the medical witness. Why then should he not be preferred to the office of Coroner? In England public attention is being aroused to the necessity and importance of placing intelligent, well educated physicians or surgeons in this position. Cases are constantly being brought to light in which, from ignorance of the value of certain indications, and the bearing of others; from a dogmatism which is often observed in men "clothed with a little brief authority," and from puffed up ideas of knowledge which usually find place in the minds of those who have only a smattering of any science, Coroners snub the medical witness, refuse *post mortem* examinations, and by so doing, in all probability, allow guilt, emboldened by success, to plot anew the destruction of human life. An "M.D.," writing to the London *Lancet*, says:—"I was sent for, some time ago, to see a woman, who, complaining of abdominal spasm, went up stairs, threw herself on a bed, and in a few minutes was found by her husband—who *tardily* followed her, owing to a quarrel being on the *tapis*—a corpse! At the inquest, the learned Coroner thus interrogated me: 'What was, in your opinion, the cause of this woman's death?' Answer—'I really can form no opinion; she was in apparent health previously, and dead when I arrived.' 'Have you any reason to believe that she died from unfair or violent means?' A.—'As I am perfectly in the dark without an autopsy, my answer can only be, I have no such reason.' 'Might she, or might she not, have died from spasm of the heart?' A.—'Certainly she might, or from any other hypothetical cause.' Coroner.—'Gentlemen of the jury—You have heard the evidence of the husband, and of the medical gentleman who attended, and who tells you that, in his opinion, — did not die from foul means or violence, and that possibly she died from disease of the heart. If you are not satisfied with such evidence I will order the body to be opened, *which will be your act, not mine!*' Verdict—'Died from disease of the heart.'" Now, this is not a solitary instance, it is only one of many that have been accumulating for numbers of years, and now bid