

variably satisfies the average coroner's jury. For actual time taken up by the technical work the physician is thus paid at about the rate of fifty cents to one dollar per minute in external examinations.

On the other hand, to make a complete autopsy requires usually, a couple of hours, at least, and a report has to be drawn up. When two hours work is performed for \$10 payment for time consumed in technical work, is only eight and one third cents per minute. It is clear that to a fairly busy man the rates of pay for the external examination is more profitable than that for autopsies and the medical witnesses appear to have very little financial inducements to perform autopsies in preference to external examinations.

The real facts are that the external examination is in most cases merely a formula to cover clinical evidence given by physicians who have attended the case during life and the facts adduced are rarely such as could be made out by inspection of the body.

This system of paying for one thing and receiving another is most irregular. Clinical evidence should be paid for as such, and not classed an external examination.

Two cases have recently come before the public in Montreal showing the absurdity of coroners' verdicts being given without the additional security of making an autopsy. In one instance an old man found dead in bed, was publicly declared by the jury to have "died from drink," when the cause of death was found (upon performing a private autopsy) to be pneumonia. In the other a verdict of manslaughter was found and the suspected person indicted and placed upon his trial without the cause of death being established by autopsy, although the sittings of the coroner's jury covered a period of four days and two adjournments were made.

Fortunately the medical witness examined obtained permission of the friends to open the body after the inquest was closed, and upon the result of the autopsy being explained at the trial, the judge felt justified in dismissing the case without calling for the defence, and stating that had the autopsy been ordered in the first place the case would never have come to trial at all. His comments upon the negligence of the jury were short but pungent. We are curious to learn what will