

and is killed, upon the inquisition the township or the guilty party shall be amerced, Bac. Abr. Coroner, C.

The inquisition was formerly of much greater credit than now.¹¹ But where it has been subscribed by the coroner and jurors it is equivalent to a bill of indictment returned by a grand jury, see *R. v. Cole*, 3 Camp. 371, where a bill of indictment against the prisoner for the same offence had been thrown out by the grand jury, and she was convicted. There is, however, this difference between an indictment and a coroner's inquisition finding murder, &c. that the Court will refuse bail after the first, but will in their discretion bail after the latter, for they may look into the depositions to see if the evidence supports the charge of murder, whereas before the grand jury the investigation is secret.

In the case of *Jones v. White*, 1 Str. 68, the Court divided upon the point, whether an inquest of the coroner *super visum corporis*, finding the testator a lunatic, was admissible upon an issue of *devisavit vel non*. It was read at the instance of Pratt J., though he thought it was not in strictness admissible, because it was an issue out of Chancery, and merely to inform the conscience of the Chancellor.

Upon the verdict being brought in, the coroner may commit the person found guilty of the murder by his inquisition to prison. The Statute provides that if any be found culpable of the murder, the coroner and jury are to go to his house and enquire of the value of his property, which is to be appraised and delivered to the township, which is made answerable therefor to the judges of assize. With us there is no forfeiture for felony. But cases may occur where a timely execution of this duty might, at least, save the county from the expenses of the prosecution and conviction of a murderer.

Immediately afterwards the body is to be buried. The Code, Art. 25, sec. 7,¹² authorizes the coroner to provide a coffin and decently bury the body in cases where it is necessary. And by the Act of 1868, ch. 457,¹³ the coroner of Baltimore City is to report monthly to the Police Commissioners the inquests held by him, and he is also to deposit in some bank, subject to the orders of the Judges of the Orphans Court, all moneys and property found on the person of the deceased.

Lastly, where an inquest has been held *super visum corporis*, and the verdict recorded, the coroner cannot of his own motion hold a second inquest, the first inquisition remaining unquashed. For he is *functus officio* as to this, so soon as the verdict is returned, *R. v. White*, 29 L. J. Q. B. 257.

¹¹ An inquest held by a coroner and a commitment signed by him are rather ministerial than judicial acts and are not void because done on Sunday. *Blaney v. State*, 74 Md. 153.

The inquisition of a coroner's jury is not a judicial proceeding and is inadmissible in evidence either upon a criminal prosecution or in a civil suit. *State v. Cecil Co.*, 54 Md. 426.

¹² Code 1911, Art. 22, sec. 7.

¹³ Balto. City Code, sec. 297.