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Hon. Major Steward.

PUBLIC MORGUES.

ANALYSIS.

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A BILL INTITULED

AN ACT to make Provision for Public Morgues and to amend the Law relating to Coroners' Inquests. Title.

BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. The Short Title of this Act is "The Public Morgues Act, 1896." Short Title.

2. It shall be incumbent upon the local authority of every city or borough having ten thousand or more inhabitants, as shown by the census last taken, to provide a suitable building for the purposes of a public morgue, and if any such local authority shall fail so to do, then any ratepayer of such city or borough may apply to the Supreme Court for a mandamus to compel such local authority to comply with this provision, and shall be entitled to recover from such local authority all costs incurred in and about the obtainment of such mandamus. Certain cities or boroughs to provide public morgues.

3. The dead-house of every public hospital, in cases where there is no building specially set apart for a morgue within two miles of such dead-house, shall be taken and deemed to be a public morgue; and the officer in charge of such hospital shall, at the request of any Justice of the Peace, or officer or constable of police, receive into such dead-house any dead body which may be brought to be deposited therein until an inquest shall have been held thereon. Dead-house of hospital to be public morgue in certain cases.

4. If the officer in charge of such hospital shall refuse to receive such dead body for the purpose aforesaid, he shall, on conviction thereof before any Justice of the Peace, forfeit and pay a sum not exceeding five pounds: Provided always that the inquest upon such dead body shall not be held upon the premises of such hospital. Penalty for refusal to receive bodies.

without the consent of the Medical Superintendent first had and obtained.

Inquest or inquiry  
in licensed house.

4. Every licensed publican shall, at the request of any Justice of the Peace, or officer or constable of police, supply convenient accommodation on his licensed premises for holding an inquest or inquiry under "The Coroners Act, 1867," or any amendment thereof; and in default shall be liable to forfeit and pay any sum not exceeding five pounds; and for such accommodation he shall be paid the sum of one pound. 5

Exception.

But no such inquest or inquiry shall be held upon the premises of any licensed publican if there shall be a Courthouse or police-station situate within a distance of one mile from such licensed premises, whereat such inquest or inquiry can be conveniently held. 10

Amendment of  
section 4 of Act of  
1888.

5. Section four of "The Coroners Act Amendment Act, 1888," is hereby repealed, and in lieu thereof it is enacted as follows:— 15

"Notwithstanding anything contained in 'The Coroners Act, 1867,' or in section one hundred and thirty-six of 'The Licensing Act, 1881,' no holder of a publican's license shall be required to receive any dead body for the purpose of an inquest being held thereon if there shall be a public morgue situated within two miles of his licensed premises." 20