

Faradic currents were of use only to strengthen the muscles of the abdomen, and so aid in defecation.

The Efficacy of the Older Methods of Treating Nasal Disease, contrasted with those of to-day, by Dr. C. C. Rice, of New York:—Dr. Rice said that our knowledge had especially advanced concerning the nature, cause and treatment of hypersecretion from the nasal mucous membrane. We had found that medication by solutions or sprays, failed to change its state at all. We had learned the relative importance of inflammation of the larynx, and that it was secondary to catarrh in the nasal passages.

The occlusion, changed color, and hypersecretion observed in the nasal cavity, often invited astringent remedies which only increased these conditions, for we now knew that we had to deal with erectile tissues, a true cavernous body, any stimulation on the surface of which caused turgescence.

The hypersecretion itself differs from that in ordinary mucous membrane. It was a serous secretion. We had learned in the past ten years to use atomisers for cleaning the nose only, to employ cocaine and the galvanic cautery.

The President gave an able review of the subject of medical expert testimony. He referred to the misunderstandings and perversions of necessarily complicated truths which arose whenever a man trained in medicine attempted to impart his views to an uneducated audience.

He suggested as a partial remedy for the evils inherent to the present system by which lawyers handled the medical expert of their own selection, and the expert put forward by the opposing lawyer entirely with a view of winning their case, that a board of three or more experts be appointed by the court, one or more being nominated by each of the opposing counsel, and the odd member by the court; that these experts should be paid by the court and the charge equally divided; and that questions on medical matters should be submitted to, and answered by the board in writing.—*N. Y. Medical Journal*.

Correspondence.

Editor Medical News:

SIR,—A meeting of medical men of Prince Edward Island, was held in Charlottetown, January 12th ult., for the purpose of discussing a Medical Act for this province.

The question of medical law and registration was discussed by all present, and it was the unanimous opinion that this province should have a Medical Act, thereby placing the profession on a level with the other provinces of the Dominion.

A committee was appointed to prepare a bill to present to the legislature. A very reasonable bill has been prepared, similar in its provisions to the British Columbia Medical Act, and will be presented to the legislature at the next session.

F. F. KELLY, M. D.,

Charlottetown, P. E. I.

Secy. of Committee.

THE DEPARTMENT OF MARINE VS. MEDICAL MEN.

MEDICAL men are occasionally called upon to treat sick mariners and furnish the bills to the Department of Marine and Fisheries, where they undergo examination, and if not approved by Mr. Wm. Smith, are clipped and cut down. The department have a rule to pay medical men \$1.00 per visit where no distance is travelled. In a recent case of

severe Rheumatic Iritis complicated with *Epi Scleritis* and Meningeal pains, I had occasion to make 3 visits some days, and two visits most of the time, as the treatment could not be carried on by any person at hand. Fancy my surprise when I had been informed by Mr. Smith that one visit a day is all that the department would allow.

It is high time that the question of the rights of medical men should be thoroughly ventilated. I hold that the government has no power to arbitrarily cut down the services of a medical man, for if they have power to keep back a portion, they have power to take the whole, and if the question of visits is to be decided the deputy officer in the marine department is not by any means an authoritative competent officer to decide upon this matter.

Medical jurisprudence of all nations concede that the physician or surgeon in charge of a case is the only proper judge of the necessities of the patient in this particular, and may exercise his discretion accordingly. The number of visits which a physician may make in any given case cannot be pre-determined. How, therefore, is the department of marine going to decide away in Ottawa, that more than one visit is unnecessary?

For my own part I take the ground that an honorable medical man would visit a patient only when in his judgement and opinion a visit was necessary, and that being the case I hold that when professional services are rendered to the government according to their own fee bill they have no right to cut the account down—they may arrange a compromise, but if they have power to keep back a portion, they can keep back the whole. This I deny. Medical men all over this Dominion doubtless have been more or less annoyed by the arbitrary conduct of this individual, and the sooner the question is considered on its merits the better for the profession.

The department of marine acts a very dishonorable part when accounts being rendered for services performed according to their own fee bill, they refuse payment. This conduct would not be tolerated for a moment if made by an individual or a corporation, but having the Divine Royal Prerogative behind them, you cannot sue the government without obtaining the consent of His Excellency the Governor-General, and the amounts are so small that medical men would rather suffer wrong than prosecute their rights. And the expenses attending litigation would cost them more than they would gain. The knowledge of this doubtless makes Mr. Smith a little too ready with his clippers. The MARITIME MEDICAL NEWS will afford an excellent medium for the profession to make known their grievances, and I think it is high time they organized and made their influence felt and compelled the department to do simple justice in these matters. At all events I believe the rights of medical men are not sufficiently well understood.

The common law sets no limitation to fees provided they be reasonable, and within this rule a practitioner is allowed discretionary powers, and may charge more or less according to his own estimate of the value of his services. It is only where an unreasonable and palpably unjust charge is made that courts will interfere to reduce the claim to a more equitable one. But in the case of the government the difficulty is, we cannot get at them by the law, they cannot be sued without their own consent, and their agents are not liable.

The Minister of Marine is a Nova Scotian and a clear headed man, the son of a worthy sire. I hope he will cause his subordinate to do justice in these matters. I hope every one who has a grievance against the department will speak