

its removal from the body. He did not think it was destined for a pabulum for respiration, because it was largely made up of albumen and contained very little fat, but its chemical composition would rather indicate its purpose in being subservient to the formative operations. Dr. Andriezen, however, from observations made on amphioxus ascidians and lower vertebrata, draws a rather different conclusion, and thinks it is concerned with respiratory gaseous exchange, and its removal is followed by malassimilation of oxygen by the body tissues. There is one thing, at all events, being made clearer every day, that changes of a most remarkable character follow when its functions are destroyed and its nutritive influences removed, either by disease or extirpation. Complete extirpation in man and monkeys is followed by changes, bodily and mental, identical with myxœdema, which proves that the latter disease is due to the abeyance of function in the thyroid body. As the appearances of this condition in the adult are similar in many of their aspects to what is called sporadic cretinism in children, it may be fairly concluded that some defect in the thyroid is the *fons et origo mali* in the latter disease. But if this gland is chargeable with these evil consequences, there is observable from the same source a sort of compensatory satisfaction. The fresh thyroid of the sheep or calf, taken raw or slightly broiled, to the extent of one quarter to a half a gland daily, will in a few weeks effect a remarkable change for the better in the diseased tissues. In a case of operative myxœdema following extirpation of the gland in a monkey, injections of thyroid extract—which is now prepared by Brady & Martin, of London—in about six weeks removed most of the morbid changes in the tissues, such as the muscular twitchings, œdema of the eyelids, the low temperature and anæmia. In Dr. Osler's first case of sporadic cretinism mentioned in his pamphlet, he used the extract, and in a month's time he had not noticed any improvement, but he remarks in his *brochure* that "the interest in the subject (Sporadic Cretinism) is at present a very practical one, inasmuch as the observations on the beneficial effects of thyroid feeding have been shown in several cases, particularly in those a within the first three or four years of life," and it is to be

hoped that further experiments in his own case may confirm this statement. Thyroid feeding and the extract have also been employed with success in cases of psoriasis, by Dr. Byron Bramwell, in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, and by Dr. John Gordon, in the syphilitic form of the same disease, in the Aberdeen General Dispensary. Before concluding, we might say that there are no cases of cretinism or myxœdema reported, so far as we are aware, either amongst the white or native population of British Columbia. Enlargements of the thyroid are not common here, in fact we might say that they are even rare. Dr. Osler tells us that there is some misunderstanding existing with regard to the definition of a crétin, some confounding them with ordinary idiots. He says the term crétin "should be limited accurately to a form of idiocy associated with changes in or absence of the thyroid gland." Briand, Chandé and Bouis, in their *Manuel Complet de Médecine Légale*, claim that crétins are not subject to the fits of passion and excitement which characterize idiots. We will venture to quote an extract touching this point from that valuable work: "Aussi déshérités que les idiots au point de vue intellectuel les crétins n'ont pas les excitations périodiques ou passagères que l'on observe chez ces derniers. Dans certains cantons de la Suisse où le crétinisme est très commun, on voit les crétins calmes impossibles indifférents à la curiosité par fois indiscrette des voyageurs."

## Prince Edward Island.

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### CHANGES REQUIRED IN THE PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND MEDICAL ACT OF 1892.

In view of the fact that reciprocity in registration is about being negotiated between the Maritime Provinces, it will be necessary to appeal to the Legislature of this province during its first session. The changes should embody the curriculum of studies of at least four years, with a preliminary matriculation examination before the studies begin, and an examination in every case as the only legal qualification to legalize the practice of medicine. In matters of detail, the Council will require power