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## EDITORIAL.

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### MR. JUSTICE RIDDELL'S ADDRESS ON MEDICAL EVIDENCE

In our previous issue we gave in full the text of Mr. Justice Riddell's address. It will bear more than one reading.

He points out the position of the court in our modern social conditions. At one time the law of might was the one that prevailed; but public opinion gradually came with its restraining influence on people's actions. In time people found out that it was well to put many usages into the form of rules, or law; and courts were established to enforce these rules or laws.

Evidence may have to deal with facts or with opinions. Facts are for the judge or jury to determine. Evidence may be documentary or by a witness. Of witnesses, there are two classes, namely; the ordinary witness, and the skilled or expert witness.

Mr. Justice Riddell goes somewhat fully into the subject of difference of opinion. It points out in his address that these differences are found to exist among lawyers and judges, among theologians, and among scientists. He points out to what extremes these differences of opinion had led people to go on the bygone persecutions. "So many men, so many minds" is still true.

Mr. Justice Riddell very properly lays it down as "the first duty of the witness to tell the truth." When a witness is asked to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," the meaning is that this shall be done in answer to the questions submitted to him, and that he shall conceal nothing that is true, nor suggest anything that is false. There must be no *suppressio veri* or *suggestio falsi*.

The witness must not only tell the truth, but he must make the truth tell. To do this, the witness must so conduct himself as to make it appear that he is honest. He must give his evidence in plain language, and in such a manner as to give the appearance that he is not an advocate for either side. A plain, straightforward manner does much to carry weight in court.

In giving answers, Mr. Justice Riddell laid down three rules:—1. Understand thoroughly the question put before attempting to answer it; 2. Answer it as briefly and concisely as you can, consistently with the