

that might be profitably discussed in medical societies.

In Paris, France, the subject has been recently discussed and it was suggested that the government should provide means for the more complete preparation and education of experts.

The *Philadelphia Medical Times* properly objects to the way medical witnesses frequently express opinions, with "much assurance," on purely legal points, a propensity utilized by counsel in order to discredit the testimony of the witness on purely scientific questions. The *Times* draws attention, too, to the fact that Prof. Wood, at a recent trial in Philadelphia, recognized this distinction. Prof. Wood, when asked "if he thought the prisoner responsible for the deed?" at once referred the question of technical responsibility to the court itself, where it really belonged.

Matters Recent and Current.

THE CHOLERA. — Although already much space has been given in this JOURNAL to the subject of cholera, this is at the present time one of the most important with which such a JOURNAL can deal. As indicated in these columns from time to time since last year, it is probable the cholera will reach this country next summer. In view of the course of the disease in the past in Europe, the probability of this steadily increases. The bare possibility of such a visitation should awaken all to at least a sense of duty—of duty, if not to themselves, to those depending upon them. All well know that means may be practically employed whereby the ravages of the disease may be greatly lessened and even its lodgement or spread in a community prevented. Hence the nature of the duty is apparent. According to the best authorities and most recent experience it is not, in our inland cities and towns, in the direction of quarantines and sanitary cordons that duty lies, but clearly in that of absolute cleanliness. Prof. Tommasi Crudeli, of Rome, in a recent address before the Royal Academy of Science, on the subject of quarantines asserts that practically sanitary cordons, unless it be in the case of naturally isolated districts, as small

islands, are of no value. Such is the very generally expressed opinion of the best European authorities. The watchword everywhere is "cleanliness." Scavenge, whitewash, disinfect—be every where clean, *clean*, CLEAN.

OTTAWA AND THE CHOLERA.—Ottawa, as every one who has been in it knows, is naturally exceedingly well situated in every respect, and not the least so certainly in its relation to health. But the most healthy locality may soon be made a most unhealthy one by the operations of man. We desire always to avoid everything of an alarming or a sensational character, and while believing that the city is not perhaps in a worse sanitary state than any other city in Canada, indeed it is probably in a better state than many of them, we have learned from good authority that parts of the city are in an exceedingly dangerous condition;—small and circumscribed parts they may be, and probably are, but the cholera germ requires only a very small hotbed in which to commence operations—in which to grow and develop, and with the most marvellous rapidity. A spore of cholera mould (for a sort of mould the contagion probably is) touches the spot and in an incredible short time new generations of spores are scattered to the winds like the products of a collection of powder that a spark has touched. Then the clean share the products and suffer along with the unclean. It is an utter impossibility for a medical health officer, more especially one not sufficiently paid to give his whole time to the work, to even know of all collections of filth in a city like Ottawa. And as stated by Dr. Bell at the meeting of the medical society here, the health officer should have a staff of trained inspectors under him. And knowing of unsanitary conditions, with the limited powers given to a health officer and the limited means supplied to the health department by an apathetic public, comparatively little can be done. No fact is better established than that the cholera and like diseases will not take