

text-books supply all the wants of the students, why are "grinds" and "coaches" so largely resorted to, not by the "wasters" at our colleges, but by the very best of our students? or why, to carry the question a little further, did so many of our professional men attend with such marked profit and pleasure the lectures of Prof. Osler, on "Cerebral Localization," given here a few days ago.

His lectures were didactic and yet were most enthusiastically received by the profession of Toronto. If men grown gray in the study and practice of medicine could listen profitably to didactic lectures given by one who has made a study of a special subject, what shall be said of a third or fourth year's student who could not (owing, we suppose, to some phenomenal cerebration) listen with profit to didactic lectures, if they were what all lectures should be, given by one who is a master of the subject under discussion, and with earnestness, zeal, and thoughtfulness.

There is little doubt that one or two summer sessions will ere long be insisted upon. This would supply the necessary time for students to take part in practical work of their year, and ensure a better and more practical graduating class, as it certainly would improve the young practitioner's position when called upon to battle with disease on his own account.

ELECTROLYSIS IN URETHRAL STRICTURE.

The action of electricity in causing absorption of inflammatory products has been largely canvassed during the past few years. Indeed, the number of diseases which have been reported as cured by the use of this agent, and the brilliant successes scored by Apostoli in the treatment of fibroids of the uterus, and by Newman and Belfield in urethral stricture, have been sufficient to lead any conscientious practitioner who credited the reports, to feel it a duty, and an imperative one, to pay some attention to the study of electricity as applied to medicine and surgery. So much has been written in current medical literature, that to the ordinary observer it seems almost as though electrolysis has come to be regarded as the new method, sure and reliable, for the treatment of that old enemy, urethral stricture. Latterly, however, a number of careful men have given the results of

their observations to various medical journals, and their conclusions have not that roseate hue which glowed in the earlier reports of those who 'brought out' electrolysis in the treatment of urethral stricture. Dr. Keyes, N. Y. *Med. Jour.*, says bluntly that the method is a failure. He states that the ideas concerning the method may be summarized thus:—1. "That any one by following certain rules may use the method successfully. 2. That electricity does no harm to the urethra. 3. That stricture cured by electricity is dissipated by absorption, and the urethra remains permanently open." In eight cases observed by Dr. Keyes, one of which was treated by Dr. Newman himself, and the others by Dr. Keyes, no good results were obtained. The cases were typical ones, so that the question is no longer even an open one. Dr. Keyes closes his article as follows:

"I may state that electrolysis with a very mild current—I prefer to put it at less than two milliampères and a half—does no harm; in fact, does nothing that I can appreciate, and does not interfere with the benefit to be derived from ordinary dilatation. I believe that a strong current is full of danger, both immediately from irritating effect and ultimately from cicatricial effect; and that employment of the negative pole does not prevent this. My study of the subject and the experience it has brought me, digested with all the impartiality I possess, lead me to state that the allegation that electricity, however employed, is able to remove organic urethral stricture radically, lacks the requirement of demonstration. The confidence of its advocates that it will radically cure organic fibrous stricture is, in my opinion, due either to the combined credulity of the patient and imagination of the surgeon, or to some special but fortuitous act of Providence, upon the co-operation of which, in the case of his own patients, the general practitioner cannot with any confidence rely."

Dr. Thomas, of Pittsburg, in the *Jour. of the Am. Med. Assoc'n*, gives the details of a case he attempted to cure by the new method. He says that after two months' treatment his patient was worse than he had been when the treatment by gradual dilatation was abandoned. He also shows that even according to Dr. Newman's own report, none of his (Dr. Newman's) cases were actually cured. He gives the electricians credit for honesty,