

Godkin tells us that the science of forensic medicine had its beginning in 1553, when the Emperor Charles V. of Germany directed that the opinions of medical men should be taken in cases of death by violence with a suspicion of a criminal agency, and goes on to give a very interesting account of its progress up to the present time.

Some contributions by eminent lawyers give much valuable information on subjects which frequently arise in court, but are not, as a rule, fully treated in our ordinary text-books on medical jurisprudence. Much new material in the way of experimental work is presented in this volume, especially with respect to gunshot wounds and blood stains. The report of the investigations of Dr. Victor C. Vaughan in regard to ptomaine poisoning is exceedingly interesting, and, in some respects, rather startling. The chapter on life insurance deserves special mention, being the best we have seen on the subject.

It is very difficult, in a brief review, to give anything like an adequate idea of the merits of this work. As to the first volume, we find nothing that deserves adverse criticism. All the chapters are admirable, and the matter all fully up to the times. We believe every medical practitioner should have this "System of Legal Medicine."

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**CHOREA AND CHOREIFORM AFFECTIONS.** By Wm. Osler, M.D., F.R.C.P.,  
London ; Professor of Medicine Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, etc.  
London : H. K. Lewis, 136 Gower St., W.C.

In this latest work Professor Osler deals exhaustively with the interesting affection chorea, and the not less interesting, if rarer, affections closely allied to it. The author draws largely upon the records of his own cases and those of his colleagues in the Infirmary for Diseases of the Nervous System, Philadelphia. The list taken from this source includes 554 cases. In addition to this wide experience, medical literature, current and remote, has been utilized to place before the reader whatever may be of interest, whether in the way of historical views as to nature and pathology, or peculiar phases of the disease. The author deals at length with the heart inflammation so commonly met with in chorea. The records cited indicate in what proportion of cases is endocarditis likely to occur, and also in what proportion is this endocarditis followed by permanent heart derangement. Of 554 cases 170 presented heart murmurs, and in fatal cases the frequency of endocarditis is so great as to make the statement true, "that there is no known disease in which endocarditis is so constantly found, post mortem, as chorea." Of 140 cases examined by the author and his colleagues two or more years after the attack of chorea, there were signs of organic heart disease in 72.

With reference to the pathology of the disease there is still much that is obscure, and what had been written early in the century would still apply. Regarding the relation of chorea to acute rheumatism, the writer puts the question : "Are its symptoms merely manifestations of the rheumatic poison, or does the arthritis bear the same relation to chorea as the joint inflammation to gonorrhœa or to cerebro-spinal fever?"