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Synopsis of a paper read before the members of the Medical Section of the Canadian Institute, at a social meeting held in the new wing of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum, on the evening of Friday, 19th November. BY JOSEPH WORKMAN, M.D., Medical Superintendent.
On the position of medical witnesses, chiefly in cases of questionable insanity.

After some introductory observations the reader proceeded to submit to his auditory his views on the subject, selected by him for their consideration, of which the following is an outline :

He begged to assure those who honoured him with their presence on this occasion, that his purpose was not to offer instruction even to his junior professional friends, but to endeavour to interest them in the consideration of a few matters of ordinary occurrence, with which members of the Profession are, from time to time, liable to be brought into encounter, and some of them more frequently than is at all agreeable.

Those who have had experience in this department of duty, will admit that its satisfactory discharge is sometimes a perplexing and unpleasant task. The medical witness is usually summoned by the counsel on one or other side ; and if he is not extremely cautious, he may find himself involved in a partizanship quite antagonistic to his professional dignity, and very ill-comporting with his subsequent mental comfort. He must not forget that whilst it is conventionally understood to be the duty of the advocate so to utilise the testimony of every witness as to make all white on his own side of the case, and all black on that of his opponent, yet it is the sacred obligation of the medical man to absolve himself from all party allegiance. He must feel no interest in the case, on either side. His proper and only safe position is that of *amicus curiæ* ; the friend and helper of the Court, and not of either of the litigants before it. But the apprehension of this relation is sometimes more easy than the preservation of it, more especially to juniors, who have not had the benefit of experience in it.