

usual medical questions coming up for consideration, and the grounds upon which they were decided.

In giving evidence, I have made it a rule to confine my statements of opinion as far as possible to what was clearly demonstrated by the facts observed, and in each case to state fully the facts from which these conclusions were drawn; in other words, to let the facts speak for themselves. In case it became necessary to make statements based upon probabilities, this was frankly admitted, and the possible objections to the view taken fully discussed. The practice of bolstering up weak and inconclusive facts by strong affirmations of opinion is unworthy of the name of medical testimony.

The chief end of the medical evidence was, of course, to establish clearly the cause of death. Many interesting cases of the present series have, unfortunately, not been made clear by the medical testimony, owing to autopsies not being permitted. Out of my 100 cases there were 29 autopsies ordered, testimony being given after external examinations only in the remaining 71 cases.

As a general rule, it was found that where autopsies were performed the cause of death was demonstrated with absolute certainty in almost every case, and testimony of the most positive kind could be given without reserve. On the other hand, in the case of the external examinations, I can only recall half-a-dozen instances where I felt justified in making a positive statement as to the cause of death, and these few were in connection with public accidents, where, in any case, there would have been no reasonable doubt on this point, even if no medical examination at all had been made, as the circumstances of the accidents and their fatal results were clearly established by eye-witnesses.

In two of the more important cases (Nos. 45 and 59) I was fortunate in having the co-operation of Dr. G. Villeneuve in making the examinations, and obtained valuable aid from his thorough knowledge of medico-legal questions and clear reasoning upon the facts observed by us jointly. It is much easier, as a rule, to recognize the facts brought out by a post mortem