

There is one point, however, in the evidence given at the inquest, as detailed in the report of it in the *Montreal Herald* which demands a passing remark, and which strikes me as most singular, if the report be accurate. Mr. Sturton, sen., stated, "Digitalis is often given in doses of half an ounce, and one ounce, to remove the consequences of continued intoxication." I presume that the witness here alluded to the comparatively recent employment of that medicine in delirium tremens, as originally suggested by Mr. Jones, Surgeon of the Jersey General Hospital. It is impossible that Dr. Marsden could have been ignorant of that fact, or that Dr. Russell could have been also who sustained the opinion of Dr. Marsden. The report says that "Dr. Marsden expressed dissent from the opinion given by Mr. Sturton respecting the properties of digitalis. It was, he said, a most deadly poison." And in reply to the question, "Have you read in medical authors of doses of one ounce of tincture of digitalis being given?" Dr. Russell is reported to have answered, "I have read and heard of enormous doses of poisonous drugs being recklessly administered, and that such treatment has produced the death of the patients in some instances. A judicial investigation has condemned such practice; and I hope they will always do so, for the practice is unjustifiable."

Against this sweeping denunciation I thoroughly demur. It is true that two or three instances of decease have succeeded the exhibition of large doses of digitalis in delirium tremens cases, but it is very questionable, indeed, if the cause alleged did not savor much of the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* style of reasoning. Were such reasoning of value, we should have to discard the greater part of our most valuable remedial agents. How many deaths have occurred, traceable distinctly to the employment of chloroform; and yet is there an agent more commonly employed or more generally esteemed? I have myself repeatedly administered the tincture of digitalis in doses of four and six drachms in cases of delirium tremens, and have as frequently witnessed its tranquillizing influence after opium had most signally failed.

One of the most remarkable answers during the whole enquiry, is that reported as having been given by Dr. Russell to the question by a juror: "Have you a knowledge of any other drug likely to produce such symptoms as those experienced?" *Ans.* The narcotico-acid poisons often produce symptoms at first sight very much alike. They are generally vegetable. The two principal are aconite and hyoseyamus. *Strychnine is a narcotico-acid poison*, but not in such common use as digitalis, aconite and hyoseyamus."

I am persuaded that it will be news to all writers on the materia