

Editorial.

DOCTORS AS DRUGGISTS.

We have always been a firm believer in the truth of that old maxim which requires the cobbler to stick to his last, and whether the principle be applied to doctor or druggist we maintain it to be equally applicable. The practice of counter dispensing, as carried beyond the limits of reason, expediency, and common sense, has always been denounced in these columns, and the rights of druggists have been as strongly upheld. If a student spends a considerable portion of his time and money in gaining a knowledge of his profession, and succeeds in passing the ordeal of examination ordained by those who strive to maintain the standing of the class to which they belong, we think that our Legislature should, in common justice, encourage such persons, and protect them from those who usurp a position which they are not qualified to fill.

It may be said that this is a narrow and interested view to take of the question, partaking too strongly of class legislation. It may be so, and for this reason we have never urged it. There is, however, another aspect of the case in which all are interested—that is the public safety. If it be found that it is not safe for druggists to prescribe medicines, let the law put a stop to it. On the other hand, if the public suffer from the ignorance of doctors who attempt to dispense medicine, let proper restrictions be at once made and enforced. This principle has already been half carried out by our legislature, and a rigid law prevents the druggist from taking the position of prescriber. It is fully time that the next step should be taken, and that doctors should be prevented from attempting that which they do not understand.

During the present summer there have already been brought to light two cases of poisoning, originating with dispensing doctors—one by strychnia, which resulted fatally, and was noted in this journal; another, to be shortly described. If the Legislature and the public were thoroughly aware of the existing state of circumstances, the evil of which we complain would very quickly be remedied. We have a Pharmacy Act which has been of incalculable advantage,