

The question was asked by a juror if the tincture of digitalis was not sometimes given by medical men in large doses, say half an ounce, to which the medical witness replied to the following effect: "It is given, but I consider the practice a bad one; and medical men have been condemned for so doing." Surely our medical friend will not say that the greatest benefit has not resulted from the employment of half ounce doses of the tincture of digitalis in delirium tremens when the proper cases and subjects for its administration are selected. We have employed it frequently—seen it used frequently—with the most marked beneficial effects. The records of medical periodicals speak as to its great use in this disease. Our own journal of last month contained a brief but interesting case of this disease from Mr. Hunt, Assistant Surgeon of the 4th Battalion, Prince Consort's Own Rifle Brigade, stationed in this city, which we think no one will deny would have terminated fatally but for the judicious employment of the tincture of digitalis in half ounce doses. From this digression let us return. The evidence of the two survivors showed that the unfortunate dispenser was bothered and teased while preparing the draught—and thus he excuses his mistake—this is no excuse, only a palliating circumstance in the case. The jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against young Mr. Sturton, who was admitted to bail. We cannot imagine that any great punishment will be awarded this unfortunate young man, who seems to feel most deeply his sad position, for though a very careless mistake, it is one ever likely to occur so long as the present condition of things is allowed to continue. What then are the causes of these constantly recurring fatal mistakes, and what means ought to be taken to prevent them? With regard to the first we answer, there are several causes, principal among which is the employment of incompetent assistants. A young man wishing to become a chemist and druggist is apprenticed for a certain number of years, five we believe, to one in the business, and in the majority of instances, in this province at least, as soon as he becomes acquainted with the names of the different drugs, is allowed at once to become a dispenser. This we consider a great error, and it is our conviction that no apprentice should be allowed to make up a prescription unless under the very eye and guidance of a regularly qualified assistant, till he, by examination, show that he has a theoretical as well as a practical acquaintance with his business, and has regularly fulfilled his apprenticeship: every prescription should also be checked before leaving the shop by a second party. The latter is done, we are aware, in at least one shop in this city—perhaps in more—but we know it is not universal. Why are so many incompetent assistants found in our drug stores? perhaps our readers ask. We answer simply