

cines now administered to the poor are wholesome or not, certainly they are not cheap. Last year the Montreal General Hospital spent nearly twelve thousand dollars in drugs and surgical appliances.

Maxim V.—*Lest his apothecary should oversee, he oversees his apothecary.*—"For, though many of that profession be both able and honest, yet some, out of ignorance or haste, may mistake: witness one of Blois, who, being to serve a doctor's bill, instead of *optimi* (short written) read *opii*, and had sent the patient asleep to his grave, if the doctor's watchfulness had not prevented him. Worse are those who make wilful errors, giving one thing for another. A prodigal who has spent his estate, was pleased to jeer himself, boasting that he had cozened those who had bought his means. 'They gave me,' said he, 'good *new* money, and I sold them my great-great-grandfather's *old* land.' But this cozenage is too too true in many apothecaries, selling to sick folk for *new* money *antiquated* drugs, and making dying men's physic of dead ingredients."

Prescribers of drugs are not infallible in these days either and mistakes in prescriptions are yet common enough, if we believe what we hear from the law courts. Nor have we yet eradicated the vice of substitution. The manufacturer of a proprietary preparation could not state the case against the practice with more vigour than does the worthy divine. The chemist of the Inland Revenue Department told us, not long ago, something about "antiquated drugs." Out of 15 samples of tincture of opium examined only four were genuine; half the samples of citrate of iron and quinine were adulterated. Of 23 samples of tincture of gentian, nine were adulterated; of 11 samples of tincture of cardamons five were adulterated; of camphor two out of six; of myrrh five out of 17; of rhubarb 14 out of 21; of calumba one-third; of ginger four out of seven; of squills four out of six; of jalap one-fourth the samples; of buchu every one. Carrying the research further, into spirits of nitrous ether, and dilute hydrocyanic acid, the official analysts found the same results. Only one sample out of nine of the former was found correct; some had no nitrous ether and several others were practically useless.

Maxim VI.—*He brings not news, with a false spy, that the coast is clear, till death surprises the sick man.*—"I know, physicians love to make the best of their patient's estate. First, it is improper that *adjutores vilae* should be *nuncii mortis*. Secondly, none, with their goodwill, will tell bad news. Thirdly, their fee may be the worse for it. Fourthly, it is a confessing that their art is conquered. Fifthly, it will poison their patient's heart with grief, and make it break before the time. However, they may so order it, that the party may be informed