

Ontario Medical Journal.

SENT FREE TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE PROFESSION IN ONTARIO
AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

R. B. ORR, - - - - - EDITOR.

All Communications should be addressed to the Editor, 117 Cowan Avenue, Toronto.

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Contributions of various descriptions are invited. We shall be glad to receive from our friends everywhere current medical news of general interest. Secretaries of County or Territorial Medical Associations will oblige by forwarding reports of the proceedings of their Associations.

Physicians who do not receive their Journal regularly, or who at any time change their address, will please notify the editor to that effect.

Editorials.

THE DISPENSARY ABUSE.

The *New York Academy of Medicine* thought fit a few months ago to have a long discussion on this subject, with the best methods for the remedy thereof. This condition of affairs, known by a very large superabundance--if we may be allowed to be tautological--of free institutions for medical treatment, does not only exist in the United States, but over all English speaking countries, especially in the centres of population.

A charitably inclined man, or a few like-minded women, acting either through real kindness, or for the sake of notoriety, at some time or other, think it incumbent on them to supply a place where poor (*sic*) people may obtain medical advice free, with medicine thrown in, as a sop to bring them there. The idea, no doubt, is good, and if carried out properly should be, and is, of great service to the poor. The trouble is that these things are all carried too far. If they could be limited to those unable to pay for the treatment of their ailments, no complaint could possibly be made, but, unfortunately, no limitation is set on them. The great majority of cases which go to these free institutions would be quite easily able to pay their way if requested to do so. Instances of this kind are

everlastingly cropping up, and could be easily enumerated.

One case in point: A physician was called to one end of the city to see a case. The woman said she had been to Dr. ———, and no good had resulted. She then began to deride the physicians in connection with the dispensary she had gone to, etc., and after attendance was over, a bill of over thirty dollars was paid in a lump, and without a murmur. We would like to quote another which happened just the other day. A lady, with carcinoma of breast, living in a large house, was persuaded to go to a hospital for operation, because she would there be attended to for nothing. The known income in this case is \$2,800. These ordinary dispensaries are not the only evil the practitioner has to contend with. A workman, in receipt of good wages, falls and breaks his leg, or his arm, or injures himself in any way; ambulance telephoned for, comes along and carts him off to a hospital, in many instances against the will of both the patient and his friends.

The *New York Times* mentions a case. A man fell from a public building; the ambulance not arriving, he was removed to his home, and paid the attending surgeon \$150 for his extended treatment.

Is there any other profession or trade where men devote so much of their time to work looked