

sweetest slumber, while the over-taxed student is, too often, the victim of insomnia with all its hideous reveries.

Someone has well said that the bulwarks of a nation consist not in strong fortresses erected on its boundaries, nor does its stability depend upon mighty navies that traverse every sea ; but its security lies in the keeping of intelligent men and women who have sound and rugged bodies ever ready to repel the inroads of disease.

It is a matter for congratulatory reference that Governmental assistance, municipal aid and private contributions, prompted by appeals from the profession and under its guidance, have dotted the land with hospitals for the reception of the poor and needy, as well as for the convenience of the opulent, and that these institutions are accomplishing a great work in the interests of all classes ; but it is to be deplored that, under the guise of poverty, daily abuse is made of the privileges that philanthropic motives have provided for the deserving poor.

Here the attending physicians discharge responsible and onerous duties without hope or expectation of reward, other than that which might be expressed in Portia's words paraphrased—"Charity is twice blessed : it blesses him who gives and him who receives," but gratuitous services to those who are quite able to remunerate are not a blessing but a pauperizing curse to the recipients.

It is stated by no less an authority than the *Medical Record* that the number of persons who received free medical and surgical relief at the hospitals and dispensaries of New York during the past year amounted to 49.7 per cent. of the entire population, and that fully 70 per cent of this number were quite able to pay a medical practitioner at least a moderate sum for his services ; and no member of a hospital staff in Ontario will deny the fact that the evil exists here. How this difficulty is to be met it is hard to determine ; but some effectual check should be placed on a custom so fraudulent in character. As a rule, before admittance is granted to a free ward, a certificate is required from a clergyman or other reliable citizen to the effect that the case is one deserving charitable consideration ; and, it seems to me that, were such a law extended so as to include those seeking out-door advice or attendance, the evil would be much mitigated. It is, of course, understood that exceptions would be made in cases of emergency and amongst those who are utter strangers in the municipality. I would suggest that a representative committee be appointed whose duty would be to make full inquiry as to the best method of minimizing these positions and with instructions to report to this Association at its next annual meeting.