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Editorial.

HOSPITAL ABUSE.

A paper was read on this subject at a recent meeting of the Montreal Medico-Chirurgical Society by Dr. George E. Armstrong, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, McGill University, in which he outlines the principal aspects of this much-discussed evil. He refers to the growing disposition to get medical care at the expense of the public by those who are able to pay for it. In New York city it was estimated that fifty per cent. of the population were in this category, and in most large cities doubtless a similar state of affairs prevails. Dr. Armstrong considers the causes under which this condition has developed under seven headings. The first is the "increased efficiency, comfort, attractiveness, even luxuriousness of the modern hospital ward"; the rapid increase in the number of hospitals and the accommodation for patients; the rivalry between the increased number of hospitals in the way of attaining to a high standard of efficiency, and swelling the list of patients cared for, irrespective of claims of the applicants for charitable attendance; the advance in medicine and surgery has increased the expense of treatment, and the necessity and expense of the care of trained nurses is often beyond the means of patients who, under the conditions of twenty years ago, would have received more simple treat-