charge of the case, the indirect responsibility of the physician being thereby materially lightened, since, in case of neglect, the whole blame is thrown on the attendant.

Relief of responsibility may, however, be purchased too dearly by loss of freedom in treatment. The patient must be treated both by physician and attendant as suicidal so long as the caution card exists, and the physician is debarred from any relaxation which his experience and judgment might otherwise consider as beneficial. With caution cards the physician may be tempted to rely on the certain punishment of the attendant if he fails in his duty; without them he must be much more assured of the character and reliability of the attendant.

The general percentage of suicides since the adoption of caution cards have not materially decreased, and it would be quite easy to adduce the example of asylums that for a long series of years (prior to the use of caution cards) had no suicides, or suicides very much below the permilliage that now obtains. Some of these examples are sufficiently striking to prove that this immunity was not the result of mere chance, but of the conditions of treatment existing in these asylums. Is it not possible that a careful study of these might evidence a system of treatment better even than that which now predominates in England, while so sparingly adopted in Scotland and Ireland?

The primary principle in the treatment of suicidal tendencies ought to be to divert the attention of the patient from the idea, and it is to be feared that the caution-card system, if not necessarily, yet frequently defeats this principle as the patient comes to know all about the card.

Caution cards cannot be regarded as free from drawbacks, and there can be little doubt that this discussion will make men pause before extending their use.

International Home Relief Congress.

We draw special attention to the provisional programme of the International Home Relief Congress, which is to be held in Edinburgh in June. The subjects for discussion are of great importance to those engaged in local administration and the charities of the country. We trust that there will be a successful meeting.

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