

## The New Dispensation of Temperance.

A Lecture Delivered by Carroll Ryan, Esq., in the Tara Hall,  
Quebec, April 25th, 1893

The hall was fitted to its utmost capacity and many had to go away unable to obtain even standing room. Mr. Fremont, Mayor of the City, occupied the chair, and on the platform were a number of leading citizens. In the audience were many members of the learned professions, merchants and ladies. The Chairman introduced the lecturer, who on coming forward was received with hearty cheers. After a few preliminary remarks Mr. Ryan proceeded as follows:

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

I propose to occupy your attention for a short time this evening in the discussion of what has been well termed "The New Dispensation of Temperance." Heretofore the drinking habit has been regarded as a moral delinquency only curable by moral conviction or persuasion. But, while this view of the question is founded on a right perception of the consequences of intemperance, it is now admitted by the medical fraternity that drunkenness is a physical as well as a moral disease. It is not necessary for me to repeat the old truism about the interdependence of mind and body, but we must bear it in mind when dealing with this subject. The aim of medical science is to establish a sound mind in a sound body. Any physician will tell you, however, that the first requisite in producing a clear intellect is to bring all the organs of the body into as perfect a state of health as possible. Shakespeare was right when he wrote:—

Ask God for temperance, that's the appliance only  
Which your disease requires.

This, as briefly as I can state it, is the line on which "The New Dispensation of Temperance" is presented for the consideration of the public, and on which it appeals for the support of all friends of the Temperance cause.

We who have entered upon this work believe, and our belief is founded on profound conviction born of personal experience, that to rescue the victims of drunkenness from the meshes of a degrading body and soul destroying habit, the craving for stimulants, which has its roots in the diseased condition of the brain and nervous system, must first be overcome. We all know how extremely difficult it is to overcome a habit which has become a part of our nature through long years of practice. Even our limbs and voluntary muscles acquire a memory and volition of their own, and men will perform actions to which they are accustomed without reflection. Our limbs have been known to carry us in the direction of our habitual desires even against our will. As in a love song the poet sings:—

A spirit in my feet  
Has borne me, who knows how,  
To thy chamber—window sweet.

and, if we follow this line of thought deeper, we shall discover a profounder truth which is that, if we cherish some desire or ambition with devoted constancy our whole being becomes unconsciously absorbed in its pursuit and everything we do leads, without our specially intending it, to the accomplishment of that one object. Sometimes it happens that men become possessed of a master passion, the existence of which as such they never suspected until, perhaps, late in life, when that second consciousness which utterly destroys all illusions, comes upon them. Then it is that the desire for wealth, the dreams of ambition become unspeakably trivial and paltry, and we obtain a glimpse of what that third and final consciousness will be when we turn to take a last farewell of all earthly things. Thus we come to the end of habit when too late; when we cannot flatter ourselves, as the French philosopher says we do, on leaving our vices; when, in truth, our vices are leaving us.

How vastly important it is, therefore, that we should correct our habits in time before they have become a part of the marrow of our bones, before they have warped the tissues of our brains and so attuned our nervous systems that they will only answer to their accustomed stimuli. As a matter of fact we do make efforts to correct our habits, chiefly by good resolutions, but a melancholy proverb, too often confirmed in its terrible truth by the experience of many, warns us that the road to perdition is paved with good intentions. True in its general application this is particularly verified in case of those who are the victims of drink. When, after some more than usually foolish or wicked performance of liquor, the pang of an awakened conscience comes upon them they "swear off," and in the fervor of repentance make vows of amendment. Their conscience and desire to improve are all right, but the body is not. That has been educated to make demands which the will long accustomed to comply with cannot resist, and they fall back into their old ways, becoming more hopelessly confirmed than ever in their misfortune. A man in this condition reminds me of a story.

Farmer Brown had a little son and a hired man named Mike. They were all working in a swamp one day and Farmer Brown was some distance away. All of a sudden Johnnie came running up to his father with a blanched face. The boy's eyes were almost starting from their sockets, "Say, pop," he gasped, "Mike's in the swamp up to his ankles." "Wal, if that's all," said the farmer, "let him stay there. Tell him to take his boots off and get out." "But he can't do it, pop. He's in head first."

Drunkenness is a vast swamp, as we all may see when walking along the streets in the number of saloons, and thousands upon thousands are into it, like poor Mike, up to their ankles head first. How to get them out is the great question. The churches have brought all their vast influence to its solution, temperance organizations and legislatures have endeavored to find an answer, and, though these combined influences have done an enormous amount of good, and to a large extent revolutionised the social customs of society, there is still a terrible amount of suffering and misery in the world arising from intemperance. But now comes the new agency, famous all over this continent as the Bi-chloride of Gold Cure.

When it was admitted that inebriety was a disease, physicians sought a remedy. The general opinion of the profession was that it was a matter of will-power. Every man and woman addicted to drink could cure himself or herself by exercising the will. But, as we have seen, resolutions to quit the habit are, in the great majority of cases, futile while the tissues of the brain and nerves are in a condition which creates a craving impossible to resist. Here we have the root of the disease, and to get at it we must adopt means for restoring these tissues to a normal condition of health. This is in plain words the plan adopted by Father Lawrence W. Murphy at his Institutes in Montreal, Toronto and Quebec and Ottawa, a gentleman of whom I would like to say a few words.

Father Murphy is a missionary priest of the Catholic Church who has devoted himself to the cause of temperance. With the consent of the bishop to whose diocese he belongs, he has undertaken this work, and the wonderful success which has attended his labors is accepted by many as proof of a divine blessing upon them. No one can come into contact with him and fail to be impressed with his

extraordinary gifts both natural and acquired. An American of Irish parentage, he combines in himself the best qualities of both nations. His splendid intellectual equipment has been chastened and perfected by many years of hard, profound study, and to a character naturally kindly and courteous he has added the grace which comes to those who have travelled far and seen much of the world. His magnetism is irresistible. It is this which gives him the extraordinary power for good which I have frequently seen exercised in his treatment of the unhappy victims of liquor, morphia and other poisonous habits.

Last November he came to Montreal and opened a Bi-Chloride of Gold Institute for the cure of inebriety, the opium habit, and kindred diseases. He had already established an Institute at Toronto and has since started one at Quebec. He chose as the field of his operations the Recorder's Court. Montreal is a big city where drunkenness is rampant, and in the Recorder's Court the most appalling evidences are to be seen of the ruin, misery and degradation caused by drink. With the consent of Mr. de Montigny, the Recorder, Father Murphy took some of the worst of these cases in hand. He not only cured them of their evil habits—literally, as I may say, cast out the devil that possessed them—but he also fed them and clothed them. To-day, I am proud and happy to say, those once abandoned slaves to whisky are sober, industrious citizens, bearing testimony in the eyes of all Montreal, as I do now in those of the people of Quebec, to the miraculous efficacy of his system of treatment.

As the fame of these cures spread abroad, men, and women, too, belonging to all classes in the community, even ladies and gentlemen of the highest social standing, sought Father Murphy's aid and assistance in their own behalf, or in the behalf of those near and dear to them. As a result we have now the living proofs and the willing, gladsome testimony of over 200 persons in Montreal alone who have been saved from misery and death by Father Murphy's treatment. I could occupy your time for hours recounting the facts of cases that have come under my own observation. I have seen men brought to the Institute on Cathcart street in the last stages of delirium tremens. Given up by the doctors, there appeared nothing for them in the way of help but death—and what a death! I shudder to recall what I have heard and seen on those occasions. Nothing worse of physical agony or mental anguish could be imagined. But no sooner had they come under the influence of Father Murphy and begun to feel the effects of his treatment than they grew calm, and in a few days were on the highroad to recovery. It was the same with victims of the morphia habit. What wrecks of humanity I have seen brought to Father Murphy to become at the end of a month new beings, restored to health, clothed in their right mind, and fit to take their place again in life, I have at my disposal many testimonials from persons who have been cured of all care or desire for liquor. But there are other matters in this connection to which I desire to direct your attention.

You are probably aware that certain members of the medical profession have given opinions adverse to the Gold Cure. You may have seen these opinions occasionally quoted in the newspapers. They may have referred to alleged gold cures of which I have no knowledge. Certainly they cannot refer to Father Murphy's Cure. For I fail to understand how any man who would candidly investigate the truth of the statements I have made here this evening, and see for himself the living proofs of the great good accomplished could yet try and discredit a mode of treatment so nobly beneficent in its results. But if there are physicians who have condemned the Gold Cure in general terms, there are also physicians of the highest professional standing who have borne testimony in its favor.

But I need not go abroad for proofs of its efficacy. I have seen more than enough, as I have told you, to convince the most sceptical of the soundness of the cure.

All medical men, as I have said, are now agreed that drunkenness is a disease, a physical disease. As such it is amenable to physical treatment. Everybody knows that men do not become drunkards all of a sudden. The habit grows upon them little by little. Indeed there are men going about their business every day in apparent sobriety who are deeply alcoholised without their being conscious of what is wrong with them, though they feel that something is wrong. Many of these supply the cases we so often read about in the newspapers of persons dropping dead from what is conveniently called "heart failure." Alcohol taken into the human body acts directly on the nervous system, and through it on the heart, increasing its action by firing the blood through the rapid combustion of the albumen that everywhere clothes the delicate nerves and acts as a conductor to the forces which vitalize the blood. This burning of the nerve tissue extends to the brain as well as other organs, and when the stimulant has exhausted its force and passes out of the system as it entered it, without assimilating with any of its parts, there is a general relaxation of the nerves. They are like springs that having been strained will only respond to a repetition of the stimulant. Hence arises the craving, the deadly thirst for liquor, which nothing but liquor will or can satisfy. You might as well talk about the deadly nature of sewer gas to a man down with typhoid fever, as preach abstinence from drink to a man whose whole system is clamoring for alcohol. He must have it, and the more he gets the worse he becomes. It is the same with morphia, chloral and other nervous stimulants. The end also is the same, unless a means can be found to restore the brain and nervous system to their normal state of health. This is what the Murphy Gold Cure actually does. Not only will it do this, but it destroys the desire for stimulants and places a man in the same physical condition, wear and tear of time allowed, as he was before he took to drink. But have there not been failures? it may be asked. I admit there have been failures. Of the number of cases treated by Father Murphy carefully kept records show only 2½ per cent. of failures. This demonstrates the superiority of the Murphy cure over that of any other. But these failures, I may observe, arise from no inadequacy in the treatment. They arise simply from the incurable condition of the individual. All diseases can be arrested and cured if taken in time and by the application of proper remedies. But once the patient has passed beyond a certain stage, cure is no longer possible. The disease has obtained the mastery and must run its course to the final, fatal termination. I have closely observed some of the few cases of relapse after graduation in Father Murphy's Institute, and am convinced that an hospital for the insane was the place for them, rather than an Institute where there must be some healthy tissue left whereon to base a hope of restoration.

This brings me to the consideration of another class of cases, the habitual drunkards who are the human repeating decimals so to speak, in our police courts. In the city of Ottawa you will remember, no doubt, men and women who appeared regularly from time to time in the Police Court, charged with having been drunk and disorderly. This appearance was the only regular habit left them in their sad and pitiable existence. They were a burden and a disgrace to the community. Practically they were an expensive charge on the taxpayers for the common goal was their only home. Nothing could be done with them, they were incurable. Perhaps you have a few such characters here. They are to be found

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