



AN ADDRESS BY MR. FLINN.

Among Others, He Talks On the Gold Cure at Jefferson Park Presbyterian Church, Chicago.

The following address was delivered by Mr. Jno. J. Flinn, formerly president of the Bi-Chloride of Gold Club, in the Jefferson Park Presbyterian church. There were present at the time a large assemblage composed of some of the best people of the West Division of Chicago, and some seventy-five members of the Bi-Chloride of Gold Club of that city.

REVEREND SIR AND FRIENDS:— I BELIEVE it has been noted as a remarkable fact that while death may confront us in our homes, or out in the world, while we may see our dearest friends dropping around us, and the young, the brilliant and the gay passing silently away from the scenes they have cheered, illumined or gladdened, the fact that we must follow them—that death must inevitably come to ourselves—scarcely takes possession of our minds.

But this feeling of exemption on the part of individuals is just as strongly developed with regard to other phases of our every-day existence. It is almost impossible to convince the most reasonable of us that we are constituted in the main like other men and women. Indeed we frequently find ourselves, almost unconsciously, thanking God that we are not like our neighbor, while our neighbor, at that very moment, perhaps, is thanking God with the same fervor that he or she is not like us.

In the little village of Dwight, less than one hundred miles from here, there may be seen now as there might have been seen at any time during the last three or four months, between seven and eight hundred men, marching in double line, with their left arms uncovered, four times a day, to receive through slits in their shirts-sleeves, a part of the treatment prescribed under the rules governing the Keeley cure for drunkenness. These six or seven hundred men, at periods of two hours, usually beginning at seven in the morning and ending at eleven at night, may be seen, no matter where they may be at the time—whether attending divine service or a meeting of their club, or walking on the streets—emptying into their mouths the contents of two-ounce bottles containing the bi-chloride of gold remedy in a diluted form. They take their hygienic treatments and their remedy as seriously and as conscientiously as the victim of fever and ague takes his quinine or the consumptive takes his cod liver oil.

Who are they? They are representative citizens of this republic. They are as a rule men of good birth, men who rank high in the various professions to which they belong. There are statesmen here, members of congress here, members of the various state legislatures here, judges from the bench, eminent lawyers and doctors, successful and prominent merchants, capitalists, millionaires and sons of millionaires, college graduates and college professors, first-class mechanics and artisans, poets and novelists, actors and ministers of the gospel, bankers and bank cashiers, and now and then, perhaps, a newspaper writer. They come from all parts of this continent, every state in the Union, nearly every town, village and district in the country have been represented in the lines at Dwight during the past six months.

I am confining myself to the patients for drunkenness only. Are they cured? That, after all, is the question. I take it that the invitation which came from your pastor to the Bi-Chloride of Gold club of this city had an exalted purpose behind it, and that you were to be given an object lesson, illustrating one of the greatest achievements of modern science—the discovery of a new principle in medicine which is brightening fifty thousand hearth-stones this glorious Christmas season; bringing smiles of gladness to the faces of women and children in every part of our land, and filling the hearts of despondent mothers, widows and daughters with a new and blessed hope—a discovery that must inevitably and speedily add hundreds of thousands of games to the membership roll of the Christian churches of America, and in the future save the souls of countless millions from perdition.

I think I may say that the gentlemen who are present with myself in response to this invitation, that not one of them has any desire to parade himself before the public, unless he is convinced that by so doing he can accomplish some good for his fellow men. I speak for myself when I say I would not be here if I thought that the gentlemen who are present here for this purpose, were to be regarded as a young man. When I found it had mastered me I quit it. Personal pride, ambition to succeed in my profession, will power, and, later on the love of my family, kept me away from it for about seven years. Then I drank again and up to the time I reached Dwight I had been a periodical drinker—sometimes going without food or sleep, but inevitably going back to it, and always at the very time sobriety was the thing most desirable and most important for me. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link. A man's will power is no stronger than at his weakest moment. I believe my will power to be as strong as that of most men, and that I am, like every other man, made of matter, not of spirit, and that my weaknesses, it is at these weak moments that men believed to be well balanced mentally and morally, lose their equipoise. Some abscond with the money of their employers, some leave for Canada with the money of their depositors, some take to lying and cheating, some neglect their families, wreck the homes and violate the domestic altars of their neighbors, and some take to drink. It might be inferred from what I say here that I do not consider habitual or periodical drunkards the most dangerous men in a community. I will let that inference stand. Will power has not saved me from this. I have had my share of prayer, and I say this with all respect, and as one who has a full and firm conviction within him that prayer is good and is heard above when it comes from a pure heart and is supplemented by good actions.

I graduated from the Keeley Institute at Dwight, and I have not needed treatment on the third day of the present month. I know what is in your minds, I think. You are saying to yourselves: "What sort of testimony is this? Here is a man who has gone months and years on will power without drinking, and now after being away from Dwight less than a month he is going back to it, and he knows he is cured!" Excuse me; you are mistaken. I am not going to tell you anything of the kind. I am simply going to tell you this: That for twenty months, or until I had been twenty-four hours at Dwight, I had scarcely ever passed a day of sobriety when the desire for a stimulant did not come upon me. No matter how sober I was, how long I remained sober, it was a constant, never-ceasing fight with me to keep away from stimulants. I have kept away from them, it is true, for months and for years, but I have done so at the expense of innocent amusement, of companionship that I desired, and of recreation that might have enjoyed. Nervous depression, anxiety without cause, fear of coming evil, imaginary troubles, have weighed upon me in my sober moments as a result of the unequal battle raging within me. My blood was poisoned with alcohol, and my system deranged as a result of intervals for more stimulants as my stomach of yours cries out for food. I was diseased and did not know it until Dr. Keeley told me so and proved himself right by curing me. For a year and a half before going down to Dwight I never tasted or touched liquor. I drank less than two days before I left for the Keeley Institute. I had been on no debauch, but I knew what was coming and I feared it. I would have gone on and drank to the dregs under ordinary circumstances; drank until nature was exhausted, drunk, perhaps, until death had ended the spree. Thirty-six hours after arriving at Dwight I positively used to accept a bottle of whiskey offered me by one of the physicians of the institute, because I had no longing for it and from that moment to this the desire for it has never returned.

I feel that a great weight has been lifted from my heart, as though it had been raised from my mind. I am happier than at any time for twenty years. My head is clearer. My thoughts are better. The world looks brighter before me. I am wonderfully improved in disposition—in fact I notice that I have become a more companionable fellow—that I win friends as I used to before, and I drink at all, and my wife says I am so much improved in looks and temperament that she hardly knows me.

Let me say to you as I once said before on a similar occasion that men go to Dwight not to be healed of a vice but to be cured of a disease. I don't know it, but I believe I am. I believe I believe I ever drink whiskey again I will have to form a new desire for it. I will drink it wantonly, not because my system craves it or because I have an appetite for it.

I have not the ability much as I have the desire, to confess to you that I believe which fills the heart of every man who has conscientiously taken the Keeley treatment. Emotion plays no part here. There is, perhaps, less of

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the emotional to be witnessed or experienced at Dwight than at any other place. Our enthusiasm for the Keeley cure is the result of a calm, dispassionate, careful study of ourselves, by comparison and by contrast. We all feel that a great change has come upon us. We do not understand it. I imagine it to be something like the grace of God, as described by those who have felt it enter into their souls—a mysterious power, an incomprehensible happiness.

We can never forget Dr. Keeley nor cease to be grateful to him for all he has done for us. We feel that we would be ungrateful to him and ungrateful to God if we did not use every effort in our power to see that others less able or less unfortunate than ourselves, are granted the same blessing.

The Bi-Chloride of Gold club of Chicago has picked up all of the streets and sent to Dwight for treatment sixty-one worthy men, and let me tell you, amazing though it may appear, that not a single one of this number has relapsed into his old habit, although many of them were men who were looked upon as being hopeless cases by their friends and by reformatory institutions long before Dr. Keeley took them in hand. These men are to-day bread-winners, good citizens; some of them are ornaments to society. They are paying back to the Bi-Chloride of Gold Club as rapidly as they receive the amounts which it has guaranteed for their treatment. But this process is necessarily slow, and although Dr. Keeley has generously remitted \$3,000 of the indebtedness the club is still heavily involved, and must depend upon individual subscriptions for the prosecution of its labor of love. Over forty inquiries came at his hour knocking at its door. We believe that every one of these forty can be saved. Will you help to save them? You can do it if you will. As Christian men and women you ought to do it.

In conclusion I will read a little contribution of mine to a book on Dwight and the Keeley treatment, written by my friend Mr. Chas. Sumner Clark of the Milwaukee Evening Journal. It is entitled "The Silt In The Sleeve" and I read it because it embodies my sentiments in regard to the Keeley treatment as well as the sentiments, I believe, of every one of the 50,000 men who have been redeemed by the Keeley treatment.

So you ask me to touch on a theme which must bring up the past, my dear friend, and a past that seems now but a dream and is suddenly brought to an end. And you ask me to sing you a song— Oh! I wish that my pencil could weave a sweet anthem of love to the throne That marched on nearly one thousand strong, To be healed, 'neath the silt in the sleeve!

Let me think: 'You were one of its men, And you were one of its men, When you marched with that column of men, Cheer'd on by a brave woman's prayer, You were one of its men, 'Till the wounds which they truly redeemed, 'Till the one of its men, The new science was all that it seemed, But faith came and your feet fairly heaved, As they cut the long silt in your sleeve.

Well, we'll never look back with regret To those days, nor attempt to conceal The old scars that seem to all time cannot heal, They'll recall to our men's eyes a fight, A triumph and a glory that may grieve That wrought in the darkness till light Found its way to our souls at Dwight, Through the hallowed silt in the sleeve.

Election of Officers.

The club room was crowded Wednesday morning by members who wished to participate in the selection of officers to serve the ensuing two weeks. The routine business was hurried through with, and at 9:48 o'clock the chairman announced that nominations for the presiding officer would be in order.

The name of Mr. Slater of Michigan was first placed in nomination by Mr. Watson. Then followed the names of Mr. Best of Milwaukee, and Mr. Wooten, the present vice-chairman. The latter name was withdrawn at Mr. Wooten's request, his term of treatment having almost expired. The ballot was cast, and Mr. Slater elected by a large majority.

Mr. Nelson, of Knoxville, Tenn., was the unanimous choice of the club for vice-chairman. He was escorted to the chair, and responded to the call for a speech by thanking the club for the honor conferred upon him. Mr. Slater was also conducted to his seat of office, and after the budge had been conferred upon him he made a few remarks. He said he was the fifth one from his town to come to Dwight; he never had thought until now that he needed the treatment. He would discharge the duties of his office as best he could and hoped that the members would be lenient and overlook his shortcomings.

Mr. Young, retiring chairman, then addressed the club. He said he was rather at a loss for words. His was the same old story. He had gone through with two fortunes and part of a third, but it was all right, he would get it all back again with interest. He never could make up his mind that he was due at Dwight, although his friends thought so two or three years ago. He came here doubting; he was going away convinced. The club had given him great encouragement and he was satisfied that he was a cured man. He received this morning an Anheuser-Busch calendar and a copy of the "War Cry" through the mail. Probably some of his friends thought he was going into the wholesale soul-saving business by joining the salvation army. He supposed the calendar was sent for the purpose of calculating the time until he would get drunk again. He had been honored many times by the people of his state; he was once a delegate to an Episcopal convention called to elect a bishop. He had received a letter from the church in which he paid rent for one pew, saying he didn't think the Keeley treatment would do any good unless it was done through his church. Mr. Young had answered him in a letter saying that "he thought the short-haired women and long-haired men and the churches who gyrated around over the country making temperance speeches, were 'not in it.' (Great applause.) At the conclusion of his remarks he was presented with a gold-headed cane, the compliments of the club. Mr. Davis, of Charleston, made the presentation speech in a few well chosen words. Mr. Wooten, the retiring chairman,

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