

MacSwiney's Fast Recalls Many Notable Starving Cases

Analysis of Records Indicates Good or Evil Effects of Abstinence Depend Largely on Subject's State of Mind

Some Claim Beneficial Results From Longer Periods of Fasting Than Caused Hunger Strikers' Collapse

WHAT is the difference between a fast and a hunger strike? This is an important question raised by the worldwide interest in the case of MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, who from the second week of his hunger strike, maintained in prison throughout the third week was reported as daily growing weaker, exhibiting symptoms of giddiness and numbness and approaching death. These signs are contrary to all those witnessed by physicians who have studied innumerable cases of voluntary fasting.

The latter class do not deny this; indeed, they make a point of admitting the superior power of the mind and go so far as to "save the universe on a spiritual and not a material support, claiming that this has the support of modern philosophy and also of the latest discoveries of science.

"We do not derive our strength and energy from food alone," say these modern philosophers, "and a recognition of this fact should revolutionize our lives. The question of the food supply, its quality and quantity, is the great world question to day. The evil effects of overeating are at last being estimated, and for all men, the proper balance and limitation of the food supply is the one fact important to all; every other is insignificant."

The same authorities—those who like Graham, Dewey, Fletcher, Armistage and Page, that is, guide their own lives and their medical practice by this philosophy—varied in their opinions about voluntary and involuntary starvation. The earlier men, upon whom there fell during their lives the stigma of empiricism, seemed to be convinced that a man could be cured willy-nilly. If a patient would not of his own free will abstain from food then it had to be forcibly kept from him. Under such conditions, there would not be much to choose between the chances of recovery of one of their patients forced to fast and a political prisoner like MacSwiney who refuses to eat for a principle.

The reason generally given to account for the wide differences between fasting and starvation is psychological in its nature. The mind or the will, according to psychologists who have studied the subject has more to do with bringing about good or fatal result than the body. But as the same physical condition exists in both a fast and a starvation bout—that is, abstinence from food of any kind—the body will find it difficult to agree with the doctors.

Carrington Advocates Fasting.
"Fasting and starving," writes Hereward Carrington in his report to the American Institute of Scientific Research, "are dif-



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Dr. N. J., who cured herself of tuberculosis by fasting sixteen days, and Dr. L. B. Hazard of Seattle, who found a cure for diabetes in a long fast.

Sinclair himself, having already taken this cure with good results, permitted a cold to fasten on him and went back to his self-proved remedy. He came to New York, "where I could pursue the fast with diversion," and walked about, working, etc., but without violent exercise in the course of the fasting. And, he concludes, "I shall continue the fast until I feel hungry."

Religious fasting has been common since the beginning of any religion, and religious fasts are common to-day. But the hunger strike of Bishop Eusebius, who was canonized after his death, was a result of the great battle between churchmen on the issue of Arianism. Eusebius vehemently opposed Arian and was imprisoned by his disciples. Therefore he refused to eat and drink for year, as he explained in a letter to Rome, he held communion with them. It is a fast of the fourth century.

The words of Eusebius were: "Unless they permit my disciples to come to me and bring me my food and drink, I shall accept nothing from these heretics and they will be responsible for my death."

Little cared the so-called heretics, who would have let the Bishop starve to death and not public opinion forced his jailers to admit the Bishop's disciples with food. A week later the Arians were forced by the same power to release him from prison.

The Celebrated Case of Ann Moor.

A most celebrated case is that of Ann Moor of Tutbury, Staffordshire, England. Her extraordinary abstinence from food, fluid and solid, according to physicians who had her in charge and to other credible witnesses, endured for three years. This case is related in an old pamphlet printed by Thomas G. Bangs, 70 State street, Boston, which was sold for a shilling a copy, or 25 cents for a dozen copies. It is a part of the Gordon Lenox Ford collection in the New York Public Library.

Dr. Robert Taylor, member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, is the author of the pamphlet, to which he appends the testimony of many physicians and laymen who had the woman under observation. Her fast lasted from November 4, 1806, to July,

1809. The last solid food, consisting of a few raisins, was given her in January, 1807. At that time she was removed from her own home to a Mr. Jackson's, who was convinced that the woman was shamming. There she was surrounded by strangers, who kept her in view day and night.

In this long period the woman's pulse fell from 74 to 68, and it gradually became painful for her to lie in bed, so she was propped up. For a time she took a few drops of water, but it distressed her, and thereafter she was satisfied to have her mouth wiped out with a damp rag.

"Now," goes on Dr. Taylor's narrative, "she indulges herself pretty freely in snuff. She is talkative and cheerful. Air seems to be her only aliment; she cannot endure being without a fresh current of it."

This woman died at 53, never having recovered from her mysterious illness. In opposition to the pamphlet which furnished the quotations others were printed in London, professing to be able to prove that Ann Moor was a fraud.

George E. Davis, patient of Dr. Dewey who followed Dr. Graham in this country as a leader in the fasting school for curative purposes, appears in the records as an interesting case, although as he withheld from food but sixty-one days he is not in the Moor woman's class. In his own words Davis says that he had no hunger from the third to the fortieth day. He weighed 228 pounds when he began his fast and came out of it weighing 174 pounds.

"I am cured of paralysis," testified Davis. "My strength is normal, my digestion perfect, my vision strong. I have no dread of a second stroke. I have been working in St. Paul, Minn., ten miles from my home, and make the trip to and from daily. I am more robust than since my boyhood."

Another patient of Dr. Dewey was George W. Tutthill of Minneapolis, Minn., who was at when he was under the regimen. He broke his fast before it was completed and had a relapse. In his second attempt he remained without taking food of any kind for forty-one days. Coming out of this second fast Tutthill weighed but seventy-two pounds.

At absolutely unbroken or "finish" fast the advocates of this cure.

"We know we can go without nutriment of any kind with safety and benefit," asserts Hereward Carrington in his physiological work entitled "Vitality, Fasting and Nutrition," and he adds, "and that for a period of time not less than several weeks. In all observed conditions nature will clearly indicate when food is needed by sending up an urgent call for it. Why not continue the treatment to its legitimate conclusion?"

When the legitimate conclusion is reached, that is, when nature tells the patient that the fast is ended, Carrington prescribes drinking at first liquid food only, preferably fruit juices freed from the pulp. The second meal, consisting of grape juice (unfermented) or orange juice, is to be given six hours later, and after another twelve hours the patient may receive a light luncheon. "It is astonishing," says this firm believer, "how small an amount will be called for once the 'danger period' has passed."

"Fasting is nature's cure," writes Charles Brodie Patterson in "The Will to Be Well," and he leaves it to nature to appoint the time for a faster to eat again. "The spontaneous and precisely coincidental clearing of the tongue and the sweetening of the breath will show when the cure has been effected." He urges the sick "to put faith in other things and forget the body (in the sense of continuing care upon it), and the body will become well and strong and remain so."

The "habit hunger" lasts two or three days after the faster has begun treatment

that have sprung up in the morning and been mowed down by nightfall.

A form of fasting or self-denial was at the basis of Fletcher's effort in the direction of bettering human efficiency. He sought to complete the work of Cornaro, Epicurus, ancient and modern food economists, by putting this efficiency on a scientific basis and sociology on a physiological basis.

"The fundamental of health is food," said Fletcher. "I found that I could do nothing to benefit mankind until I had solved the problem of nutrition. What can we know of nutrition? Nature does not make us responsible for what we cannot know, but she has given us control of what we shall eat and how much of it we shall eat by giving us taste, salivation, mastication. By deliberate feeding, that is, by chewing my food, I ate less, because I gave my stomach time to check the intake and close the admission valve at the right moment—when enough food had been received by the alimentary canal."

Fletcherism More Popular Than Fasting.

In a series of pamphlets this discoverer of the uses of "the first three inches of the alimentary canal," sought to prove that his methods are essential to the popularization of a science of right living. "Fletcherism" soon numbered thousands of enthusiastic converts. To eat less and to chew thoroughly were certainly easier tenets to accept than to embark on a period of fasting,

terent things. Fasting is beneficial to the body and starvation is "the reverse."

"Fasting," he continues in another place, "never become a popular method of cure, involving as it does, too much self-denial." The starving doctor, however, advocates properly conducted therapeutic fasting.

And in his volume devoted to the practice of fasting, and strongly, even vehemently, advocating its general adoption, this writer says:

"Fasting is a scientific method for ridding the system of diseased tissue and morbid matter and is invariably accompanied by beneficial results. Starvation is the denaturation of the tissues from the nutriment which they require and is invariably followed by disastrous consequences. Fasting begins with the first meal that is omitted and ends with the return of natural hunger. Starvation only begins with the return of natural hunger and terminates in death. Where the one ends the other begins."

Dr. Graham, who as early as 1848 advanced ideas of abstinence from every kind of food as a cure for paralysis, locomotor ataxia and kindred ills, including chronic rheumatism, went further than later men, have gone in that he advocated forcible abstinence if necessary. In a sense, also, this was the practice of Dr. Dewey, whose name is every where associated with the practice of fasting for health reasons. The latter said:

"Take any food from a sick man's stomach and you have begun not to starve the sick man, but the disease."

The Spiritual Factor.

This is a nutshell is the whole science and philosophy of fasting. It does not, however, cover the cases of voluntary abstinence from food by perfectly healthy persons (or persons supposed to be healthy) who have from political or other reasons, like the Lord Mayor of Cork and Mrs. Pankhurst, refused to take nourishment. In such cases the attitude of mind seriously operates against producing results that the fasters claim are legitimate.

Later advocates of fasting, in the vast strides that have been made in the study of the mind and the will, make a strong distinction between voluntary fasting and involuntary, which they frankly denigrate as starvation and point in unpleasant colors all the latter's ills. In language suited to the common understanding, the difference sought between the two things which seem alike to that understanding is one of scientific and unscientific starvation.

Tanner's Forty Day's Fast.

Fasters we have always had with us. The Yogis of India have practised it for centuries and there have been episodic examples which have stirred the people to curiosity but not to emulation. Men have only to be in middle life to remember the case of Dr. Tanner, who fasted for weeks in a public exhibition at Koster & Bial's, on Thirty-fourth street, New York, when that place of entertainment was still in existence. Everybody was kept on the qui vive to see if he would survive the ordeal of not eating for forty days. He did, and almost everybody doubted not that attendants had "passed" Tanner something. And the same popular cynicism has attended later examples of endurance, but without disturbing the "fadists," who continue to claim that fasts of three days or nine days or ninety days are equally harmless if properly directed.

Among the later advocates of fasting, who has cheerfully put himself on record as being in the habit of resorting to it to cure himself of anything from a cold to paralysis, is Upton Sinclair, who published in 1910 a series of articles on the subject, based on his own experiences and citing others, which had come to him by correspondence, but authenticated. Thus, Richard Fausel of North Dakota (a hotel keeper and so prober for seventy-eight days and reduced his bulk of 385 pounds to normal weight; Mrs. L. W. Smith, who fasted thirty days to cure herself of peritonitis and appendicitis and "who is perfectly well now"; Mrs. Vossler of New-

Americans Finance Orphanage As Tribute to British Heroes

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THE establishing by means of American funds of a home in England for British boys orphaned through the war, the sons of British navy and army heroes, puts a new link in the chain of international friendship that binds us to those of our own strain across the sea. The orphan home financed by America is at Reading, forty miles from London. It is an "adopted" home, the National Allied Relief Committee through its English representatives deciding, after much searching and many investigations, to take over what is known as the St. Andrew's Home of the Waifs and Strays Society of England, an institution already equipped, perfectly fitted for their purposes. It would have been a year or more at the least, before there could have been built and fitted out such a building. The St. Andrew's Home, "ready made" is ideal and the offer of the Waifs and Strays Society to turn it over was gladly accepted.

Col. the Hon. Arthur C. Murray is chairman of the British Management Committee, of the National Allied Relief Committee. Major the Hon. J. J. Astor, treasurer; Evelyn Wrench of the English-Speaking Union, secretary; and Lieut.-Col. A. S. Cleaver, Robert Grant, Jr., G. Mills McKay and James Van Allen Shields its other members. The new orphanage will be under its direction and under the protection of the British Ministry of Education. At the meeting at the Savoy Hotel formally founding this American orphanage in England, America's memorial to British heroes,

the check for its carrying on was presented by John Moffat, who had brought it from America. Only a few days before Mr. Moffat was received at Buckingham Palace and decorated as Commander of the Order of the British Empire, King George tendering him the thanks of the British people for his work for the Allies during the war.

The new orphan's home will care for forty-eight boys. Its purpose will be to develop them into strong, upright and efficient Britons. The home that American funds are paying for is a picturesque old gray stone building, with lawn, playgrounds and garden space.

The boys attend the public schools in Reading, and also receive all necessary home training at the hands of Head Master J. G. Churchill, who holds a lieutenant's commission in the British army, and Mrs. Churchill who is matron of the home. The boys are also attached as a cadet corps to the Berkshire Infantry Regiment, which gives them both military and physical training.

The National Allied Relief Committee, Inc., sponsors of this new movement, is made up of Americans who from the early days of the war saw a great duty lying before them. It is composed of New Yorkers who have travelled widely, know the countries abroad and have many close friends in them. As a body it saw the needs of England and France as if it were actually on the ground. During the war it sent over many hundreds of thousands of dollars—hundreds of thousands of pounds, indeed—for relief of the Allies. When war came to an end it found its work must be continued.

but it then finally disappears, although the time naturally varies in individual cases. When once this period has passed no hunger will, in any case, be experienced until the fast is completed—ready to be broken and natural hunger then announces itself, and shows that the system is free from its previously diseased condition. This is now the different professors of fasting speak of its progress. They have not the same unanimity when discussing what to give the patient after the fast is broken.

Dr. Dewey's star patient, Milton Rathbun, took for his first meal oysters, soda crackers, beef broth and Oolong tea. Such a first meal filled other fasters with horror. Bernard McFadden has compiled a list of forty-eight fruits as being especially suitable. Dr. Hamish advises popcorn. Carrington says it is a matter of habit and custom—the native of India will ask for rice, the Esquimaux for blubber, and the American and Englishman for roast beef and boiled potatoes. Horace Fletcher said on this point:

"Appetite will come only for those foods which the system requires, and this appetite can be safely and implicitly followed."

Here is introduced the name of an American known the world over for his original views on food. His theory may be briefly set down as the more a man chews the less he needs to eat. Malnutrition is the red rag that Horace Fletcher waved throughout his life.

Appetite, said Fletcher, always should be consulted, as this is the way the brain interprets the wants of the body. His rule for eating was to wait until some special food is desired, then to eat in the regulation way, with complete mastication, until sufficient. After a time, he said, the appetite demands little meat.

Scientific tests of the Fletcher theory were made at Yale under Dr. William G. Ander-

son, director of the gymnasium, in order to show the value of his theories in connection with human nutrition. Meanwhile to "Fletcherize" became a sort of social fad, another of them like so many varieties of "fasting" which even the doctors advising it were unable to limit. If they were correct, Nature herself would tell when the fast was over. Nature alone could fix the period it would take to clean the encumbered system of base matter and notify the patient that the work had been accomplished by suddenly revealing an appetite for food, hither-to quiescent. The Fletcher method was not so drastic, took longer, but its enthusiasts affirmed that it accomplished the same result. It and fasting brought a clear gain of energy and no loss of strength. By the fasters the claim was made without reservation in these words: "Clear gain—no loss." And these words apply, they say, to all cases of fasting of however long duration.

Dr. Charles E. Page of Boston records his belief in the efficacy of therapeutic fasting—fasting for cure—in these strong words:

"It has been the sheet anchor of all bed-ridden dietitians for generations, but these have been comparatively few in number. Therapeutic fasting is by no means starvation, whereas fasting in certain cases is both fasting and poisoning."

"The actual cause of disease is wrong living habits. A few meals skipped are beneficial in many cases of health breakdown. If we give the stomach time for rest and healing, the patient taking small portions of fresh water occasionally, we clear away threatened intestinal auto-toxemia."

These remarks are culled from his recommendation of therapeutic fasting for the treatment of whooping cough, a stomach cough due, he says, to wrong and over-eating. F. G. Benedict in his treatise on "Prolonged Fasting," and J. G. N. Chiff in a report of observations on fasting cases printed in the *British Archaeological Association Journal*, find similar results.

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