

The Rader Case

Mr. L. F. Rader of Olalla, Wash., died at 12.15 P. M., May 11, 1910, at 123½ Broadway North, in the forty-seventh year of his age. Mr. Rader's physical history is one of intermittent suffering. As the result of an accident in childhood in which he was internally injured, his youth and early manhood were filled with a succession of most acute attacks of painful illness. About fifteen years ago he deserted the orthodox means of treatment and turned to what is now known as the natural or drugless method, with the consequence that he experienced the first relief he had ever known. Three years ago he lay ill for three months, and after again submitting to medical treatment he turned to the fast and to me. In fourteen days he was up and about, and in a month he was able to attend to his ordinary business. Since then he had no return of acute symptoms until March 31 of this year, when, after unwonted physical exercise and a heavy meal, he was seized with severe pains in the intestines, which compelled him to take to his bed. His stomach rejected food, and within a week the taking of water brought nausea. I was then called to diagnose the case and to direct treatment. I made the statement at that time to Mrs. Rader that there seemed but little chance for his recovery, but tried the administration of fruit juices and light broths.

The point was soon reached, however, when Mr. Rader refused any sustenance, since it [\[Pg 138\]](#) resulted only in nausea and excruciating pain. In the meanwhile the patient came to Seattle, and went to the Hotel Outlook with every symptom showing the relief that is the logical sequence of removing food temporarily from a system struggling to right abnormal conditions. Things progressed smoothly until meddling outsiders interfered and caused the city health officials to take cognizance of the fact that a man was "starving" in the hotel. Without warrant Mr. Rader's rooms were entered, and he was confronted by Drs. Bourns and Davidson, who endeavored to persuade him to return to orthodoxy and to the care of the orthodox physicians. Mr. Rader's indignant repudiation is of record, as is also the result of the attempt to declare him insane.

In connection with the latter, after his removal to a quiet, comfortable room in the upper part of the city, an order of the court, obtained in some manner by the health officials, sent the humane officers to the rescue, and the house was watched and guarded while the faithful nurses prevented forcible entry attempted by these servants of the people. The latter even went so far as to raise ladders to the window of Mr. Rader's room, and with display of weapons tried to force the catches in the vain effort to serve the writ which was their excuse. To prevent their seeing the patient and to save him as much as possible from the noisy disturbance, I carried him to the bath and locked the door. I then climbed from one window to another across a court into the next flat in order to call the attorney for the humane society, who [\[Pg 139\]](#) took the needful steps that eventually recalled the writ. In the meanwhile Mr. Rader had suffered mentally to such an extent that his life was despaired of for many hours, and he never fully recovered from the nervous shock, which undoubtedly hastened his end. Until the coming of these officers he was able to walk from his room

to the bath, but afterwards he continually begged to be protected from outsiders and to be permitted to die, if need be, in peace.

When the death of a patient under my care occurs I am most anxious that no stone should be left unturned to exhibit the cause. In this, my seventh death in four years' practice in Seattle, I find my diagnosis and prognosis completely corroborated. I was assisted in the autopsy by two old-line physicians and by the deputy coroner. The results of the post-mortem examination were as follows:

Mr. Rader's viscera showed the most abnormal characteristics it has been my fortune to observe in years of post-mortem work. The lungs were adherent at every point to the pleural cavity as well as to the diaphragm in places. The heart in fair condition. Stomach dilated and prolapsed. Gall bladder in three distinct pouches, any one of which was the size of the normal sac, and two of these sections were filled with 126 gall stones of one grain to half an ounce in weight; the largest was 3 inches in circumference one way and 4 inches the other way. The small intestines collapsed to the pelvis and midway intussuscepted so that a section of two measured [\[Pg 140\]](#) yards occupied but five inches in length; portions of these were of infantile development. The transverse colon lay anterior to the descending colon throughout its extent, while the ascending and descending colon showed infantile size and cartilaginous structure. The sigmoid bend and rectum were of diameter not larger than the adult thumb and in advanced cartilaginous state. The kidneys fair; the liver enlarged and badly congested.

The conditions exhibited were such that the wonder in any mind practised in the care of the human body lies in the thought that nature was able to preserve under these handicaps this man's life until the forty-seventh year. To me this is proof positive that "man does not live by bread alone."

The facts given may easily be verified. Mr. Rader fasted because he had to fast. He could not take food in any sort or in any manner, and his death occurred because of organic disease beyond repair. He was never without water and fruit juices; vegetable broths and prepared foods were given whenever the occasion seemed to present itself, but always with painful consequences. During the month of April he was virtually fasting, although food was supplied as mentioned. It is not at all remarkable in my work to have patients abstain from food for thirty, forty, and fifty days, although by far the greater number do not require this length of time.

Criticized as I have been for my methods, and realizing that the combined efforts of the old [\[Pg 141\]](#) schools are aimed at what it eventually means, perhaps a definition may not prove amiss:

Starvation consists in denying food, either by accident or design, to a system clamoring for sustenance.

Fasting consists in intentional abstinence from food by a system non-desirous of sustenance until it is rested, cleansed, and ready for the task of digestion. Food is then supplied.

The conduct of the health and humane officers in the Rader case is not the first instance of their methods of procedure that it has been my fate to experience. In the latter part of January, 1908, I had under my care Mrs. D. D. Whedon, a young married woman in a critical state of health, mother of one child and about to become the mother of another. Officious neighbors complained to the

authorities that the child was being subjected to the fasting method and was slowly starving. Without warrant these creatures of authority entered the apartments of Mrs. Whedon, subjected her to a bodily examination against her will and protests, took her child from her by force, and when her husband attempted to regain possession of his daughter, they arrested him for resisting an officer and had him placed in the city jail. I also was charged at this time with practising medicine without a license, an accusation that was quashed on appeal to the superior court.

I rather court an investigation of my work and its results, successful and unsuccessful. Thus far the methods pursued by those antagonistic have been the very ones that have succeeded in [Pg 142] informing the world at large that the work is here, that it progresses, else why the furor? It is here to stay and to do what the truth eventually always does—prevail.

The autopsies in each of the several deaths that have occurred in my practice in the city of Seattle have exhibited organic disease, the origin of which lay in the early years of life. In all of these bodies arrested development of one or other of the vital organs was in evidence, and in the majority the injured intestines showed cartilaginous structure and deformation that must have required either violent shock or continued functional disturbance to produce. In view of the fact that these instances cover subjects who had endeavored to follow orthodox methods until orthodoxy proved unavailing, and who then turned to the fast and its accompaniments, I feel perfectly confident in declaring that early drug treatment is responsible for later and fatal disease. Nature had endowed each of these patients with strong vitality; each of them had suffered from severe functional disorder in infancy; each had been drug-drenched.

Broadly speaking, there is no drug that is not a poison, stimulating or paralyzing in result, and in infancy the latter is doubly apparent and appalling. It needs but the parallelism between the effect of an application of a glass of brandy upon an infant and an adult to emphasize this statement. Consider then the consequences of repeated dosings for fevers, colic, colds, and the varied category of infantile disease, and conceive [Pg 143] the results upon tender, growing, human bodies. Not one of us but has these sacred relics of the days of powdered dried toads and desiccated cow manure to blame for organs arrested in development or functionally ruined.

The principle embodied in the intelligent application of fasting for the cure of disease is not to be crushed by vilification. The knowledge of it, thanks to strenuous attacks by the medical profession, has been distributed gratis throughout the English-speaking world; and my own part in the work of propaganda has been made more than easy by opposition displayed. I believe that I have a cause to defend, a truth to uphold, a principle for which, if need be, I shall die fighting.

Linda Burfield Hazzard.

Seattle, Wash., May 16, 1910.