

The Keeley

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The Chicago Literary Club

Over on the table by the window sits, or will sit, two bottles, one of bourbon and the other of wine. Corn and water combine, distilled to the desired proof, and aged to the intended smoothness in wooden casks, to produce whiskey, some of which was duly bottled, labeled, packed in cartons of twelve, sold and shipped to a wholesaler, who sold and delivered it to the Cliff Dwellers. The product of fermented grapes, followed a similar path to our table, and may cross your lips ere long.

The wine and liquor industries employ one million people in the United States and the business totals \$35 billion per year. Those bottles, lubricate hospitality and good fellowship, enhancing the pleasure of the evening, or if need be, ease its pain.

Another industry as great as the liquor trade is that which mops up after it, preventing and treating alcoholism, rehabilitating alcoholics and counseling and assisting their families and employers, incurring enormous expenses in the process. To these expenses are properly added the cost in human life, injury and illness, litigation, inefficiency and lost production levied by drunkenness.

It may be the case that this equation of pleasure and pain is in balance, or even tipped toward the side of the overall benefits of drinking. Nonetheless, the human tragedy on the debit side is enormous, and in great part avoidable, as demonstrated in Islamic lands where prohibition is an article of religious faith, and in Illinois by many thousands of inebriates and for alcoholics who progresses to total abstinence under a concerted treatment plan between the years 1879 and 1966. Tonight, I cite the career of a graduate of Rush Medical College, class of 1864, who was commissioned acting assistant surgeon in the medical service of the Union Army in February of that year, served in the general hospital at Benton Barracks near St. Louis, and was mustered out at Chattanooga in September, 1864. We may imagine a minute incident of that 'irrepressible conflict'. The scene is an encampment in Tennessee of the Army of the Cumberland; the time, a Friday evening in July. The young surgeon has completed his rounds at the medical tent and heads for his own. An eighteen-year-old private staggers by him, gets off an awkward salute, mumbles "Good

night, Sir”, reels, stumbles and falls to the ground. The doctor summons two men to carry the guzzler to his tent to sleep off his binge. Before turning in, the physician jots down a note on this case in his journal for his study of inebriation among the troops. The subject of alcohol and its effects had interested the doctor from his youth. He was born in 1832. Growing up in Potsdam, New York, where his father practiced medicine, Leslie E. Keeley, for that was our doctor's name, loved to go to the village tavern where a crowd would gather to meet the stage from the South. The driver would throw the reins to an obsequious hostler and hurry to the barroom. Young Keeley would follow him, and listen with open ears to the news he oracularly doled out. One night this hero received from his numerous admirers' invitations to the bar, and then with unsteady steps he moved away and sank down on the ground and went into a stertorous sleep. Young Keeley watched him till morning. From that night he displayed a sort of mania to watch all men addicted to drink . . . he would follow and care for villagers and visitors who drank too hard. He was laughed at for his pains. <sup>1</sup>

1. Chicago Daily Tribune, Feb. 22 1900, p.5.

Alcohol flowed freely during the Civil War. It was used as a tranquilizer and anesthetic as well as for diversion or solace. Keeley studied its use, classifying heavy drinkers: rich or poor, rural or urban, bright or dull. He concluded that they represented indiscriminately all classes and conditions of men.

Sherman's Atlanta campaign was concluded in September, 1864, and the back of the Confederacy was broken. That month, Dr. Keeley returned to Illinois. The record is a blank for two years. In 1866, he moved to Dwight, 74 miles southwest of Chicago on the Chicago and Alton Railroad. He established a general practice. Village and railroad were twelve years old and, in a few years, the latter, appointed him division surgeon.

The doctor pursued his interest in alcoholism, concluding it is a disease, that an opinion rejected by almost all who heard of it. He wanted to use double chloride of gold as a treatment, but it was unsafe. In a drug store beneath Dr.

Keeley's office worked a young Irish chemist, John R. Oughton. Cooperating with the doctor in his efforts, he found an eliminant for the excess of gold in the system. Further details are not available, as this was a secret formula.

The doctor's brother-in-law, Major Curtis J. Judd, a merchant in 1879 Dwight, provided in 1879 the capital needed to launch a partnership with Keeley and Oughton.

Civil War veterans and railroaders were early patients of the Keeley Institute, and they provided word-of-mouth advertising. Growth was slow; however, The Keeley Co. was incorporated in 1886. Keeley was president, Oughton was vice president, and Judd, secretary- treasurer. The boom came when Joseph Medill, editor of the Chicago Tribune, heard of Keeley's claim to be curing men of drunkenness. In 1891, he sent a reporter to Dwight, who filed accounts of cures. Medill doubted him and dispatched another legman. Dr. Keeley thereupon challenged Medill to send him six of the worst drunks he could find, promising to: "sober them up in four weeks, send them back to Chicago as sober men who, unless of their own volition, will never again seek liquor, having no further need for it."

THE TRIBUNE editor selected what he termed "the toughest products of alcoholism the Chicago saloons could turn out." When they came back, he agreed that "a veritable miracle was wrought," that the booze addicts "went away sots and returned gentlemen."

### **Thrives During Prohibition**

Newspapers throughout the country then followed the lead of THE TRIBUNE and sent reporters to Dwight to write stories of the new treatment, bringing a boom to both the sanitarium and this little town.

By 1890, Keeley Institute was attracting patients from so far away that it was decided to start franchised branches staffed by physicians trained at Dwight.

### **Spread Over World**

The first branch was begun in 1890 at Des Moines, Iowa, followed by Atlanta and White Plains. In 1891, a branch was established in London under

direction of Dr. Oscar C. DeWolf, a former Chicago health commissioner. By 1895, there were 81 branches in all states and in many foreign countries. <sup>2</sup>

2. Chicago Tribune, June 6, 1966.

The Keeley Institute was called the first treatment center for alcoholics in the world, and it remained the most important liquor cure hospital in North America. Men overwhelmed by liquor, in large numbers, and some drug addicts, (Is there a difference?) took the “Keeley cure”, a name which everyone understood along with the phrase, “gone to Dwight”. In the 1890’s, as many as 1800 patients were under treatment at one time, straining the facilities of the village. A building boom of large homes provided bed and board for the “jags,” as the patients were called. Streets were paved, electric lighting put in place and sewerage and water systems were state of the art. In 1891 Keeley built a substantial laboratory and office building, and a hotel. Fire destroyed these in 1902, and they were rebuilt, entirely fireproof. Tile and marble were used extensively, and elsewhere the floors are of monolith. On June 3, 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt pressed the button which formally opened the Livingston Hotel.

What was the treatment? It lasted four weeks, until the use of psychotropic drugs cut the time in half. Each day, four hypodermic shots of the secret formula were administered, at 8:00, noon, 5:00 and 7:30. A tonic was taken every two hours, in the patient’s room or the hotel. A wide variety of other medicine was prescribed as needed. Whiskey, or opium, in small amounts, was given as long as needed, generally for only two or three days.

It was Keeley's philosophy and practice to treat the whole man. In a multitude of instances, the whole man became engaged in his cure with gratefulness and unabashed enthusiasm. A contemporary historical sketch reads in part as follows:

Although the medicinal treatment was extremely successful, Keeley was the first to admit that shots wouldn't work without the willingness of the patient.

“You must remember I cannot paralyze the arm that would deliberately raise the fatal glass to the lips,” he once said to an audience of hundreds of his clients. To help themselves through the treatment period and the time beyond, patients formed an early-day Alcoholics Anonymous --- the Bi-Chloride of Gold Club.

The group formed in 1891, its first official gathering held in a Dwight blacksmith shop for lack of a better meeting place. Within a year, clubs formed at each of the branches and plans were laid for a national convention. Three hundred delegates from 50 clubs in 20 states unloaded at the Dwight depot in February 1892. Another was held in the village in September of that year when delegates voted to form a national organization called the Keeley League.

By 1900, the league had held seven national conventions to further the cause of temperance. Future presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs helped organize the 1893 event held at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. According to the state historical society article, Sept. 15, 1893 was declared Keeley Day and arriving leaguers were met at the fair terminal station by an honor escort of Columbian Guards. Adorned with Keeley League buttons and badges, the group formed a lengthy procession and walked to the specially composed tune “Keeley Grand March.”

Other conventions were held in Colorado Springs, Harrisburg, Minneapolis and Indianapolis with delegates reporting in 1897 that 370 local leagues contained 30,513 members. The book “The Wonderful Story of Keeley and Dwight” published about that time lists “lawyers and intense brain workers” as making up the largest section of Keeley clients. Physicians composed the next largest group; ministers, third; while newspaper writers numbered fourth. Women, too, were treated at Dwight, many of them for opium addiction. An 1893 booklet promoting the institute shows an engraving of the Ladies’ Home, “a three-story colonial cottage, recently erected and equipped with steam heat, electric lights and baths, for the exclusive use of lady patients.”

“Ladies visiting Dwight for treatment,” the booklet continues, “are assured that their wishes regarding privacy and seclusion will be closely observed, while there will be no embarrassing restrictions whatever.”

The diverse ranks of the “Keeley Grand Army of American Drunkards” continued to flourish long after its troops first lined up in 1879. When Keeley died in 1900, John R. Oughton assumed command. When he died in 1925, his son, James H., directed operations until his death 10 years later. James H. Oughton Jr. then continued the tradition until the institute finally closed its doors in 1966 — marking an end to the era when Dwight was a Mecca for drunkards.<sup>3</sup>

3. Streator Times-Press. Nov. 29, 1982.

In most cases, patients came voluntarily, and paid their own way. One applicant wrote: “I can come drunk or sober, but would prefer the former.” In the nineties, the cost was \$100 per month for room, medical examination, laboratory work, medications, physical therapy, gymnasium and counselor. Board was additional, inflation raised the figure to \$338 per week and up in the 1930's. Additional care cost more. A trained attendant around the clock was recommended for several days.

Cigarette smoking was forbidden, as it was thought to create a craving for alcohol, being a vasoconstrictor. Cigars, pipes and coffee were permitted in moderation.

In an interview with James Oughton, the Tribune reported:

After the initial close attention, patients were not confined to their rooms. They could, stroll thru the town, which Oughton said “had its share of saloons” they could enter if they chose. But they learned early to choose not to.

Notes Changed Attitude

However, they usually spent most of their time on the Institute's 20 acres of landscaped grounds that includes lakes with swans and ducks and a famed collection of unusual trees.<sup>4</sup>

4. Chicago Tribune, June 6, 1966

It is apparent that, instead of the strait-jacket, and the asylum atmosphere, the Keeley Institute allowed much freedom, but required the lineup

for the shot in the upper left arm four times a day, and the medicine self-administered every two waking hours in one's room.

I was recently in Springfield, two levels below the old state capitol, where the underground parking garage surrounds the Illinois Historical Library. I had occasion to look at some of the records of the Leslie E. Keeley Co., courtesy of Jim Oughton. There are about 137 linear feet of shelf space including 424 bound volumes, 17,000 letters, 148,500 documents, 91,500 index cards, 6500 published items, 270 photographs and 40 museum objects. Outgoing letters were duplicated by letterpress and preserved in large bound volumes between thin linen cloth pages. Here is a sample written December 2, 1915 by one of Dr. Keeley's successors:

Report of the second examination in your son's case. He has gained 8 ½ pounds. He says;

I don't sleep very well at night ... I have no craving for liquor, chills at night, my memory and mental condition are rotten.

The doctor continues (the letterpress copies do not show a signature nor is the name of the sender typed in.) He is very introspective, and I am sorry to have to tell you that from the very beginning of treatment he selected as associates here amongst the patients, men who are not likely to encourage him in resolving to lead a different life either here or in the future. He has not given us any evidence of earnestness in wanting to do the right thing and we have very little faith in his living the life of a total abstainer after leaving Dwight.

Regretting the necessity of writing you so plainly in this matter, but feeling it our duty to do so.

Very truly yours,  
The Leslie E. Keeley Co

A letter to one who brought a father and son:

In the case of the father: the first exam showed cogwheel respirations, a tumultuous heart action, pulse rate 100/min., an enlarged liver, a catarrhal stomach, an inflamed throat, tremor in hands and a dull mentality. The father



gained four pounds, “feeling first rate, pretty fair appetite, no craving for liquor, using no tobacco, no attacks of faintness past three or four days, eyesight improving, nerves getting better, very little headache and no pain around the heart and thoroughly satisfied with his progress.”

Do I not see a tranquilizing effect from the whole Keeley regimen, in the positive sense, not a deadening of the central nervous system, but a return to tranquility?

From a letter home, about another patient, this excerpt:

“If he returns to the use of cigarettes, it will be a question of time only when he will resume the use of alcoholic drinks to relieve the resultant nervous depression.”

From another letter:

We wish you would write him urging the more moderate use of tobacco and that he discontinue the practice of inhaling while smoking pipe or cigar.

From the reply to an inquiry about treatment for two addictions, tobacco and liquor:

If he is not in earnest, of course he will smoke surreptitiously and, in that way, defeat our efforts at relief.

In response to a general inquiry:

The time required in liquor cases is four weeks and the price of meals, add medical care for that time is \$100. Board and room range from \$10 to \$21 per week . . . we do not withdraw liquor suddenly . . . within four days the patient finds he can give up drink without inconvenience.

Our requirements are few and simple, being only such as are needed to enable us to build up the patient and restore his indifference to drink. We expect him to exercise daily in the open air, to retire at a reasonable hour each night, to take his meals with regularity and to follow any instructions which our physicians might give.

One bill included “attendant charge 20  $\frac{2}{3}$  hr. @ .125 = 2.60

3 meals attendant @ .25 = .75

In explanation of the attendant's charge, we desire to say that we found

difficulty in getting the patient to comply with our regulations in relation to drinking ice water and going out of doors with slippers on. We were therefore forced to put an attendant with him for about 21 hours in order that he should do what he was requested to do.

Concerning a patient who returned to cigarettes after leaving, and to liquor in six months: When he left here, he was told that to the man who has been addicted to drink there is simply a choice between total abstinence and continue inebriety.

A note from one letter:

“One of our employees meets every train.” There were seven trains per day each way, stopping at Dwight. The limestone station was the finest between Chicago and St. Louis, built by the Chicago and Alton Railroad in 1891, the structure, designed by Henry Ives Cobb in the Richardson Romanesque style of rusticated masonry. The foundation is of Joliet stone and the walls above are of Bedford Blue stone from Indiana composed almost entirely of fossil shells. He also did the Chicago Public Library. The correspondence during the months of December, 1915 through March, 1916, totaled 899 letters, or about ten per day.

Now we go back 20 years to Dr. Keeley's correspondence in 1895 and 1896. One letter, addressed to an inquirer in Sweden, said:

One bottle of my remedy would not be sufficient to cure your opium habit and especially so without the hypodermic solution which is used in the arm. Keeley went on to say that six bottles are needed, and he suggested ordering them from the Keeley Institute branch in London to save express charges.

A letter came from a company in Cincinnati which manufactured cigars, asking Dr. Keeley to represent them, and adding that, for a substantial order, “we should be pleased to shade the price for you.”

Keeley's reply:

“Thanks for the offer ... I never handled goods for any one, and decline to do so now. I simply purchase what suits me to use and give away . . . have just returned from a tour through Mexico and have enough of cigars on hand

from that quarter to last me for the next months or more, even with extravagant indulgence.”

The Keeley Co.'s response to another appeal:

Sisters of St. Mary,  
Episcopal Cathedral  
215 Washington Boul'd.,  
Chicago, Ill.

July 1st, 1895.

Dear Mesdames:

Your letter of June 29th to Dr, Keeley is with us today. It is probably needless to say to you that an Institute of this kind has to do more charitable work than any concern in the United States with four times its receipts. People send their husbands, brothers and fathers here without warning of their coming, in many instances, and always with the most pitiful, begging letters possible to write. Mothers are anxious for their sons, wives for their husbands and sisters for their brothers, as a cure will insure, first, decency, second, support and third, position in church and community. These people will pile promises to pay as high as Ossa on Pelion, but we never hear from them again unless perchance they should lapse back to their old habits in the course of years. Then we will hear a cry, - a cry that goes out over the land. They are injured in the man going back to his old habits because of reverses, domestic infelicity or trials that "they cannot stand" without the nepenthe of old days.

Sisters of St. Mary.

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We usually find that the man who comes here of his own volition, pays his money for a cure and returns to his home will protect his cure and be very grateful. If it were not that class of men--and they are very largely in the majority-- our work would be a weariness to both body and soul.

We are willing to do our share of charity, but we have had too much of it to do. Hence, will say, that we will contribute \$25.00 towards the cure of the man you speak of. If he is a worthy man outside of his habit, he has certainly made friends enough to contribute the balance of the charge. We would like to

know his age, his occupation, the condition of his wife and family, the number of children and their ages and his own disposition towards a cure. All of this will aid us in determining what you as a society may safely do in his behalf.

K.A.

Very truly yours,

THE LESLIE E. KEELEY CO.

Leslie E. Keeley bought out Campbell and persuaded a friend of Oughton's to put \$500 into the business in Oughton's name, hoping thereby to keep Oughton from leaving and disclosing the formula. More money was needed, and Father Halpin, the resident Catholic priest, was induced to put in \$500. Then C.J. Judd was brought in, and it became a five-way partnership.

Hargreaves writes:

The business had by now developed to such an extent that a bright future seemed to be before it. . . the opium cure had been discovered by Keeley and Hargreaves and put upon the market. The tobacco cure followed later.

Started at first as a patent medicine business, it was soon found that it would be necessary to put most patients under personal treatment. . . This formed the most profitable part of the work.

A disagreement in 1886 resulted in Hargreaves' being forced to sell his interest, in placing the remedies on the market, to his co-partners. . . Some years after this the Gold Cure got a phenomenal boom and patients flocked here from all parts of the country. . . After a while the business settled down with the establishment of branch institutes.

After pursuing the same line of work in Chicago, Hargreaves in 1894 organized a company in Dwight to sell his remedies and treat patients. The Keeley Company enjoined them from using the remedy and Hargreaves from disclosing it. The case in four years found its way to the Illinois Supreme Court.

Sour grapes or innocent victim? I have not learned what the court decided, but must assume that it sustained the injunction.

Ten thousand people gathered in Dwight, September 17, 1939 to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Keeley Institute or "The Keeley", as it was known in

Dwight. General chairman of the citizens' committee for the event was Frank L. Smith, a mover and shaker in the Republican party who was the only man to be elected to a seat in the United States Senate, travel to the capitol to be sworn in, be refused a seat by the upper house, and return home. That is another story, and there are two sides to it. Smith was a man of very substantial accomplishments, and respected in Dwight. He said:

Sixty years ago, there came into being in this little hamlet of ours, an idea and an ideal. The idea was that drunkenness was a disease; the ideal was that it could be cured.

Former patients were introduced, members of classes of recent years and earlier ones running back 47 years to 1892. "When we came to the Keeley Institute, alcohol was boss; when we left, we were boss. And we're still boss." Scores of former patients subscribed to that statement that day while the medical profession was generally hostile to Keeley's philosophy, and the popular view was that alcoholism was a defect of will, a sin. Keeley deserves a major share of the credit for changing the prevailing view of alcoholism, from a moral question, to a medical one. It is said that he treated 1,000 physicians, and many operated Keeley branches. As this view took hold, Dr. Keeley's lifework was vindicated and treatment centers proliferated across the country and Dwight's mission was over. The very substantial and imposing Keeley buildings were sold to the Public Health Service in the 1920's for a veterans' hospital. In 1966 that was closed, and the State of Illinois reopened it as a 201-bed developmental center for profoundly retarded, no ambulatory children and young people. Dwight continues to be a therapeutic community, in James Oughton's phrase.

So much for Dr. Keeley's work. What of the man? He loved theatricals, and directed three amateur productions in 1878: Pinafore, The Miser (high tragedy), and Dr. McCalligan, a rip-roaring comedy. Keeley sent the proceeds, \$200, for yellow fever relief in the South. Upon his death, an old friend, Cpl. Nate A. Reed, described him thus:

In 1891 Dr. Keeley visited Europe. Luther Laflin Mills spoke at a meeting in London, at which Canon Farrar presided, and the result was the opening of the Keeley Institute of London with Dr. Oscar C. De Wolf, for many years Health Commissioner of Chicago, as the President. It has since been increasing in its influence and prosperity.

Dr. Keeley held that his work was like Pasteur's and required an education of those who administered it—that in fact it was a new school of medicine. But he yielded to the arguments of his friends and allowed Keeley Institutes to be opened in various parts of the United States, it, however, being a sine qua non that the physician in charge must be a regular graduate of an accredited medical college and must prior to his appointment as a Keeley physician take a course of instruction at Dwight and pass an examination before receiving his credentials. Five States have passed laws recognizing the Keeley Treatment and providing for State aid to those unable to secure it for themselves. There are local Institutes in fourteen States where physicians educated at Dwight are in charge.

#### Some of His Characteristics.

Dr. Keeley was recognized by the State University of Missouri, in 1892 by the conferring of the degree of LL. D., and in Switzerland and France his work has also been recognized. He was invited to visit Turkey and Egypt, and while in Mexico received honors from President Diaz. One of his old friends, Colonel Nate A. Reed, thus describes him:

Dr. Keeley was a born autocrat. He brooked no interference. Had he gone upon the stage, he would have had few if any superiors. He had Shakespeare and the Bible almost at his tongue's end. The Rev. T. De'Witt Talmage invited him to speak in his Tabernacle in Brooklyn a few years ago, and it required two companies of policemen to clear the street so that the doctor could enter. Similar throngs greeted him at Montreal and Quebec.

“But it is not only among the victims of alcohol and drugs that the death of Dr. Keeley will be mourned. There are many others. He was a many-sided man. He was quick to see the suffering and feel for them. An importunate

beggar upon the street would by him be refused, and then he would turn back and bestow his alms, giving his companion an excuse, 'he may be suffering.'" An article in a Chicago paper, talking about some suffering family was sure to be followed by a letter from Dr. Keeley to his Chicago representative to look the matter up and if it was a genuine case relieve it.

"More than \$20,000 was thus expended by Dr. Keeley, and hundreds of men who went to Dwight heartless, homeless, and penniless, were not only given free treatment but also were given board, clothes, transportation, home, and helped to employment out of the doctor's pocket."

#### Unostentatious Man

Mate Palmer, editor of the Banner of Gold, said: "When last we heard from Dr. Keeley he was in the most robust of health and I cannot imagine what could have carried him off so suddenly. Dr. Keeley was the most charitable and kind-hearted of men. His charity was always unostentatious. In fact, I think, that word best describes him. He obeyed the scriptural injunction in giving, and kept his right hand from knowing what the left hand was doing. He always kept in the background, and frequently delegated to his friends the actual performance of kindly acts. While he built up a great practice, I do not think he gave much attention to the massing of money. He lived quietly in Dwight. I presume the business will continue as of old, as it is in the hand of a stock company."

TRIBUNE, CHICAGO, ILL

FEBRUARY 22, 1900

#### DEATH OF DR. KEELEY.

Thousands will read this morning with deep, personal sorrow the news of the death at Los Angeles yesterday of Dr. Leslie E. Keeley, the discoverer of that well-known cure for inebriety which bears his name.

The ridicule with which the Keeley Gold Cure was welcomed when The Tribune first called public attention to it years ago has long ceased. Medical men were forced to stop denouncing Dr. Keeley when the evidence became

overwhelming that he was able to take the many confirmed drunkards, make them sober, and keep them so, except when they did not wish to lead a sober life. The inebriate was given back his free will, and in the majority, of the cases treated he exercised his free will by keeping away from liquor.

Dr. Keeley was more fortunate than some others in that the public appreciation of the value of his discovery came before he died. He worked at his "cure" for years before he perfected it and after he had perfected it, he worked for years before he was able to make anything out of it. He was for a long time a poor country doctor. But at last, he had his reward. The Town of Dwight became famous, and he became rich, and was able to travel and enjoy himself. Those who have benefited by his treatment will regret that he could not have enjoyed life a little longer. Men were cured of the drink habit before Dr. Keeley was born and not all who, take the Gold Cure stay cured. But he did more for the victims of inebriety than anyone had done before him and may, therefore, with justice, be counted among the "public benefactors." For he who takes a large number of drunkards and makes them respectable, self-supporting members of society, certainly is entitled to that name. Leaving other aspects of the case out of sight, the economic value of the Keeley Cure has been great.

RECORD, CHICAGO, ILL  
FEBRUARY 22, 1900

DR. L. E. KEELEY IS DEAD  
EXPIRES AT LOS ANGELES, CAL.

Inventor of the "Gold Cure" for Drunkenness at Dwight, Ill., Succumbs  
Suddenly to Heart Disease—Estate Valued at \$1,000,000.

By The Associated Press

Los Angeles, Cal., Feb. 21. Dr. Leslie E. Keeley, the inventor of the "Keeley Cure for the liquor habit," died in this city in Adams Street to-day of heart disease, Dr. Keeley had been ill with a severe cold for two days, but



nothing serious was feared from it. This morning he suffered an attack of heart failure, but recovered and later said there was nothing serious the matter with him. Dr. Westhughes, a specialist in heart diseases, was summoned, however but before he reached the Keeley residence, Dr. Keeley had had a second attack and was dead. There were with him at the time of his death, his wife and Judge Ewing of Chicago, who has been stopping at the Keeley home for several days.

Dr. Keeley was 68 years of age. He leaves a widow, but no children. The estate is valued at \$1,000,000. The body will ultimately be taken to Dwight for interment, but at yet no arrangements for the funeral have been made. Dr. Keeley had been in southern California for three winters.

#### Grief at Dwight, Ill.

Special to The Chicago Record.

Dwight, Ill., Feb. 21. —The news that Dr. Leslie E. Keeley was dead came upon the citizens of Dwight to-day as a great surprise. When he left here, Dec. 26, for his winter home at Los Angeles, Cal., he was apparently in excellent health, with the exception of the bronchial trouble from which he had suffered - more or less for a number of years. Maj. Curtis J. Judd, the secretary and treasurer of the L. E. Keeley company, was on the train between Dwight and Chicago on his way to Massachusetts when the news came, and was immediately telegraphed to return.

Dr. Keeley began the treatment of drunkenness and addiction to the use of opium in 1880, and no particular attention was attracted to the work until about ten years afterward. In 1891 and 1892 there were in Dwight for treatment constantly from 800 to 1,000 patients, a much larger number than the village could conveniently accommodate. This necessitated the opening of branch institutes, which sprung up all over the country, and to-day there are sixty such institutes, one or more in nearly every state. There are also branch institutes in England and other foreign countries. Over 300,000 men and women in the United States alone have been treated at the various Keeley institutes.

#### Many Telegrams Received

The community of Dwight was greatly shocked by the news of the

doctor's death, as no one had any cause to expect it in the near future. Telegrams have been pouring in from various parts of the country ever since the news was made public, and many anxious inquiries as to when the funeral services will take place, indicate that there will be a large attendance. At present it is impossible to say when the body will arrive in Dwight, but it is expected on Sunday or Monday next.

Dr. Keeley had amassed a large fortune, had a beautiful but modest home at Dwight and a magnificent one at Los Angeles, Cal., where for the last three years he had spent his winters. Five brothers and two sisters survive him, as well as a widow. Connected with the business of the company is a nephew, Dr. Milton R. Keeley. The business has been carried on since 1886 by the L. E. Keeley Company, of which Dr. Keeley was the president, John R. Oughton vice president and Maj. Curtis J. Judd secretary- treasurer.

The death of Dr. Keeley will not affect the business in any respect, as he had not participated in it actively for the last three or four years. During that period, he had been absent from Dwight most of the time. It is well known that the formula of the Keeley remedies is a secret, but it is known to Maj. Judd and to Mr. Oughton, his business associates, the latter being the chemist of the company.

Personally Dr. Keeley was a man of strong personality and was greatly admired by all who knew him. He had a keen logical mind and a decidedly scientific turn, was an omnivorous reader and had a remarkable memory. He was always ready to help the needy. He never was too busy to listen with attention to an account of the misfortunes of others and was ever ready to relieve them not only by his advice and good judgement but in a more substantial way. Among his most sincere mourners are the poor of Dwight and the working men.

The over work of the weary were encouraged by unexpected gifts, and the poor but ambitious youth and children were given opportunities to develop some potful labor. But all was done as quietly and unpretentiously, that the enthusiasm of the grateful once alone revealed his gratuity. The gracious presence will be missed, but the kindly ministrations will be cherished as sacred

memories, and those who have been inspired to braver effort will bless the helpful influence that has broadened and beautified their lives.

BANNER of GOLD, CHICAGO, ILL  
MARCH, 1900

## FUNERAL EXERCISES

### SIMPLE SERVICES AT LOS ANGELES AND AT DWIGHT “DOCTOR KEELEY'S REMAINS LAID TO REST IN THE MAUSOLEUM AT OAK LAWN.

The funeral of Dr, Leslie E. Keeley took place at the Congregational Church in Dwight, Thursday afternoon, March 1, at 2 P.M. The remains arrived from Los Angeles, Cal., Feb. 27, at 2:10 P.M.

In the same train were Mrs. Keeley, her maids, her brother, Mr. A. C. Dow, Major Mitton R. Keeley, Major C. J. Judd and Mayor R. Oughton. They were met at the station in Dwight by a large number of friends and the remains immediately removed to the residence on Mason Avenue.

The full funeral arrangements were announced Wednesday. The Rev. J. A. Montgomery, of La Grange, Ill., the first pastor of the Dwight Congregation Church, and an intimate friend of Doctor Keeley's for years, was chosen to preach the sermon.

Long before 2 o'clock, Thursday, the lecture room of the church was filled and the audience room would have been, only it was found necessary to reserve that for the friends who came from a distance.

Private services were held at the residence at 1:30 P.M.

The report of the funeral probably cannot be better told than the following; from the Chicago Inter Ocean:

Doctor Keeley had requested that his funeral should be as simple and unostentatious as possible, and his wishes were carefully observed.

At 2 P.M. the casket was borne to the Congregational Church, where the Rev. J. A. Montgomery, of La Grange, Ill., spoke briefly and feelingly of the

Dwight physician. Doctor Keeley had expressly stipulated that no eulogy should be pronounced, and Mr. Montgomery, who had been a close personal friend of Doctor Keeley, confined his remarks to a brief summary of the deeds of kindness done to the struggling poor of that locality in the years immediately following 1866. Mr. Montgomery was the pastor of the first Congregational Church in Dwight, and rode frequently with the physician upon his rounds, so that he had a good opportunity of noting the character of the discoverer of the Gold Cure when he was no more than a poor country doctor.

#### BEAUTIFUL FLORAL TRIBUTES.

Beautiful floral tributes from different Institutes, Keeley Leagues, and individuals who had been patients at the Dwight Institute, and friends, were banked high about the casket and filled the chancel of the church.

Although the country roads were almost impassable, many of Doctor Keeley's old patients, gray and stooping, drove in miles to look once more upon the face of the "good, gray doctor," who had been their friend as well as physician when the now thickly settled country was a sparsely settled prairie. But the casket was not opened, and no one looked upon the face of the dead.

One of the touching things of the services was the singing of "The Sweet By and By," by May Phoenix Cameron, a rich contralto of Chicago. The author of this familiar hymn, Dr. J. Fillmore Bennett, was a patient at Dwight in 1892, and has since written many (articles for the press proclaiming his fealty to Doctor Keeley and his cure.

The preacher also recited the following tribute to Doctor Keeley, written by another of his admirers in the early days of the treatment:

Close reef that name, each added title trim;  
What matter titles to a man like him?  
The thing he did and not the words he said,  
Will move a world to weep when he is dead.

The Rev. E. F. Wright; pastor of the Congregational Church of Dwight, read the ninety-first Psalm, also Corinthians, 15th chapter, 41st verse, and the first seven verses of the 21st chapter of Revelations.

Miss Cameron sang Rodney's "Calvary," and then to the solemn strains of Chopin's funeral march the casket was borne from the church.

The remains were followed to Oak Lawn Cemetery by the whole concourse of people, where they were placed in the mausoleum which Doctor Keeley had built three years ago.

Many former patients came from far distant states to attend the funeral of the man whom they looked upon as their earthly savior.

And so, with no eloquent tongue to rehearse his good deeds, recount his triumphs or tell of the thousands of troubled homes and tens of thousands of despairing hearts into which Doctor Keeley had sent the rays of hope and happiness, the sage of Dwight passed to his rest.

The pallbearers were:

E. M. Pike, Chenoa; Dr. Russell Broughton, Dwight; Col. J. B. Parsons, Pontiac; Charles L. Romberger, Manning Smith, Edward McWilliams, Spencer Eldredge and Frank A. Haise, Dwight.

A special train of four coaches conveyed most of the funeral party to the cemetery. Here the Rev. Mr. Montgomery pronounced the brief burial service of the Congregational Church after the casket had been put in its last resting place. Five minutes later the bronze doors were swung to their places.

How is one to assess The Keeley? With a keen eye and a humble spirit. The keen eye looks at the secret formulae and wonders. A biographical sketch of Dr. Keeley offers this unattributed and self-contradictory assessment:

The medical profession objected to his commercial methods and denied that the good results were due to gold, ascribing them in the main to suggestion. The sudden disrelish of the patient for his whiskey was attributed to injections of apomorphin and to injections of strychnia and other alkaloids. Relapses were said to be frequent.<sup>5</sup>

Three points: 1) The good results are acknowledged amid the author's

vague volley of disparagements. (Keeley claimed 850,000 cures.) 2) Would not medication logically reinforce suggestion, which of course played its role. These are desperate men, their spirits broken, fighting a disease of spiritual and moral dimensions (Yes, opinion in the 1880's was partly correct.), as well as physical. It is one of the few diseases which lures its victims to try with fiendish ingenuity and unbounded persistence to re-infect himself time after time. A full panoply of resources must be brought into play to fight it. 3) That present-day treatment yields perhaps a forty per cent success rate, suggests humility when assessing the Keeley cure.

The time has come to repair to the table by the window. It would not be amiss to toast, whether ginger ale or coffee, bourbon or wine indefinitely to the memory of Leslie E. Keeley for his idea that alcoholism is a disease, his ideal that it can be cured, and his instance that to the shots and the regimen must be added the will of the patient. As John Bunyan wrote in *Pilgrim's Progress*, "There is no persuasion will do it, if God openeth not their eyes."

5. Dictionary of American Biography, Scribner's, 1938, by Edward Preble.

About the author:

Rev. John Shaw Broeksmit Jr., 90, died Aug. 22, 2011 in Chicago from injuries sustained in a fall. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Jane Murray Broeksmit, of Chicago; six children: Laura Broeksmit Downing of Seattle, WA; Peter of Dwight, IL; William of London; John of Brooklin, ME; Samuel of Washington, D.C.; and Robert of Chevy Chase, MD; two sisters; and eleven grandchildren. Rev. Broeksmit was born in 1920 in Chicago, the son of John and Mary Broeksmit. He was raised in Chicago and Lake Forest and graduated from the Hotchkiss School in CT in 1938 and from Yale University in 1942. He served as a lieutenant on destroyer escorts in the Navy during World War II and received a letter of commendation from the Secretary of the Navy for his role in the sinking of a German U-Boat. He spent eight years as a buyer at Sears, Roebuck and Company in Chicago and then entered Chicago Theological

Seminary, where he graduated in 1956. He was ordained into the ministry by the United Church of Christ in 1956. He was minister of First Congregational Church in Galva, IL from 1956 to 1965. He was a pastoral assistant at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Lake Forest and taught at Lake Forest Academy from 1967 to 1972. He was minister at the First Congregational Church of Dwight from 1972 to 1988 and was also a member of the staff at Fox Developmental Center in Dwight from 1975 to 1997. He was a member of the University Club of Chicago and The Chicago Literary Club and was a long-time member of Rotary International.