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Have the Police the Right to Supply Drugs to An Addict

How Do the People of Ontario Like This Plan of Procedure? Is it in Keeping with the Theory of Their Own Medical Experts?

There are many angles to some of the recent cases in the North Land where medical men were charged with supplying narcotic drugs to an addict, the addict being used as a "special agent" by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Last week The Advance quoted from the evidence in one case to show the type of man used as a "special agent." Along with the article The Advance could not forbear using the heading, "What Does the North Think of This Type of Law Enforcement?" A similar question might be used as a heading for the present article which will quote the official evidence in regard to another phase of the matter,—the supplying of drugs by the police to the addict.

Here are some of the questions and answers:—

Mr. Dean Kester, counsel for Dr. Day, cross-examining the "special agent":—

Question—You were let out of jail on or about August 4th, because you were in Ansonville on the 5th. When was the first time Mr. Miller gave you any drugs? Answer—I can't recall.

Q—Did he give you any that day? A—Oh, yes!

Q—What did he give you? A—Morphine.

Q—How did you take it? A—Hypodermically.

Q—Did he give you any the following day? A—Yes.

Q—He has given it to you every day since? A—Yes.

Q—Has he given you any to-day? A—Very little. I get it every day.

Q—What time did he give it to you? A—I can't recall.

Q—Was it this morning or this afternoon? A—It was this morning.

Q—How much did he give you? A—I don't know.

Q—He has given you drugs every day since Aug. 4th. A—Yes.

Q—Has Mr. Miller ever taken you to a doctor? A—Yes.

Q—When? A—He has taken me different times.

Q—On or about when? Was it shortly after you went out of jail? A—Yes.

Q—What doctor? A—Dr. Laframboise, Ottawa.

Q—Had he given you drugs before he took you to Dr. Laframboise? A—I don't know whether he did or not.

Q—Mr. Miller, I suppose, keeps you off your drugs for a few hours or a day or so before you go to try to make a purchase? A—He does not.

Q—Does he give them to you before you go in? A—He gives them to me when it is time for me to have them.

There were the following questions and answers in the examination by Mr. Gauthier of Constable Paul H. Miller:—

Question—You are a Detective Constable of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police?—Answer—Yes.

Q—Working for the Department of Health, under the Narcotic Drug Section? A—Yes.

Q—Since August 5th, I understand, you have been using the last witness Fraser, as an operator? A—I have.

Q—Will you tell us what happened on Oct. 5th, commencing from the time you prepared to leave Timmins? A—Previous to Oct. 5th, I was sent to Timmins to see this man and try to endeavour to get from him where he was making his purchase of drugs in this part of the country. When I arrived here I had a few conversations with him; the result was I telegraphed to Ottawa and stated that this man was an addict, and asked whether they wanted me to go ahead and use him. I received a reply to go ahead.

Q—Without going into all those details, what did you do after picking him up on August 5th?—Where did you take him? A—I had him various places between here and North Bay. I arrived in Ottawa on the 9th.

Q—What did you do there? A—I went down to the Health Dept., and saw Dr. Amyot, Deputy Minister of Health, and explained the circumstances to him. He instructed me to take this man before our Royal Canadian Mounted Police physician and have him put under his care, and arrangements made to have me act as his attendant, and to use him in an endeavour to clear up any places where narcotic drugs could be purchased in Northern Ontario.

Q—Dr. Laframboise examined this man? A—Yes.

Q—And since this time he has been under treatment by the doctor in your charge? A—Yes, I have been looking after him ever since.

Question by Magistrate Atkinson—You have been giving him drugs under their instructions? A—Yes. I have endeavoured to cut him down to where I could handle him.

Mr. Kester questioned Constable Miller:—

Q—How do you pay Fraser? A—There is no set way of paying him. When he left here on August 5th there was no arrangement or agreement made. The Department has a way. There is a schedule that runs so much per case, that does not count convictions; it depends on the importance of the case or what the case is like; if it is a trafficker, etc., there is no certain amount set for any one individual case. There is a schedule they run on.

Q—The more cases he gets the more money he makes out of it, and he gets his expenses besides? A—Yes, and the opportunity of going through a cure when he is through.

Q—He is going through the cure in your hands? A—If I get time enough I will get him well.

Q—Have you a license from the Minister of Health to hand drugs out to addicts? Mr. Gauthier—I object to that question. Magistrate Atkinson—I am instructing that if there is anything liable to incriminate him, he does not have to answer. You can ask him to see what he will say.

Q—Have you a license from the Minister of Health? I suppose it makes no difference. Will you answer that? A—I would not like to answer that question. It does not make any difference to me. I would not care to answer that. I will say that I was turned over to the doctor. I was to act as his nurse. I feel confident I can handle him.

Q—Where did you get your nursing experience?—I have had five years of this work.

Question by Magistrate Atkinson to Dr. Porter—You have had experience with drug addicts? Answer—Not a great deal in the line of treatment. I have had it (morphine) stolen from me.

Mr. Kester questioning Constable Miller recalled in rebuttal. Question—At what time would you give him shots, say November 13th? A—I arranged my shots about four times a day; one in the morning; one in the evening and before going to bed,—all depending on circumstances.

Q—You switched it this time? A—It was an even shot; he had one on our return home from Connaught.

Q—Then you gave it to him as a matter of course? A—I gave it to him as an attendant or nurse, under the instructions of the physician.

Q—The physician did not tell you to give it to him on that particular day. Are you reducing his dose? A—I will reduce it; at times I have to go accordingly. I have had him knocked out after coming out of a doctor's office.

Q—You will have to find out from them. I could not tell you.

Mr. Atkinson asked, "Could you tell me what justifies Dr. Laframboise to feed this man Fraser morphine four times a day? A—That is difficult for me to say. I say some medical men believe in slow and gradual diminishing it, and others more prompt. I haven't any idea why Dr. Laframboise is having this man treated periodically and reducing it. I suppose his belief is in the slow and gradual reduction of it.

Dr. P. C. Johns, of Toronto, another witness for the prosecution followed along the same lines as Dr. Elliott. He did not think, however, that a doctor should be condemned for his treatment, if he were entirely conscientious.

It is difficult to reach a conclusion in the matter with the prosecution's own witnesses and experts at such variance. Drs. Elliott and Johns all for taking all drugs away from the addicts at once, and Dr. Laframboise apparently of another school of thought. Still more confusing is the apparent idea that a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer may administer or supply drugs to an addict to use him as a special agent or operator, or whatever name may please one. But a doctor, believing a patient to be about to collapse evidently lays himself open to prosecution should he believe the administration of drugs necessary. If this is the attitude of the law, the public should know it. That is why The Advance has given such space and prominence to the matter. The Advance believes that very vital principles are at stake, and that if the matter is allowed to pass unnoticed not only the medical profession but the public in general will have serious cause for regret. The Advance is glad to hear that Mr. Jos. Bradette, M.P., for Cochrane Riding, intends to bring this matter to the attention of the House of Commons.

If you're going to ride in the good old boat, just grab a paddle and pull; don't stand around by your desk and mine, throwing a line of bull. You may not like the way things are run—don't holler it far and wide; if you can't help paddle the old canoe, then don't expect to ride. The captains may pull some bonehead plays. I've found they sometimes do, but it don't help them if you criticize—just make a suggestion or two.—Exchange.

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Dr. John Elliott, a witness for the prosecution, when examined by Mr. Kester, differed with the opinion expressed by local doctors that Dr. Day's treatment had been the proper one. He did not believe that it was necessary to wean an addict gradually from drugs. He said the new method was to put them in an institution and cut them off at once from the drug.

Q—A medical man sends him to that institution, and he is in the state I describe, in a state of collapse, what is the first thing they will do for him? A—You will have to find out from them. I could not tell you.

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BACHELORS' NIGHT FRIDAY AT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY

On Friday evening of this week (to-morrow) the regular meeting of the Caledonian Society in the Hollinger hall will be Bachelors' Night. A very attractive programme has been prepared, the event being under the management of the bachelors of the Society, who on previous occasions have shown how pleasant an evening they can provide.

MR. J. BRADETTE, M.P., BUSY IN INTERESTS OF RIDING

Mr. Joseph Bradette, M.P. for this riding, was in Timmins this week on business connected with his representation of the constituency in the House of Commons. Mr. Bradette appears to be taking his duties in earnest, and is evidently sincere in his efforts to do everything possible for all parts of his riding. Mr. Bradette has already taken up at Ottawa the question of a new post office for Timmins. He has also in mind the need for a dock at the Mattagami Landing. This does not mean that he is centering on material affairs for it is equally true that he has been urgent and active in seeking to protect the people in other ways. He has taken up the matter of the recent cases against medical men in the North Land for the alleged illegal supplying of narcotic drugs to an addict used as a "special agent." Mr. Bradette has entered strong protest against any attempt to use the method of inducing professional men to apparently break the law and then trying to brand them as law-breakers. Mr. Bradette has a very wide knowledge of this North Land from his long residence and his intimate connection with public affairs, and he naturally scoffs at the idea that there is any traffic in drugs in the smaller communities of the district. As he points out, such an idea is absurd. Why then, he asks, should attempt be made to fasten any such reputation on the district through the activities of any drug addicts as "special agents" here? It is a question that will be generally asked, and unless there is satisfactory reply it is one that Mr. Bradette will ask on the floor of the House.

In his efforts for the advantage of this constituency, or other matters, Mr. Bradette should receive the hearty support and co-operation of all, whether they supported him in the recent election or not. He is showing that he is the Member for this riding, working for the interests of the people and so should have the co-operation of all in any good work he may inaugurate.

NOTED CANADIAN WRITER AT COBALT THIS WEEK

Rev. Charles W. Gordon, a noted Canadian preacher, and with more than national fame as an author, writing under the pen name of "Ralph Connor," is at Cobalt this week conducting a mission in the United Church there, meetings being held each evening.

Coco: Have you read "To a Field Mouse."

Cola: No, how do you get them to listen?

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Monday, Jan. 24—Free and Easy Social for Members and Friends
Monday, Jan. 31—Grand Whist Drive
WATCH THIS SPACE FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Meeting
OF THE
HUMANE SOCIETY
FRIDAY, JANUARY 14th 1927
at 8 p.m.
In the Town Hall
Election of Officers, annual reports and other business.
Members are asked to turn in subscription books by this date.

TIMMINS
Skating Rink

HOCKEY
Mines League

Monday, January 17th
South Porcupine at Hollinger

Thursday, January 20
South Porcupine at McIntyre

Games Commence at 8.15 p.m. sharp

Admission 50c. Children 25c.