

TRANCES AND DEATH.

Why People Do Not Recover Consciousness in the Grave.

"There is no excuse for any one being buried alive," said Dr. W. A. Hammond. A *Herald* reporter had called on him in reference to the burial alive of Miss Stickney, of Minneapolis, who was taken out of a vault and found to be in a trance-state, and did not die until several weeks after her funeral.

"No," he continued, "there is no excuse for it. The tests of death have been brought down to such a nice point that any competent physician would have no difficulty in accurately determining whether or not death had taken place."

"Does decomposition always set in after death?"

"Invariably, provided the body is not frozen. Of course you can freeze it and keep it for years before it will decompose—just as fish are kept frozen for market. The salmon that you eat now were caught last spring and have been kept frozen ever since. They are just as good."

"Do you imagine that there is any foundation to the belief of many that people are sometimes buried alive?"

"O, I have no doubt of it. I have known of its being done, but it is not by any means of frequent occurrence—not nearly so frequent as many people imagine. The physician is entirely to blame when it does occur. The fact that bodies have been found turned over in the coffins leads people to believe that they were buried alive. But that's not so. It is probably the work of the gases coming from the body. Pent up in a coffin they become very powerful, and it is almost singular that they do not move bodies around more than they do."

"Then you don't take any stock in the stories of men who come to life under the ground, of their terrible struggles to get free, and their horrible death at last?"

"That's all bosh. Poe wrote of graveyards trembling with the struggles of the buried alive. That's all bosh, too. When people are buried alive, as they certainly have been, they never wake up to know it. When in a trance-state their vitality must be so weak that when they begin to regain consciousness and to attempt to breathe they die of suffocation immediately and never know that they came to life again. Buried for dead, they practically are dead."

"That's consoling, at any rate," said the reporter, who was beginning to feel a little "creepy" in the gloomy room, that in his distorted imagination began to seem like the interior of a tomb. The doctor did not look unlike Father Time as he waved his cimeter.

"This Miss Stickney was undoubtedly in a trance-state when she was buried," continued Dr. Hammond. "Were it not for the water around her heart she might have regained consciousness."

"Is it possible to freeze a human being up for any length of time and then restore consciousness?"

"No, not with a human being. It can be done with some of the lower order of animals. Frogs are the highest grade to which it can be carried successfully."

"Why can't it be done to men?"

"Because, no matter how warm or cold the atmosphere is, the temperature of a human being in good health is always 98° in life. Reduce that temperature to the freezing point and it would kill the person. Now, the temperature of a frog is always the same as the surrounding air. If the mercury goes up to 110° the frog's temperature goes up there too, without doing him any harm. In the same way it will go down to zero and the frog will not mind it. I have frozen a frog solid in a block of ice, and after some time thawed him out, and he would jump all around the room. A frog is very hard to kill. You can take his heart out and he will still live. Cut his head off, tickle him on one side with a straw, and he will draw up the leg on that side and push the straw away."

"Is that purely mechanical action?"

"No; it's because a frog's brains are not all in his head; some of them are in the spinal column, and it is the latter that directs his legs. For that matter, I believe, the brains of a human being are not all in the head, either. A girl plays a piano and carries on a conversation at the same time. The brains in her spine govern the action of her hands, and the brains in her head allow her to talk."

"Is it possible for men to go into trances that could be mistaken for death?"

"Yes; it is quite certain that an apparent cessation of all the vital functions may take place without the entire loss of vitality, which would leave the organism in the condition of a dead body to be speedily disintegrated by the operation of chemical or physical agencies. The state of syncope is at times so complete that the heart's action cannot be perceived, nor any respiratory movements be observed, all power of movement being for the time abolished, and yet recovery has spon-

...tasy taken place, which could scarcely be the case if all vital action had been suspended. The best authenticated case of this kind is that of Col. Townsend that occurred in the early part of this century and of which the world has about lost sight.

"It is described by Dr. George Cheyne, who was an eye witness. He says the Colonel possessed the remarkable faculty of throwing himself in a trance at pleasure. The heart ceased apparently to throb at his bidding, respiration seemed at an end. His whole frame assumed the icy chill and rigidity of death, while his features became colorless and ghastly, and his eyes fixed and glazed. Even his mind ceased to manifest itself, for during the trance it was willingly as devoid of consciousness as his body of animation. A polished mirror held before his mouth was not in the least dimmed. The physicians were about leaving him for dead when there were signs of returning animation. He came back slowly to perfect life again after being in the trance-state for half an hour.

"Among the Indian fakirs this simulating of death is by no means of rare occurrence. There was one case reported by the English officers in which a fakir was buried in an underground cell for six weeks, and a strict guard kept meanwhile. Twice during the interment the body was dug up and had been found in the same position as when first buried. After six weeks the fakir was brought back to consciousness."—*New York Herald.*

Thieving for Fun.

Col. Thomas P. Ochiltree and Marquis de Mores woke up Wednesday morning to discover that their diamond scarf pins were missing. Col. Ochiltree was particularly grieved over his loss, it is said, not only on account of the value of the pin, but because it was presented to him by the prince of Wales during his visit to England a few years ago. He vowed that if he discovered the thief he would dispose of him in true Texas style.

Shortly after this he met Marquis de Mores and was informed of that gentleman's loss. As they had made the discovery about the same time, and remembering they had dined together with a party of friends upon the previous night, they concluded the theft in each case had been accomplished about the same time and by the same person. They started out to work jointly in hope of recovering their missing brilliants. A thorough search in the various pawnshops proved fruitless, and they were about to resign themselves to their misfortune.

"I will discover the rascal who took my pin before I die," said Col. Ochiltree. "I will lay for him as long as I live. I am certain the fellow has started out with the deliberate intention of trying to ruin me. Only the other day I had my handsome gold-headed cane stolen, only to be followed the next day by the theft of my brand-new silk umbrella. I am convinced that the same person has been guilty of all these offenses. I vowed the other day, when I was robbed for the second time, that there was not a man in the country smart enough to rob me again. Now, just to think, the fellow has had the audacity to come and take my pin. If I only had him in Texas for a few minutes."

The next time that Col. Ochiltree and the Marquis de Mores were seen together was yesterday afternoon, in the Hoffman house, each radiant with smiles, and beautiful diamond pins illuminated their respective scarfs. When each of these distinguished gentlemen arose yesterday morning there was a small package on his dressing-case, and upon opening it he found his missing jewel.

Later in the day they discovered that a few genial souls had wagered a bottle of wine regarding the successful theft of the pins. This was suggested on account of Col. Ochiltree's repeatedly asserted caution against thieves. One of the gentlemen succeeded in securing the pins.—*New York Herald.*

A Dog Teaching Industry.

Flash, the finely bred setter owned by Dr. C. A. Packard of Bath, has a favorite house in the city which he often visits. The other day he was there at the dinner hour, and, civil dog that he is, he waited till the family rose from the table, when he made his presence known and was at once admitted as a welcome guest. One of the family, a lady, is very fond of Flash, and he reciprocates the kindness shown him. The lady is a great knitter, and as Flash entered the hallway he passed to a room, secured the lady's knitting work, and brought it to her. Finding that the ball of yarn was not with it he at once returned and secured that also and then laid himself at the lady's feet while she went on with her work.—*Brunswick (Me.) Telegraph.*

An Obliging Husband.

Lady Arden complained of a toothache. All the remedies used on such occasions were applied, but still she found no relief. At length she decided on sending to Edinburgh, a distance of fifty miles from Clydesdale Castle, for a dentist to extract the suffering tooth, and when he arrived she declared that her nerves were unequal to submitting to an operation unless she saw it performed on someone else first. The few friends admitted to the sanctuary of her boudoir looked aghast at this declaration, each expecting to be called on, but after a silence of a few minutes and no one offering she told Lord Arden

that he must have a tooth out, that she might judge of his manner of supporting the operation if she could go through it. He appeared amazingly disconcerted, made a wry face, and expostulated; but the lady insisted. The obedient husband submitted, and a fine sound tooth was extracted from his jaw, after which she declared that she had seen enough to convince her that she could not undergo a similar operation.—*Manchester Guardian.*

A Novel Proposal.

The civil-service commission gets a great many very strange letters, but, perhaps, the prize letter so far came from a western lady, writes a *Baltimore American* correspondent. She wrote to say that she wanted a position. "You will see by my letter," she wrote, "that I do not need an examination." Then she went on to say that the letter would show that she was fully competent to fill the place she wanted. She wanted a place with a salary not less than \$2,000 or \$2,500, "and you will see that I will be worth \$5,000 when you finish this epistle," she added. The position she wanted was "elocutionist to congress." She stated that she had some reputation as a teacher of elocution, and referred to a number of prominent men and one senator. Her plan was to take new congressmen for so many hours a week and them to rehearse their speeches to her, and she was to correct the grammar, revise the diction, and bring forth strongly points they wished to make. Then they were to "elocute to her." After a few days of training she would guarantee they could go into the halls of congress and speak amid "long, loud, and continuous applause." She would annually save her salary, she thought, because she would lessen the time given to debate and cut off superfluous speakers. Only the advanced scholars in the national school of elocution would be able to talk for any length of time. But she guaranteed that in less than one year she would have every congressman and senator "a perfect orator." Besides, she thought, when she graduated a speaker he would be worth listening to, and the visitors in the gallery would then be repaid for sitting and listening to her pupils on the floor. One member, not very far away from Baltimore, will, no doubt, endorse the lady and apply at once for a place in her class, if she gets the appointment. The civil-service commission, however, has no such place to fill, and it will devolve upon congress to decide whether she shall start her class or not.

Wade Hampton's Belief in Prayer.

The love and admiration in which he is held by the people of South Carolina are illustrated in an incident related by Gen. Hampton when he was recovering from his sickness.

"I am certain," he said, "that my life was saved by the fervent prayers of the people of South Carolina. I was at the point of death and had lost all interest in life when I received a letter from an old Methodist minister, a friend, telling me of the deep and devout petitions put up for my restoration to health by the Methodist conference then in session at Newberry. The letter closed by begging me to exercise my will to live in response to the supplications of the people of the whole State, who were praying for me night and day in every household. When I heard the letter read I promised my sister that I would heed the kind, loving words of the man of God, and arouse my will to live. That night I fell into a deep sleep and dreamed most vividly that I was in a spacious room, in which I was moved to all parts of the State, so that I met my assembled friends everywhere. I remember most distinctly of all old Beaufort, where I had last been. I saw immense assemblages, and as I looked down upon them a grave personage approached me and touched me on the shoulder and said to me: 'These people are praying for you. Live! Live! Live!' I never realized anything like it before. It seemed a vision. I woke the next morning feeling the life-blood creeping through my veins, and I told my family that the crisis was passed, and that I should get better."—*Z. L. White in the American Magazine.*

Danger From House Plants.

Dr. Saulsbury found malarial fever to be propagated among persons sleeping in a room in the windows of which had been placed a box of earth from malarious soil. House plants cultivated in pots filled with malarious earth are a constant danger. The germs grow luxuriantly in the moisture and warm air of closed rooms. Dr. Eichwald, professor of clinical medicine in the University of St. Petersburg, has given to the public facts concerning a patient of his, a lady, with malarial fever, who was easily cured by treatment when confined to her chamber, but who quickly relapsed on remaining during the day in her parlor. The easy cure and constant relapse went on for a long time. At last the doctor, having become suspicious of the flower-pots, removed them from the house, and there was no further recurrence of the disease.

Mrs. Amanda Sykes, of Edmont, Georgia, has a goose which for the past four years has begun to lay for the season on the day that corn-planting was commenced on the place. No matter whether the day was in February or in March, the goose began laying each year on the very day that they commenced planting corn.

A YOUNG PATRIOT.

An Adventurous Climb to Nail Fast the Flag.

"You have set the fashion of telling home war stories," writes a correspondent of the *Listener* "and I have one to offer you that I am quite sure has never been in print before. Its scene was a village in the town of Sandwich, where they happened to have a considerable number of Copperheads. The mass of the people there were intensely loyal, perhaps all the more so on account of the presence of these opponents of the war, and the Copperheads had frequent occasion to make certain outward signs of loyalty, even if they did not feel the sentiment inwardly.

"Hang out your flag to-night," a man would say to another as he passed by a shop door.

"I don't see any reason why I should hang out my flag," the man in the shop would say.

"Hang out your flag to-night, just the same," the other would say again.

"But I ain't got any flag, anyway."

"Hang out your flag to-night!" the word came again; and the man who had served the notice passed on quietly.

"Nine times out of ten the flag would be hung out.

"Every town had a liberty pole then, upon which the Union flag was kept flying, often day and night. The liberty pole at Sandwich was very lofty, and was in two pieces, with small cleats or foot-pieces nailed on so that it might be climbed in case of need. At the top of the lower section of the pole, where it joined the topmast, there was a cross-tree. The rope which ran up the flag and held it in its place was made fast at the cross-tree.

"One morning, when the people of Sandwich got up, they found the flag that had been flying proudly at the top of the liberty pole lying in the dust of the street. It had been pulled down by some Copperhead in the night and basely dishonored. It was dusted and ran up to the top again amid cheers.

"There it flew all day, but next morning it was again found in the dust, while a shameful object, no less revolting than the figure of a dead cat, hung head downward, had taken its place at the top of the pole.

"Then a young man of the village, a mere stripling, came running up as the crowd gathered in horror and indignation, with a hatchet in his hand, and picked up the flag from the ground. He climbed the pole with the flag wrapped around his shoulders. Up he went, rested a moment at the cross-tree where everybody expected to see him try to run down the object at the top and run up the flag. But in an instant he started up again, climbing the swaying topmast until he reached the very top.

"Here he lost no time in cutting loose with a blow the object which hung there, and it came crashing down. Next he cut the rope itself, and the people wondered what he was doing. They saw presently, for in a minute he had the inner edge of the flag against the pole, and with nails that he took from his pocket he was nailing the flag to the mast with the back of his hatchet. When that work was thoroughly done and the flag flapped again in the breeze, amid the cheers of the people below the boy began to descend. And then it was plain that he had a new use for his hatchet, for as he came down he knocked off cleat by cleat the little pieces upon which his own feet had climbed the pole. One after another they fell off, and the blows of the hatchet left the pole as smooth and clean as before these pieces had been tacked on. Again he rested at the cross-tree, and again began descending, knocking off every piece as fast as he left it, and when he jumped upon the ground not only was the Union flag flying proudly at the top of the pole, but its removal had been put beyond human ingenuity and agility.

"The flag hung there amid the storms until, long afterward, it had beaten itself into shreds. And the people of Sandwich were prouder of the tattered flag than they would have been of any new one that could have been raised, for it told to them a story of patriotism and bravery.

"It is not much wonder that the youth who nailed this flag to the mast became a trusted and active citizen in the western State to which he afterward removed, and was named not long ago for one of the highest official honors of that State. His modesty regarding the incident is very great, however, and it has almost faded out of sight."—*Boston Transcript.*

A Lake of Soda Water.

Mono Lake is another sheet of water that is full of soda, borax, and other minerals in solution. The waters of both Owens and Mono Lakes are a natural detergent. The dirtiest and grasiest of clothing is made clean in half a minute by simply rinsing the article in the lake. It lathers naturally when agitated. When there is a high wind a wall of suds three or four feet high is seen along that shore upon which the waves beat. This quivering wall—in which are seen all the colors of the rainbow and as many beauties as are shown by the kaleidoscope—would grow to a height of ten or twelve feet before toppling over, but when it attains a certain height the wind catches it up and wafts great balls of it far inland. Some of these floating balloons of lather are as big as a flour barrel. As the prevailing winds are from the west, all the vegetation on the eastern shore of the lake is killed for a distance of many rods. When there are unusually high winds the balls of suds are blown so far inland as to reach

clumps of willows and other bushes, the leaves of which are then seen to be scorched as though by fire. The water, just as it comes from the lakes, would make an excellent shampoo for the use of barbers; and the solid matter resulting from evaporation would make a fine washing powder for laundry use.—*Virginia (Nevada) Enterprise.*

Fossil Remains.

The immediate vicinity of Templeton is rich in fossil treasures, and the laborious researches of some of our citizens into the habitat of prehistoric saurians and mammals deserves recognition and honorary membership at the hands of the Academy of Sciences. On several occasions *The Times* has recorded the unearthing of fossil bones of antediluvian monsters, but the largest exhibit in this line was accomplished a few days ago by A. Crum and J. W. Cook, who brought in a large wagon-load of monstrous petrified ribs, vertebrae, shoulder-blades, and other portions of the anatomy of mammoth creatures who inhabited this country when the slowly receding ocean left it one vast watery marsh. This large collection is now exposed to public view on the south piazza of the Templeton hotel. There is no region in the State richer in fossil remains than this section, which is now from 700 to 1,000 feet above the sea level, and gentlemen who combine the possession of leisure with a taste for geological research would find the country hereabouts interesting for exploration.

One of the peculiarities of the country, from a geological point, is the distribution of fossils in belts. Immediately around Templeton it appears to have been the home of mammoth saurians and mammals. Ten miles distant, on the Santa Margarita ranch, owned by Gen. P. W. Murphy, there is an extensive and remarkable deposit of petrified oysters, on a ridge which is at least one thousand feet above the present sea level. The deposit is probably a mile in length by half a mile in width and of unknown depth. One of the specimens now in this office is nearly a foot in length by six inches in width, a perfect oyster thousands of years old. There are many larger specimens to be obtained, this one having been taken out of a wagon rut in the country road where it crosses the oyster ridge.

In another locality, about ten miles distant, on Santa Rosa creek, near Cambria, H. S. Messenheimer, while digging a well, found a perfect flint arrow-head at a depth of seventeen feet, and for thirty-five feet the excavation penetrated a deposit of fine, small shells, an immense mound of which still exists near where the well was dug. Northwest of Templeton, near the residences of Mr. Messenheimer and Mr. Carr, both old residents in this part of the country, there is a large rock, the exposed portion of which will weigh seven hundred or eight hundred pounds, and imbedded in it is plainly discernible the upper part of an immense fossil skull, in one portion of which is a tusk about seven inches in length.—*Templeton (Cal.) Times.*

Self-Sacrifice in Fiction and Fact.

The girls in one of the junior classes of the Normal College were requested a few weeks ago to name the female character in any novel or drama they had read which left the strongest impression on their minds. Two of the responses ought to be carefully considered by all who are opposed to what are sometimes termed "light and frivolous reading." One girl, apparently 18 years old, said: "I prefer the character of Romola to any other that I have read." When asked to give her reasons she replied: "Because she was so good, so noble, so self-sacrificing." The other girl, perhaps a year younger, said she liked the character of Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*, because she was so pure, so liberal, and so self-sacrificing." Both used the word self-sacrificing; and, as self-sacrificing is the popular heroism of noble women, it is easy to perceive that these girls had in their own hearts a good deal of that very feeling which they so admired in others.—*New York Epoch.*

The Old Man Has Nothing to Say.

I hear of a husband and father who sought amusement in a public beer garden. He sat sipping his beverage steadily enough, until a pretty girl came within close range, and then, forgetting his dignity, he invited her to drink with him. She consented. Roguery in her eyes flashed into the foaming cup as she lifted it and said: "Well, here's to the health of Bessie and Charlie!" Those were the names of his children. He gave one hard look at the girl, and recognized in her the nursemaid of his household. The beer didn't choke him quite to death, but almost. And he doesn't dare to say boo at home about the manner in which his wife's favorite servant spends her evenings out.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

The Rev. Robert Collyer of New York, at a meeting of the Baptist Social Union, used the following language, which by many clergymen will be considered rank heresy: "The newspapers of the day are more widely and faithfully read than the Bible, and they are doing a noble work in grappling with corruption. If you will promise me not to tell any one, I will tell you that I read my newspaper Sunday. After I eat my breakfast Sunday morning, I read my newspaper, and then look over my sermon to see if I can improve it."