

ODDS AND ENDS.

ALIVE IN THE GRAVE.

THE CHANCES FOR SUCH A FATE ARE EXTREMELY REMOTE.

In Times of Plagues and Pestilence the Greatest Danger of Premature Burial Exists—The Death Rest That Is Applied In Vienna.

Most of us have a lingering love of life, and the thought that there is just the barest possibility of being buried alive sends a shudder through us.

Medical men know that the human body in time of illness and at other times, is little to assume all the outward appearance of death without the final separation having actually taken place. There are the comas, cataleptic and other forms of the unconscious state, each one bringing in its train the very situation of death itself.

"Happily, a medical man nowadays," said a physician to a reporter, "experiences no difficulty in declaring his patient to be dead, as a general rule, but it may perhaps happen once in his lifetime that he may have a doubt, in which case he will employ either way follows upon his findings, which are simple and conclusive, and in which he cannot be mistaken.

"It is unfortunately true that there are thousands of nervous people now walking about in fear of being buried alive, this morbid conviction coming about through reading of an isolated case happening here and there, where perhaps some one has had a narrow escape of being entombed to a living burial.

"These 'escapes' greatly outnumber those of the actual occurrence itself. The cataleptic usually shows signs of life just in the nick of time to disappoint the undertakers and to relieve sorrowing friends.

"Of course, much of the evidence on which the allegation of premature burial is based depends on the fact that bodies on examination have been occasionally found distorted, thereby fostering the notion that this or that occupant of the coffin has died from suffocation, a theory which is supported by the favorable condition of other exhumed bodies.

"But the idea is altogether wrong, in fact and in principle. It is well known among those who have made it a study that the apparent distortions, instead of depending upon natural causes brought about by decomposition, the influence of which is sufficiently strong enough to bulge out, and even burst, leaden coffins. This phenomenon does not happen in every case, but it does in a great many.

"No, no! I shall not go so far as to say that a premature burial has never taken place, but it has not occurred so often as is thought. I dare say it may occur in times of plagues and pestilence, where the presumed dead are buried within a few hours of death. That is where much mischief lies. But when panic prevails where does thought come in?

"In plagues, such as cholera, the state of collapse is so profound that it may perfectly simulate death itself, but the custom of burying the dead on the day of death is fortunately on the wane, even during advanced epidemics. It is probable that in the absence of medical aid in panic times in country places abroad it has led to living burial—in fact it must have done. But the last end of all under such conditions is merciful, for it must not be forgotten that if you are 'unconscious' only while being hurriedly sealed in your coffin you will never again experience voluntary motion or sensation.

"However, where the doctor can be consulted, living burial is impossible even in a cholera panic, for there are certain bodily movements which generally occur after death from cholera, in the absence of which a medical man would hesitate to certify for burial.

"In ages gone by and in uncivilized countries still it is possible that morose, gloomy, and pessimistic tendencies to apparent death, may have been and perhaps still are occasionally buried alive. But I do not believe that in our own country or in any civilized land such events are possible.

"In Vienna the custom prevails of taking a body to the mortuary on the eve of burial, where it is 'tested.' Thinkable are placed on the fingers of the dead, to which are attached wires connected with the mortuary bells.

"Have the bells ever rung? Yes, once. 'It is impossible for a doctor to mistake unconsciousness in its varied forms for death.

"Some time ago it was suggested that a law should be passed making it compulsory for a medical man to test bodies before giving a certificate of death. Testing by electricity was thought of, but it is an open question yet whether electricity kills or only stupefies. At all events, we in this country are not convinced that such a test would be satisfactory or afford sufficient evidence of death, although it has its value. On the other hand, I don't think legislation of this kind is necessary. It would certainly reflect upon the medical profession.

COCKATOOS.

The cockatoos, constitute a branch of the great parrot family, and, with the exception of the species which inhabits the Philippine islands, are peculiar to the Australasian region.

Leadbeater's cockatoo is one of the most beautiful of the group, his white plumage being tinged with rose color. W. T. Greene, the great authority on cockatoos, describes it aptly as "raspberry and cream" color—but as his mental endowments are by no means equal to his personal attractions he is less popular as a pet than species with more intelligence than good looks. One point in his favor must be mentioned—he is a less determined screamer than the majority of cockatoos. This, however, is not saying much. In his native woods of South Australia Leadbeater's cockatoo is very shy and difficult to approach. The birds sent to Europe, no doubt taken at nestings in the majority of instances, remain usually wild and suspicious, though they bear confinement well and do not suffer from the cold.

At home in Australia the cockatoo is not beloved of the farmer, and it can be well imagined that a flock of these big birds, amounting often to thousands, commit fearful havoc upon the crops. Hence it is shot down as remorselessly as the sparrow in England when it grows too numerous to be acceptable to the agriculturist. Like the rest of the genus, this cockatoo usually makes its nest in a hollow tree, where the hen lays two pure white eggs.—St. Louis Republic.

Male Felinity.

"Talking about the humanity of man and the felinity of woman," said the independent woman, "let me tell you a little story of a man and a cat. The story was told to me by the wife of the man, who is a domesticated woman. It seems that the family cat, besides being of a sportive disposition, had more ingenuity than most cats or understood better how to relieve the tedium of a domestic existence. This cat caught a mouse. Being well fed, her sporting instinct came into play, and she kept the mouse to amuse herself with. That is a feline custom, as you are aware, but where this cat showed superior mentality was in hitting upon a place to hide the mouse, thus protruding the amusement. She kept it in an old shoe in a storeroom. The man of the house discovered the proceeding, and was almost as much amused as the cat. Did he put a stop to it? No, indeed. For several days he fed both the cat and the mouse, after which the cat would take the mouse out for its daily exercise, to the delight of both conspirators. Then the man's wife found them out. She took the mouse away and let it go.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Sport as a Developer of Character.

"Every now and then there crops out in this republic the notion that if our more cultured citizens were our rulers that we should be much better off. We very much doubt it. If our more manly citizens could rule us, then no doubt we should be better off. But there is a freakiness and finality, an inability to give and take, a general rubbing and creaking of machinery among men developed only on the one side of the mind, which always everywhere makes them objectionable as rulers. Boxing is just as likely to make a man meek as looks, but if you have a bully to deal with neither the boxing nor the looks will avail anything, and he becomes a most manly objectionable as an editor than as a prosaist. Of course sport will fail, just as every other agency will fail with certain men. On the other hand, for the great majority of men, well conducted sport will teach them fortitude, gentleness, meekness and fair play as no other agency yet invented by man can do.—Outing.

A Funny Mistake.

A servant lass at an inn once made a funny mistake. Opening the door of one of the rooms, she saw as she thought, the handle of a warming pan sticking out near the foot of the bed. "Bless me," she said, "that stupid Martha has left the warming pan in the bed! She might have set the place on fire." Taking hold of the handle, she gave it a violent jerk, when up jumped an awakened traveler, shouting hoarsely: "Hello, there! Leave my wooden leg alone, will you!"—London Fun.

Gravestone Emblems.

In a cemetery in a neighboring state lies buried a family of the name of Ross. Upon each headstone is cut this flower, broken at the stem, while upon the babe's tomb is engraved a bud. Curious as this is in itself, however, it is emphasized by the neighboring plot, where lies a family of the name of Fish, who have followed the example of the Rosses by having a small specimen of the finny tribe cut upon each of their gravestones.—New York Sun.

Easy Enough to Tell.

Briggs—And so you consider McKicker a clever delineator of characters? Griggs—Yes.

Briggs—And can you readily distinguish his German dialect from his Irish brogue? Griggs—Oh, dear, yes. The program tells him he is going to imitate German-English and when he is going to give us a little Irish brogue.—Boston Transcript.

The following is a remedy for dily skin: Liquid refined honey, one ounce; alcohol, two ounces; chamber emulsion, one ounce; elder flower water, four ounces; strained juice of two lemons. The mixture should be used night and morning and applied with a soft rag or sponge.

A GOOD SALE.

How a Horse Was Disposed of by Measurement.

Two or three newspaper men and a congressman in Washington, who was a merchant in private life, were talking over some of the peculiarities of business methods.

"I remember on one occasion," said the congressman, "having in stock a big lot of dry goods remnants that seemed to stick right by me in spite of all I could do to get rid of them. At last I advertised to sell them at so much a pound, and the curiosity of people to see if they couldn't get more at pound rates for their money than they could get at yard rates soon cleaned out the stock. At another time I sold a lot of side meat at so much the square foot, taking the run of the side, and the customers who got bargains in the thick of the meat encouraged others who had the luck to get theirs out of the tin, so I ended up very nicely."

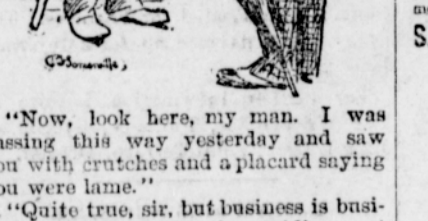
"That reminds me," remarked one of the correspondents, "of a horse I sold once at so much a foot."

"How was that?" inquired the congressman, somewhat puzzled. "How did you make your measurements? How did you get your measurements? I can understand how you might sell him at so much a hand and come out pretty well on it if he was a big fellow 16 or 17 hands high, but I don't see how you got at him by the foot."

"That was easy enough. I simply sold him at so much a foot—\$37.50."

"How much did you get for him?"

"A hundred and fifty dollars."



Business Enterprise.

"Now, look here, my man. I was passing this way yesterday and saw you with crutches and a placard saying you were lame."

"Quite true, sir, but business is business, and you know the public must have variety."—Judge.

Professional Envy.

A Georgia author, after reading that Kipling's illness had caused such renewed interest in his books as to strip the libraries and bookstores of the said, "Well, I've been laid up six months with inflammatory rheumatism, and if they sold one copy of my works I don't know it."—Atlanta Constitution.

Diplomats.

Mother—I gave each of you boys an orange. Charlie, you said you wouldn't eat yours until after dinner, and you, Jack, had the same. Have you deceived me?

Charlie—No, mother, we didn't eat our own oranges. I ate Jack's and he ate mine.—Sydney Town and Country Journal.

Fitting Name, Anyway.

"That's a nice horse you've got."

"Yes, I think he's about right."

"What do you call him?"

"Nella."

"Queer name, to be sure. What do you call him that for?"

"Because my wife can't drive him."

—Richmond Dispatch.

A Good Name.

"It strikes me that Daily Rumor is a rather peculiar, but for your new publication, Scribner, and doesn't tend to undue confidence."

"Yes, but just remember, my boy, how quickly a rumor gains circulation."—Philadelphia Record.

Poor Tommy!

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