



NOT BURIED ALIVE.

For some years past I have taken great pains to ascertain the truth in regard to the published statements of persons being buried alive, under the supposition that they were dead. In every instance the story has proved to be false.

Yet there is not a year without the horrible narrative of somebody somewhere being consigned to the tomb, and, for some cause or other, the grave or vault being opened, the discovery was made that the buried individual had "come to," and had perished miserably in frantic efforts to obtain deliverance. It has been my habit, on seeing in the newspapers one of these statements, to send a letter of enquiry to the minister or some other resident of the region, requesting the precise facts in the case. Invariably the story proves to be a fabrication, or a growth out of something that had nothing terrible in it. One person heard somebody say that she had heard of a man who told another that he believed that a man had been buried before he was dead. And then it gets into the papers, and into the traditions of the neighborhood, and then into the books, and so it becomes a part of the grave-yard literature of the world.

The latest instance to which I have attended, is that of Dr. Green, of Hoosic Falls, N. Y. Some few years ago he lay two or three days in a trance. A few weeks ago he died. At the proper time he was laid in a vault. When it came to be talked about that he was once in a trance state, there was some anxiety as to his condition, and the vault was visited, only to find the most obvious evidence—the same that Lazarus gave—that he had been dead all the time he lay there. But this was enough to start the story, and the telegraph, not from Hoosic, N. Y., but from Bennington, Vt., sent the startling intelligence that signs of life were discovered, the body was taken home, and the result was awaited with intense anxiety. I wrote to a friend in Hoosic and learned the facts, which are without any romance or sensation. The doctor died and was buried. That is all.

Now, I do not deny that such dreadful accidents as premature burials may and do happen. There are on record some instances of which there is no reason to doubt the truth. But even this is admitted with a mental reservation, for the books insist that no authentic cases are on record. The mother of the Scotch preacher, the Erskines, is traditionally held to have been placed in a vault when she was supposed to be dead. A ring on her finger tempted the sexton to undertake its abstraction, but when he used his knife she started from a trance, he left somewhat hastily, she followed him and went home, to the great surprise of her husband. This is the tradition, but if it were traced to its source, it would be found as unfounded as all the rest. No better proof of the unreliability of these stories than the results of the system adopted in Germany, of placing the dead in houses prepared for their reception where they are watched professionally until decay makes it oblivious that life is extinct. At Mentz, a surgeon was forty-five years attended to one of those hypotheses, and, although—as rare for the house to be without an instance, in all that time there was not an instance of a person being restored. When I was at Halle, and at the grave of Gosenicus, I asked the sexton to show me the arrangements to prevent premature burials. He was an old man, and stones are often old men, he led me to a house near the gate of the cemetery, in one of its two rooms was a bed, on which the body of the one supposed to be dead is placed, it is covered up, as in sickness, and the air carefully kept in a state favorable to health. On each finger is placed a thimble and from each one extends a thread, passing through the wall to a bell so delicately hung, that the least pulsation or movement of a finger would set the bell ringing, to the alarm of the attendant, who instantly flies to the reviving chair.

And now many times, in your long service, have you rescued your customers from an untimely grave?

Not once," he answered. "I have never had a case of recovery, nor of one who has shown any signs of life."

Have you heard of any cases in other places?

"It is said that one was saved in Erfurt, but it is only a report, may be true or may be not."

This is the testimony that comes uniformly from all the books and all the countries where the subject receives careful attention. While it goes to show that instances of premature burial are exceedingly rare, it does not show that such cases are impossible. In times of

prevailing epidemic, when bodies are carried off by authority as rapidly as possible, to retard the progress of pestilence, it would not be strange if mistakes were made. Asiatic cholera sometimes brings the victim to a state of apparent death, from which he may recover, under careful and persevering treatment. But in the common course of human experience, the approach and advent of death are so clearly defined, and certainly is so easily had, that premature burial can be possible only from great carelessness or indiscreet haste. The ordinary tests of the breathing may fail, but the action of the heart can be detected by the ear, even when the most delicate hand fails to discover it by the sense of feeling. In new-born infants, it is difficult to detect the motion for some minutes together, but in the case of others, the interval between pulsations of the heart does not exceed six or eight seconds. And if this examination is made twenty-four hours after death is supposed to have taken place, the fact is made certain one way or the other. There are other tests which may be readily applied, but they are not needed in the case of persons dying under ordinary circumstances. The customs of civilization, the dictates of natural affection, and the most rational judgment require such an interval of time between death and burial, as to make the case palpable to the senses, so that no possible doubt can exist. It is not likely that one case of doubt occurs in each million of persons buried, and the one case of doubt would prove to be a certain death in nine cases out of ten. From all which I infer that the nervous apprehension some people have that they will be buried alive, is just as unreasonable as it would be for a man to expect to be taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Such an event has occurred, and it is not impossible that it may again. But it is not probable.—*Ireneus, in N. Y. Observer.*

PROTECTING IRON FROM RUST.

Professor Barff, of London, explained his important discovery for protecting iron from rust, before a scientific audience, at the Civil Service Institute, on Monday, and he illustrated its application, especially to iron ships. Professor Barff's discovery is pronounced by competent persons to be of the utmost value to the iron industry of this country. In explaining the happy accident which enabled him to do what chymists had so long found impossible, the Professor said.—"Several chymists have told me their experiments 10 or 12 years ago with a view to convert the surface of metallic iron into the black oxide so as to prevent corrosion, and they all failed at one particular part of the process, for they could not get a hard and coherent surface of oxide. My early experiments were made in an iron tube, 10 inches long by 2 inches diameter, the two ends being closed with iron clips, and into it an iron pipe was fastened, one for the passage of steam, and the other for the outlet of hydrogen. Into this small chamber pieces of iron were put, and the chamber itself, in an ordinary furnace, and heated to a red heat, generated steam being passed into it. The iron was coated with black oxide, and hydrogen gas escaped from the exit tubes. The black oxide could sometimes be dusted off, at other times it seemed coherent, but on exposure to the air it was thrown off in powder or flakes. On one occasion when taking a piece of iron out of the chamber, I noticed a brownish red taint on it, and at once concluded that some of the red oxide of iron was produced on the surface and mixed with the black oxide. The idea struck me that the presence of moisture in steam formed the red oxide, which was afterwards reduced to metallic iron by the hydrogen, and that the reduced iron was converted by steam into black oxide. Experiments confirmed this surmise. I had a coil of iron pipe made, and attached to the iron chamber between it and the ingross tube, and so constructed that it could be put into the chamber with the furnace. The steam therefore passed slowly through the heated coil of iron pipe before coming in contact with the iron to be acted upon, and nearly the first experiment showed me that a hard coherent coating adhering to the iron could be produced. The two conditions necessary to success are the exclusion of atmospheric air and the perfect dryness of the steam. Under these conditions the literal spreading of rust already present is prevented by this system of oxidation, and under the coating of black oxide rust cannot be formed." The lecturer then showed a piece of boiler plate which had passed through his furnace and had been for some time immersed in water. It was perfectly free from rust, and the black coating of oxide firmly adhered to its surface. From this it was concluded that an oxide boiler plate with holes drilled through and mixed with oxidized zinc could not lose any of the coating, although the coating of the heads of the rivets might be interfered with. Thus the plates can be regarded "irrustible," and it would take a very long time for iron-rust to eat vertically into the head of a rivet. Various

pieces of black oxide, which had been placed in salt or taken from the sea-water, were then exhibited and shown to be perfectly free from rust, demonstrating that sea-water does not decompose it. Helmets, swords, scabbards, and all bright iron and steel work in use among soldiers might be subjected to this process with great advantage, for it would not, in the opinion of the lecturer, interfere with the strength or tenacity of the metal, and it certainly hardens the surface. The lecturer added that he was conducting a series of experiments on some boiler tubes, which had been subjected to the action of water at very high temperatures, but he was unable to give the result, as the experiments were not yet completed.—*English Paper.*

BLUE GLASS.—But how are we to explain the marvellous cures that have appeared to be effected by the blue-glass treatment? We are inclined to think that the sunshine which did not come through the blue glass was the curative agent, rather than that which traversed the colored panes. We believe in the beneficial influence of sunshine, the pure natural article, and not merely the residual rays that got through the Pleasanton strainer. We do not doubt the honesty of the General, nor that he really believes he is improving on the divine gift of sunlight, by his blue-glass filter; but even if it were a deliberate deception, we could forgive him for it, so long as he requires only one blue pane to seven colorless ones. Anything that will induce people to let the sunlight into their houses is to be welcomed, if there be a spice of quackery in it. The mischief done by blinds and shades is great and we can be grateful for any harmless delusion that helps to get rid of these perverted contrivances for shutting out the sunshine. We have no doubt that many who are now taking their daily sun-bath, innocently tempered by the cerulean admixture of Gen Pleasanton are receiving more of the direct sunlight in a day than they have been in the habit of getting in a week or month before, and we must be pardoned if, not looking at the subject through blue glasses, we ascribe the benefit they derive from the bath to that single fact.—*Boston Journal of Chemistry.*

It is related that on the occasion of a dinner given by Dr. Schliemann to some of his intimate friends in Athens, Greece, he exhibited an oil-painting of the remains of Agamemnon—as he had no doubt about the identity of the skeleton—recently exhumed by him at Mycenae. The painting is well executed, and the guests counted his teeth, measured his proportions, and concluded that Agamemnon was physically well-proportioned. The skeleton itself is carefully guarded at Mycenae, as it can not be removed by ordinary means without destroying it.

There is a very simple way of avoiding the disagreeable smoke and gas which always pours into the room when a fire is lit in a stove, heater, or fireplace, on a damp day. Put in the wood and coal as usual; but before lighting them, ignite a handful of paper or shavings placed on top of the coal. This produces a current of hot air in the chimney, which draws up the smoke and gas at once. Not one person out of fifty ever thinks of this easy expedient.—*Scientific American.*

Water-proof paper has been introduced as a sheathing for the hulls of iron ships. It is designed to be secured to the submerged portions of the hull by means of marine glue. From experiments made with iron ships, the paper sheathing is reported to be of great value as a shield against barnacles, sea-wood, and corrosion.

DOMESTIC.

WHAT MAKES A HOME?

If you find it difficult to obtain good "help," you have still one resource. Can you not simplify your mode of living a little? It is surely better that you should entertain less company, or, what amounts to the same thing, be content to entertain less ostentatiously, than that you should set a plainer table, and that your weekly wash should contain fewer frills and furbelows, than that you should worry yourself and your child in a vain attempt to keep everything up to your prescribed standard. It is well to aim high; but he who over-allocates the mark fails at completely as he whose arrow falls below it, and he does over-shoot it who sacrifices health, comfort and happiness in the endeavor to grasp at an ideal good.

I have never visited your home, yet I think I can see what is likely to be one of your stumbling-blocks. What is the object and end of good housekeeping? Is it merely to have the brightest silver, the clearest windows, the cleanest carpets, the whitest linen, the most faultless ironing, the greatest variety of viands, the most delicious pastry and the

most crispy of jellies? Or is it to create a happy home—a home full of light and warmth and radiance—a home that shall be a perennial fountain of refreshment—a home in whose charmed atmosphere even transient guests shall find rest and peace, and from which they shall go forth cheered and strengthened?

It has been said that we women make gods of our houses and our housekeeping. An over-drawn statement; yet one that may well cause us to pause and reflect. By so much as the house and its appointments is supreme in the affections of the wife and mother, by so much will the home proper, the sacred penetralia, the holy of holies, be robbed of its due. By so much as it is supreme, I say. Not that it should be neglected, not that it should be undervalued. But it is the shell, not the kernel. It is the body, not the soul, and as "the life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment," so should every house be subordinate to the home. She makes a sad mistake who shuts out the sunshine lest her carpets fade, who closes her best and most convenient rooms lest a fly should tarnish their immaculate paint, who buys costly furniture that the children must never touch, who puts her choicest books and loveliest pictures out of the way, where they are unable to do their ordained work as comforters, as strengtheners, as educators, lest, forsooth, they should be injured. Many a house is far too nice to be comfortable.—*From "The Household."*

ECONOMY IN THE KITCHEN.—A valuable lesson in the economy of animal food may be learned from the almost universal practice of the common people in France. It is in the use of the pot au feu, the pot on the fire. Instead of an open fireplace they have a shelf of iron, with an opening in which to set an iron pot, movable, but seldom moved, and in which are openings for other purposes. Beneath one of these openings or gratings, fuel is placed and kindled in quantities just sufficient to boil the kettle, or to cook the artichoke, steak or cutlet, on a dish above it. On the middle of this iron shelf a pot is always setting, into which pot are put all the fragments of meat cut off in preparing a piece for cooking, and all the bones carefully broken, and bits left after the meal. This pot is seldom allowed to boil, but it is made to simmer by every process of cooking that goes on during the day, and everytime the coffee pot or the tea-kettle is made to boil. This perpetual simmering gradually softens and reduces to a state of nutriment whatever flesh or bone substance is put into the pot. The fat is carefully skimmed off and reserved for use, and a portion of the rich remaining liquid may at any time be ladled out to make the foundation—the *matrice*, they call it,—of a soup. Upon this foundation is made a great variety of nourishing and toothsome soups, by the addition of vegetables of every kind, and of sweet fragrant herbs, some of these, onions and garlic, for example, are used more profusely than would be agreeable to most American palates, but some of the sweet herbs have an effect which seems like a pleasant addition.—*N. E. Farmer.*

WHITE MOUNTAIN CAKE (fine).—Cream until very light one coffee-cupful of butter. In cold weather this should be done by the stove, but in warm the cellar is the best place. Add slowly, stirring all the time, two cupfuls of sand sugar, and when the mixture is light, add one coffee-cupful of new milk, in which a tea-spoonful of soda has been dissolved when well mixed the yolks of five eggs. Rub thoroughly into four and a half cupfuls of sifted flour two tea-spoonfuls of cream of tartar and stir in the butter, alternating with the beaten whites of three of the eggs, reserving the other two for the icing. Either bake in three pans, or six round jelly plates in the latter case, put a chocolate mixture between the layers of three of the cakes, and the other three the beaten whites of the two eggs adding four tea-spoonfuls of flour sugar. On top of each layer of cake and icing put grated cocoanut an inch in depth, and finish with it at the top. The dedicated cocoanut will answer, but the freshly grated nut partly dried is much better.

CHOCOLATE ICE-CREAM CAKE.—Have a deep tin plate or shallow pan, perfectly clean, put into it two ounces of Baker's chocolate, not grated or broken up, and set in the stove where it will melt gradually, but not scorch, when melted, stir in three table-spoonfuls of milk and one of water, mix all well together, and add one ounce teaspoonful of sugar, boil about five minutes, and while hot, and when the cakes are nearly cold, spread some evenly over the surface of one of the cakes; put a second one on top, alternating the mixture and cakes, then cover top and sides, and set in a warm oven to harden. All who have tried recipe after recipe, vainly hoping to find one where the chocolate sticks to the cake and not to the fingers, will appreciate the above. In making these most palatable yet cakes, "Chocolate à laire," the recipe just given will be found very satisfactory.