

MARKET REPORTS.

Table with multiple columns listing market prices for various commodities like flour, sugar, oil, and other goods. Includes sub-sections like 'LUMBER', 'COUNTRY MARKET', 'FISH MARKET', 'WHOLESALE', 'BRADSTREET REVIEW', 'CLASSIFIED', 'NAILS', 'OAKUM', 'LUMBER', 'LUMBER', 'LUMBER'.

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BURIED ALIVE.

By E. F. Robinson, M. D.

Several gentlemen were seated in the smoking room of a parlor car attached to one of the trains running between Boston and New York. The conversation had drifted to the subject of queer experiences, and one of the gentlemen who was a traveling man for a prominent Boston house remarked: "Well, you have all had some queer experiences but I think one of mine rather overtops any that have been mentioned yet. I have been to my own funeral. I have been to my grave as well. "The story is much more interesting to listen to than it was to experience I can tell you. I'm not over fond of recalling the memory, but if you want to hear it why here goes. "I've been on the road now for a good many years and have had many a queer experience, all traveling men have them of course, but this one beat any that I have heard so far. It was in the fall of '80 and I was in Chicago. I was trying hard to land a country customer for a big bill of goods, and what with work and worry and entertaining I was a nervous wreck. "What is entertaining? Why showing your customer the town. It involves late hours and considerable drinking, smoking and the like. This bill goes to 'The house' as expense, but the nervous system of the traveling man is the one that really pays it. At drummers get it more or less. It's part of the business and we have to stand it. My trouble was that my appetite was 'out of gear' and it was simply impossible for me to sleep. I tried doctors and hypnotics, opium and the rest, but what little sleep I got from them made me feel worse than ever. "Finally, just as I was growing desperate and thinking pretty awfully of suicide I ran across the advertisement of Professor Vera who claimed to be the most remarkable mesmerist the world had ever known. You know what the ads. were like. They are common enough now, but in those days we didn't see so many of them. I didn't take much stock in that class of people as a rule, but I happened to notice that I had made strong claims of being able to cure sleeplessness. I was in a condition where I was almost desperate and was willing to try anything for the sake of sleep, so I made up my mind to see him. I figured that he would get my money and I would get no experience, but not much else; but as this was all I had been able to obtain from several of the best physicians in Chicago I determined to make this one last trial to obtain rest. "When I met my customer that night for our usual round of entertaining I proposed that he should visit Professor Vera. The professor was giving a lecture in one of the largest halls in the city and crowds were going to see him every night. This form of entertainment was much more uncommon than it seems later, so my friend was much puffed at the suggestion. We took seats in a box on the level of the stage and for a long time enjoyed the antics of the professor's victims. You know the class of foolishness goes through with in these cases. At last I determined to see what he could do for me, for while I knew nothing of mesmerism--which is now called hypnotism, by the way--still he impressed me as being somewhat above the ordinary run of 'stage professors'. "I wrote one letter stating the facts of my case and asking whether he could do anything for me. This I sent to him by one of the ushers and received in return that he would like to see me in his dressing room after the entertainment was over. We called on him as he requested, and he asked me many questions and examined my heart and lungs just as a doctor would do have done. "Then he said, 'If you will allow me to mesmerize you I can give you orders to go to sleep tonight at a certain hour, and I will wake you at a certain time tomorrow. I can give you as many hours of good refreshing sleep as you wish.' "All right, I said, 'that's what I want.' You can't start any too quickly to suit me. "Sit down," he said. "Now look me straight in the eyes." "I did so, and all I can remember is that his eyes seemed to bore right in to my brain. I lost all will of my own, and seemed to be able to think only his thoughts, not mine. All care and worry were gone from me and time was of no value--had no existence, in fact. I was perfectly happy. "Suddenly I heard a voice say, 'wake up,' and I was once more in the world of cares. "Now," said the professor, 'go directly to your hotel and go to bed. You will drop off to sleep within five minutes and will sleep until 5 p. m. tomorrow--when I will send you a mental order to awake. Come here and see me tomorrow evening after my lecture, and I will decide what other treatment you need.' "I went back to my hotel the most surprised and the happiest man alive. I had actually slept, so my companion told me, more than an hour without the use of drugs, and I already felt much refreshed. I went to bed and fell asleep almost instantly. So far as any consciousness went I might have been dead. It may have been seconds or years that I lay in that condition when I heard the order, 'wake up,' and became conscious again. I say conscious because I know no other term to express it. I was doubly conscious, and yet not conscious at all in any normal manner. No physician had ever been able to explain my experience, but all have agreed that I was in some peculiar form of cataleptic trance. "I was conscious in the first place that it was bright daylight, that I lay unattended in my bed with the sun shining in my half-closed eyes. It dazzled me, but did not pain me as it seemed as if it should. From its position I realized that it must be late in the afternoon. Next I was conscious that several persons were trying to arouse me. One of them seemed to be a doctor and one my customer and friend, my companion of the night before. They worked over me in feverish haste and talked anxiously. I was conscious of all this and yet I was absolutely powerless to move a muscle or to make a sound. I knew too, that I was not breathing and that my heart was not beating. It caused me no surprise when the doctor said, 'He is dead, send for an undertaker; I can do nothing more for him.' "I knew that I was not dead, I knew even that I stood in great danger of being buried alive, and yet, so far as my own personal consciousness was concerned, I was perfectly happy and contented. But at the same time I suffered the tortures of the damned through the consciousness of another. "In addition to my own consciousness, which seemed weak and hazy, so to speak, I seemed to be overpowered and filled with the consciousness of Professor Vera. I knew how I can't tell you--but I know that he had been injured, a blow on the head had rendered him unconscious and his body now lay senseless on a hospital bed. His own brain could not perform its functions, but his soul or spirit--call it what you will--was thinking through my brain. I could follow his thoughts clearly and I could know that the injury to Professor Vera had resulted upon me because, just at that precise moment, he had identified himself with me in order to arouse me from my sleep. Owing to some reason which I could not clearly understand, probably because he did not fully understand himself, his consciousness could not return to his own brain owing to the injury, and for the same reason it had not been powerful enough to fully arouse me from the trance into which he had thrown me. His consciousness was fully able to awake, while my own, which alone could control my body, was in the trance. I don't know whether I make this clear or not. However, it doesn't matter much if you only understand that all my uncomfortable thoughts were the thoughts of Professor Vera, and that my own mind was as calm and peaceful as when I was asleep. "Professor Vera's mental agony was fearful. He realized (thinking through my brain) that if my body was buried his consciousness would be buried with it, that he would endure the mental agony, possibly even the physical agony, of being buried alive. He tried with all his power to return to his own brain, knowing that if he could once more get control of that body he could bring me back to life. His mental struggle was in vain, however. After after hour he prayed and pleaded, cursed and swore, but all to no purpose. The undertaker came, measured me for a coffin, brought it and laid me out in it. The members of the firm for whom I worked came to see my body and took charge of my effects. I was gratified to see that they seemed to feel my loss keenly and were struggling to bring me back to life in the way of a funeral. Beyond this I felt no personal interest in the matter. "Professor Vera's consciousness on the other hand was in an agony that beggars description. Picture to yourself all of the mental horrors that could possibly be felt by a man about to be buried alive and you will never realize one half the tortures his mind endured through the medium of my brain. The long hours dragged slowly on and at last came the funeral and the last rites for the dead. I was alone in the world and in no way one to weep for me. Professor Vera, struggling hard against the stroke again and again, woke me to consciousness, but in vain. So long as his physical brain was in a coma he had not the requisite power to return to his own brain. "At last the coffin was closed, the journey to the grave began and finally I was buried. I think the professor must have been out of the grave at about 4 o'clock, probably a sort of mental faint at the horror of the situation, for his consciousness left me for a short time and my own seemed to become clearer. "I know that I, a live man, was buried under six feet of earth. It gave me no fear, no horror or fear. I was contented and happy. "Then with a rush the consciousness of Professor Vera returned and the devilish mental struggle commenced once more. I awoke with the words, 'Thank God! ringing in my ears. Are you all right, my friend?' "All right, professor. I've had the finest sleep any man ever had. I see you've got me out of the grave at last. "Us," exclaimed the professor. "Why do you say us, do you know of the agony I have gone through? Were you, too, conscious in the grave?" "After I had had a good bath, a shave, and a dinner, the first meal in ten days, we talked matters over and I told him all about it. He had never been aware that I possessed any consciousness of my own. "What he told me was this: 'After you had been dead ten days and buried for a week, during all of which time my mind occupied your brain, I suddenly found that my efforts were successful and that I was conscious in my own brain again. My great fear now was that you might come out of the trance and again wake me to consciousness in the grave. I knew if you did you would die of suffocation. Heavy moments was of value, yet the red tape moment was to get permission to dig you up twenty-four hours. If I had died you must have done the same as no one else could have done. I was so glad that I was conscious in the grave!' "That is all of the story. I was cured of my insomnia, also of all desire to try any more experiments with mesmerism or any such stuff."

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