

for three weeks, when plaster of Paris was applied and left on for a month; bone united, leaving one half an inch of shortening.

THE DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD.

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(Concluded.)

If the future investigations of science shall prove some of these things to us beyond all question or room for dispute, the question of the disposal of the dead is all-important. If we would have cremation looked upon with favor, we must destroy the idea that that which we call the soul, the living being which inhabits this body as a temporary tenant, has any further use for it after life has departed from it.

Of course it is hard for us to realize that the form of one that we have loved is simply clay, nothing more nor less than a few chemical elements that must be resolved back into their original or some other form, and that the living being we have loved is not there. Even some who believe in cremation might shrink from it when it came too close home; but once convinced of the truth of the complete and final severance of soul and body, the strongest objection to cremation will be removed.

I am in sympathy with the essayist theoretically; but cremation is an innovation upon present customs, and will not prevail except in individual instances for a long time to come.

There is another branch of the subject which ought not to be overlooked that this moment occurs to me, and that is the cremation of the bodies of animals, and all kinds of refuse found to carry disease germs, whether animal or vegetable. We find upon our sidewalks and elsewhere, on hot days, boxes and pails filled with festering and decaying material that may spread disease in all directions; and it seems to me that it is very important that all of this be disposed of by some

method, so that it shall not offend the senses and endanger health, and for this purpose fire is our best germicide.

Dr. RAYMOND.—It seems to me that the weight of evidence at the present time is strongly in favor of cremation, and yet there are some arguments which have been used by those who advocate this practice which are hardly justifiable. One of these arguments is the expense of the funeral services in connection with earth burial. This is hardly a fair argument. Because people insist upon spending a large amount of money for rich and expensive caskets, and choose to array themselves in expensive mourning, is no argument against the present method of disposing of the dead.

We may readily imagine that if the time ever comes when cremation is the generally accepted method, instead of having these cheap clay or alabaster urns, to which reference has been made, the friends of those who have been cremated will insist upon having the urns made of gold or silver, and we can readily understand that when this method of the disposal of the dead becomes fashionable, the amount of money that can be expended in funerals of that kind may be at least equal to that expended now. That argument, therefore, is not a valid one, and should not be used by advocates of cremation.

The reference that has been made to Freire's discovery of the yellow fever germ in the graveyard should not have any weight, inasmuch as neither Freire nor anyone else has as yet discovered the yellow fever germ, either in graveyards or elsewhere, and Freire's claim is not recognized by bacteriologists generally.

The essayist of the evening leaves us in doubt as to exactly which of the methods of disposal he favors, cremation or desiccation. I wish he had been more explicit on that subject. I am inclined to the opinion that he is rather in favor of desiccation. If that is true, one of the arguments which he has used against earth burial would be applicable also, it seems to me, there. The germs of disease certainly would not be disposed of by the simple process of desiccation. If