

GLEANINGS.

From the Boston Recorder.

THE DEAD ALIVE.

Numerous instances are on record in which persons have been restored to life after they were to all appearance dead, and even after arrangements had been made for their burial. Cases, in fact, have occurred where persons have been beyond all doubt buried alive.— Diseases are not unknown to physicians in which animation is so completely suspended, that the subject presents every appearance of death. In the remarkable case of Rev. Wm. Tennent, he would have been consigned to the grave, but for the interference of a physician, who persevered in the opinion that life was not extinct, amidst the opposition of friends. Sometimes this state of suspended animation is one of entire consciousness, in which case it is difficult to conceive of the horror of the situation. Generally, however, the subject is unconscious of being alive. Mr. Tennent was in a trance, his soul revelling in the bliss of heaven. The following remarkable case is related by Mrs. L. M. Child, the editor of the *Anti Slavery Standard*, in a late number of that paper:

A remarkable case, unaccompanied with the consciousness of being alive, occurred in my own family. The yellow fever raged fearfully in Boston the last part of the 18th century. The panic was so universal, that wives forsook their dying husbands, in some cases, and mothers their children, to escape the contagious atmosphere of the city. Funeral rights were generally omitted. The "death carts," sent into every part of the town, were so arranged as to pass through each street every half hour. At each house known to contain a victim of the fever, they rung a bell, and called, "Bring out your dead." When the lifeless forms were brought out, they were wrapped in tarred sheets, put into the cart, and carried to the burial place unaccompanied by relatives. In most instances, in fact, relatives had fled before the first approach of the fatal disease. One of my father's brothers, residing in Boston at that time, became a victim to the pestilence. When the first symptoms appeared, his wife sent the children into the country, and herself remained to attend upon him. Her friends warned her against such rashness. They told her it would be of little use, and no benefit to him, for he would soon be too ill to know who attended upon him. These arguments made no impression on her affectionate heart. She felt that it would be a life-long satisfaction to her to know who attended upon him, if he did not. She accordingly stayed and watched him with unremitting care.— This, however, did not avail to save him. He grew worse and worse, and finally died.

Those who went around with the death-carts had visited the chamber, and seen that his end was near. They now came to take the body. His wife refused to let it go. She told me that she had never known how to account for it, but though he was perfectly cold and rigid, and to every appearance quite dead, there was a powerful impression that life was not extinct. The men were overcome by the strength of her conviction, though their own reason was opposed to it. The half hour again came round, and again was heard the solemn words, "Bring out your dead." The wife again resisted their importunities; but this time the men were more resolute. They said the duty assigned them was a painful one; but the health of the city required punctual obedience to the orders they received; if they ever expected the pestilence to abate, it must be by a prompt removal of the dead, and immediate fumigation of the infected apartments. She pleaded and pleaded, and even knelt to them in an agony of tears; continually saying, "I am sure he is not dead!" The men represented the utter absurdity of such an idea; but finally, overcome by her tears, again departed. With trembling haste she renewed her efforts to restore life. She raised his head, rolled his limbs in hot flannel, and placed hot irons on his feet. The dreaded half hour again came round, and found him as cold and rigid as ever. She renewed her entreaties so desperately, that the messengers began to think that a little gentle force would be necessary. They accordingly attempted to remove the body against her will; but she threw herself upon it, and clung to it with such frantic strength, that they could not easily loosen her grasp. Impressed by the remarkable strength of her will, they relaxed their efforts. To all their remonstrances she answered, "If you bury him, you shall bury me with him." At last, by dint of reasoning on the necessity of the case, they obtained from her a promise that if he showed no signs of life before they again came round, she would make no further opposition to the removal. Having gained this respite, she hung the watch up on the bedpost, and renewed her efforts with redoubled zeal. She placed kegs of hot water about him, forced brandy between his teeth, breathed into his nostrils, and held hartshorn to his nose; but still the body lay motionless and cold. She looked anxiously at the watch; in five minutes the promised time would expire, and those dreadful voices would be heard, passing through the street. Hopelessness came over her; she dropped the head she had been sustaining; her hand trembled violently, and the hartshorn she had been holding was spilled on the pallid face. Accidentally, the position of the head had become slightly tipped backward, and the powerful liquid flowed into his nostrils. Instantly there was a short, quick gasp—a struggle—