

HOW IT FEELS TO DIE

EXPERIENCE OF A MAN WHO BELIEVES HE WAS "STONE DEAD."

His Whole Life Did Not Flash Before Him as He Sank Into Unconsciousness—There Was No Mental Pain Whatever—The Fear of Death Is Physical Dread.

All my life long I have been singularly sensitive, I believe, of that physical shrinking from death which so many human beings feel so acutely. I do not mean to say I am in any hurry to die; as long as things go tolerably well with me in the world I have no insupportable objection to living, but whenever I stand face to face with death, as happened to me several times in the course of my career, I regard the prospect of annihilation with perfect equanimity. I can honestly declare that on all such occasions my own doubts and fears have been for the safety and pecuniary position of the survivors, especially those more immediately dependent upon me.

For myself I have never felt a moment's disquiet. And I attribute this entire absence of fear of death to the unusual fact that I have already tried dying and found it by no means a painful or terrifying experience. I mean what I say quite literally. I have to the slightest degree been in asserting that once in my life I really and truly died—died as dead as it is possible for a human being to die, and that afterward I was resurrected. I have felt and know the whole feeling of death—not pain, but the actual act of dying. I did not stop half way, I did not come back, and when I came back to life again it was no mere case of awakening from what is foolishly called "suspended animation," but a genuine revival, a restoration of vitality to a man as dead as he ever can be or will be.

It happened in this wise, and though it was a good many years since I have still a most vivid recollection of every moment of it: I had been skating on a lake in a very cold country. I am intentionally vague because I do not desire to disclose my personality. The surface was smooth as glass and there were no wind nor ripples. But not far from where I was skating some men had been cutting out great blocks of ice the day before for summer use.

During the night this open spot of blue water had frozen over slightly—perhaps an inch thick. I skated innocently from the solid ice on to this thinner piece, and moving with considerable impetus went through it at once and was carried on under the thicker and firmer ice beyond it. The first thing I knew was that I found myself plunged suddenly into ice cold water, and struggling for my life in skates and winter clothes against chill and drowning.

I went down like lead. When I came up again it was with my head against the solid ice. If I had had full possession of my faculties I would have looked about for the hole by which I broke through and endeavored to swim under it, but I was numbed with the cold and stunned by the suddenness of the unexpected ducking; so, instead of looking for the place by which I had got in, I tried ineffectually to break the ice over my head by bumping and butting against it.

In so doing, I do not doubt, I must have made matters worse by partially stunning myself. At any rate I could not break it, and was soon completely numbed by the cold. I gasped and swallowed a great deal of water.

I felt my lungs filling. A moment of suspense, during which I knew perfectly well I was drowning, intervened, and then I died. I was drowned and dead. I knew it then, and I have never since for a moment doubted it.

Just before I died, however, I noticed—deliberately noticed—for I am a psychologist—by nature—I was aware of what I did not know. I came up, as I had been told, to understand it would, in a single flash before me. On the contrary, I felt only a sense of cold and damp and breathlessness, a fierce, wild struggle, a horrible choking sensation, and then all was over.

I was taken out of the dead. Unless extreme remedies had been applied I should have remained stone dead till the present moment. If nothing more had been done my body would have undergone no further change till decomposition set in. Heart and lungs had ceased to act. I was truly dead; there was nothing more that could happen to me. I made no sound. However, a friend who was skating with me raised the alarm, and I was shortly after pulled out again, still dead, with a book. They tried artificial respiration, brandy, heat—all the recognized means of reviving a corpse after drowning. After awhile they brought me back. I began to breathe again.

If there had been no artificial respiration I would never have revived again, and my body would have undergone dissolution in due course, without any return of consciousness whatever. So far as consciousness goes, therefore, I was then and there dead, and I never expect to be any dealer. And the knowledge that I have thus once experienced in my own person exactly what death is, and tried it fully, has had a great deal to do, I think, with my utter physical indifference to it. I know how it feels, and though it is momentarily uncomfortable it isn't half as bad as breaking your arm or having a tooth drawn.

In fact the actual dying itself, as dying, is quite painless—as painless as falling asleep. It is only the previous struggle—the sense of its approach—that is at all uncomfortable. Even this is much less unpleasant than I have been expected to be, and I noted at the time that there was a total absence of any craven shrinking—the sensation was a mere physical one of gasping and choking. Whenever I have stood within measurable distance of death ever since my feeling has been the same—I have been, I have already, and see no cause to dread it. Of course one might strongly object to a painful end, on account of its painfulness, and one might shrink, and ought to shrink, from leaving one's family, especially if young or insufficiently provided for, but death itself, as death, is not so much to be feared as it is generally supposed to be. I have absolutely no fears for a sensible person.—Pall Mall Budget.

Outwitted Their Friends. A "terribly pretty" Boston bride, as Harvard called her, found when she, with the happy groom, was about to depart on the honeymoon that some wag had decked the carriage with wedding favors, and it was literally a mass of white ribbons and hydrangea blooms. It was a trying moment! The rice fell thick and fast, and merry shouts of laughter greeted the departing couple, who were thus compelled to set off like a package of their own wedding cake. History has it, however, that the nimble pair jumped into a second carriage at the next street corner, and so outwitted the "best man" and his frolicsome coadjutors.—Boston Herald.

The Builder of Trinity's Organ. Besides the old organ in Grace church the Trinity organ was built in this city. Its builder was Henry Erben. Erben was a musical prodigy who was apprenticed to Thomas Hall, one of the old New York organ builders. When his apprenticeship expired in 1827 he was taken into the firm, but in a few years he went into business alone with so good a reputation that the contract for the Trinity organ was given to him. In 1830 Mr. Erben was still young and active enough to give the Trinity organ a thorough overhauling and to make a number of improvements in it.—New York Times.

Some One Else Does Their Shopping Now.

Two handsomely dressed women entered a Sixth avenue elevated train at the Twenty-third street station the other day and found seats with that air of relief which betokened extensive shopping. "Really, my dear," said the elder, "I am now out shopping for other people. My husband's sister lives on a ranch, you know, and she thinks nothing of asking me to make her woollens and silks, buy knocknocks for the house and toys for the children and birthday presents for the whole family. I hunted for two days last week to find a stuffed toy duck for the baby. Of course I can't refuse. Poor things, what can they do, off there? It's a dreadful nuisance, but some first cousins of my own in western Ohio are just as bad. They constantly send me little commissions, and once or twice, not being altogether pleased with my efforts, returned the goods at my expense."

"Let me tell you my experience," said her companion. "I went through just such a siege, and finally between my husband's relatives and my relatives, and friends of his and friends of mine, the commission business became unendurable, so I hit on this plan: I wrote a letter to each one of my correspondents, and told them I was trying to raise a fund for the mission school of our church, then made him a little commission on it to go toward my mission fund."

"What happened?" asked the other victim of absent relatives anxiously. "Well, two of them replied that my plan for raising money was novel and excellent, and that they would send me all the commissions they could think of."

"Did you make much for the mission?" "Not a cent."

"I have never had a request to shop for any one from that day to this."—New York Tribune.

The Tuna Fish Harp. Harp playing is again in vogue. Fashionable young women are hanging their bonjons on the willow tree; they are taking lessons in harp manipulation. The light airs of the instrument so long held sacred to the negro are forgotten in the deeper and more dignified notes of the harp. We suspect that the decorative qualities of the harp have considerable to do with this revival of that ancient instrument. A harp is a pretty thing. A curiously carved cabinet from Venice or an oddly fashioned table from France cannot be more effective in a drawing room.

The harp has a noble ancestry. Skill in bringing forth music from its chords won praise and honor in the day of King David. Kings and queens have enjoyed its music through hundreds of years. Its addition to the orchestra, however, does not date back many years. A Chicago musician has made a study of the instrument, and he says its possibilities are not yet fully understood; that the semitones of the harp can be regulated with a nicety heretofore unknown. No doubt Tannhauser and Orpheus would not recognize the harp if they were to see it, with the Chicago modification, standing in a parlour and gold parlor and responding to the graceful touch of a Michigan avenue belle's slender fingers.—Indianapolis News.

Why Chinese Use No Machinery. The American laundry boards of steam washers that wash 100 dozen pieces at a time, rotating machines to dry, starching machines to starch and ironing machines to iron. Many people believe that the Chinaman does not believe in machinery; that he scorns its use. But such is not the case. Chinese laundries cannot get laundry machinery for either love or money. Each piece sold is with the solid promise that it shall never fall into the hands of the Chinese competitor.

The American laundry boards—and there are five or six of them—keep up the crusade. The Chinaman is quick enough to see the advantage improved machinery would afford him, but there is no Chinese laundry in all this land that has as much as a starch machine, save one solitary exception, fully chronicled in the laundry trade papers.

A Chinaman on Nineteenth street, near Third avenue, Birmingham, Ala., has an muscular man and an iron, the motive power of which is supplied by an aged but powerful negro, who industriously turns the handle, while the almond eyed proprietor of the place gazes at the workings of the gas heated rollers with complacent pride, for he is the only Chinaman in this country, so far as known, who has a machine to assist him in his work. Where he got it is a mystery the laundry papers are trying to solve.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Watches That Run Without Winding. Keyless watches, now so popular, have long been known, but have not been in general use more than a dozen years. Napoleon I was the owner of a wonderful specimen of this species of keyless timepieces. It was continually kept in running order by a small weight at the end of a lever which worked on a weak spring. Every step taken caused a small "dog" to drop into the coils of a tiny ratchet wheel, this in turn acting on the barrel to which the mainspring was attached; ordinary movements about the house were sufficient to keep the spring tightly wound up.

In the Kensington museum, London, there is a pendulum, operated in a similar manner, combined with a watch, so that the one instrument tells the time and the distance walked by the wearer in a day or any other given time. There is a watch on exhibition at the United States patent office which is wound up by the simple act of closing the case. It also has an attachment that throws the winding device out of gear as soon as the spring is well wound up.—St. Louis Republic.

Calling Upon a Friend. Here is an amusing story of Messrs. Toole and Brough. Having appeared conjointly in a drama "Deeper Than Life," in which they were very ragged, wore bearded costumes, they visited the well known artists Fradelle & Marshall to be photographed in their rags. While waiting "between the plates" Toole, who is fond of a lark, suggested to his brother comedian to "pull out" and call upon a certain mutual acquaintance, who would be horribly shocked at receiving visitors in such a garb. Brough at once assented, and popping on their battered hats out into the street the pair slipped and made for the house of their friend. Of course the neat household and the neat Broughs were horrified, and declined, even without being asked, to purchase matches or the like.

"I axes your pardon," said Toole in an assumed tone; "you're making a slight mistake. We want to see your master," and he mentioned the gentleman's Christian name and that of his wife. "We have an important business with him," chimed in Brough. The girl's face wore a dazed aspect and she said: "Master never sees the likes of you at his house. He's most pertickler, ain't he, Charles?" appealing to the page. "You must be making a mistake."

"Oh, no, we ain't!" responded Toole with supreme gravity. "But I'm sorry William" (the Christian name of the gentleman) "is out. I haven't got a card about me" (pretending to fumble among his rags), "but tell your master that his two cousins from the workhouse called as they were passing through London."—London Tit-Bits.

Telegraphy is not a trade to be recommended. It is crowded now, with the result that the women, though the men and women in the business are more intelligent than other workers earning larger pay.

SENATOR STANFORD'S PET PROJECT.

The California University Will Receive the Bulk of His Fortune. Senator Stanford's life interest has settled in the university at Palo Alto, Cal., which he built to the memory of his only son. The Lick observatory has become famous for possessing the most powerful telescope in the world. The Californian expressed satisfaction at the scientific disclosures which had been made possible by such an instrument.

"Don't you think, senator?" he was asked, "that in return for your expenditures a proper compliment would be paid in naming Professor Barnard's moon of Jupiter after you?" "No; that moon is too far off to be as every day practical as I like to be. I should much prefer to be remembered by my fellow men as one who spent his wealth wisely for the benefit of others, and set an example that other men of means may be induced to follow it."

To the support of this university all the Stanford millions will eventually go. The demands keep pace with the work," he said, "and I am glad to give me a chance to carry out those plans with the success of which I desire that my name and life work shall be best known."

"I have been impressed with the fact that of all the young men who come to me with letters of introduction from friends in the east the most unbusinesslike are college young men. They come from those whom I would like to oblige. They are prepossessing in appearance and of good stock."

"But when they seek employment and I ask them what they can do, all they can say is 'anything.' They have no definite, technical knowledge of anything. They have no specific aim, no definite purpose. It is to overcome that condition, to give education which shall not have that result, which I hope will be the aim of this university. Its equipment and faculty I desire shall be second to none in the world. Its capacity to give a practical, not a theoretical education ought to be accordingly foremost."

The buildings were first erected in the fields, so dormitories were necessary. I did not expect more than 300 or 350 pupils at first, although accommodations were made for 1,000. In the first year there were 335 students and now there are 700. These I hope will be fitted for active life.

"I have the greatest faith in the possibilities of humanity. I want to make my life work such that it will teach others that same faith. I feel that I have been beneficent, and no necessary wants of humanity have been unprovided. But the use of them ought to be directed wisely."

"To the end of teaching this I expect to spend practically all my property before I die. Of course there are relatives whom I shall remember. I do not care to disclose a number of other public benefactions I shall make, but the bulk of my estate will go to the endowment of this practical university."

"It seems to me the moral duty of every man to give to the public weal a liberal portion of his accumulations, and to do it in the most judicious manner. I'm going to see if I can't spend my money in a way that will body else could do it."—New York World.

Teaching Patriotism. As public opinion is slow to move it may well be worth while to have the principles of rational, honest politics taught in our schools and colleges to a greater extent than is at present done. We hear much talk in school and college of teaching patriotism. But how is it to be taught? The practice of cheering the flag, of learning the biographies of some of our leading statesmen, or of learning to believe, without knowing why, that our country is the strongest and best on earth, will have little effect toward remedying our present political evils.

Civil government is something more than the written constitution, the names of the officers, the dates of election and other such facts as are taught in our text books on civil government. The civil government that will help our children to get ideas which later will be of practical use in politics is that which shows the principles of party government, the methods of making appointments, of carrying elections, of making nominations to offices, and all the other details of our political life as it is actually managed, together with the facts of political history and scientific study show that, however valuable in carrying single elections and advancing local interests, dishonest political scheming may be in the long run the interests of states, as of individuals, are furthered by honest principles; that great public questions are not settled till the end of the century, because "the power in men that makes for rightness" is, after all, when men's eyes are opened, the dominant one.—Professor Jenks in Century.

Extraordinary Insanity. "One of the most extraordinary forms of insanity is a mania for stealing women's shoes," said Dr. Dodd, physician at the Bloomingdale asylum. "It is distinguished as a disease by itself, and the Germans have named it 'Frauenschuhehysterie.' It is more common among men than with the other sex. There is one case on record of a young man whose sisters lost their left shoes as fast as they could buy them. It was always the left one of each pair that was taken. For a long time the thefts remained a mystery, until one day the brother caught a young woman in the street, threw her down, tore off her left shoe and ran away with it. He was captured and thus the secret was discovered."—Cor. Boston Globe.

A Pleasurable Business. Within a couple of blocks of the Stock exchange is an old bookseller, who gets a deal of comfort from his occupation. On a fair day a share of his stock is brought out for display on boxes near the entrance of the basement in which he has his shop, and he sits beside them, at once advertising his business and improving his mind by reading one of his books. Customers make their pick of the stock, pay for the books they select and go their way, but he reads on, and is happy in spite of the interruptions when the money comes in.—New York Times.

A Popular Bit of Music. Mr. Crowe composed the famous "Seesaw" waltz merely for his children, and had such a poor opinion of its merits that he sold the copyright to Metzler for a few pounds. The publisher cleared over \$75,000.

CURES OTHERS. Mrs. HARRY TAPPAN, of Reynolds, Neb., writes: "I was a constant sufferer from distressing dyspepsia for two years. I had to be carried from my bed, had horrible nervousness, was very nervous and had little or no appetite. I had tried many remedies, but none gave me any relief. I was completely broken down, and was completely unable to do any work. I found no medicine did me any good. At last I determined to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. I had taken but two bottles when I felt a great deal better. I took eleven bottles. Today, I am well. I have never felt the least trace of my former illness. I have gained 25 pounds. We use the Golden Medical Discovery whenever we need a blood-purifier. With its use, eruptions of all kinds vanish and the skin is rendered clear and soft, almost as an infant's." Sold everywhere.

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Couldn't Be Him. "That is not papa," said the youngest of the new photograph being handed round at home. "Why not?" asked his mother. "Because that man in the picture had such a nice smile on his face."—Exchange.

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