

## **Sanitary disposal of the dead : a lecture / delivered by C.N. Peirce.**

### **Contributors**

Peirce, C. N.

Lockwood, C. M.

Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine

### **Publication/Creation**

Philadelphia : Philadelphia Cremation Society, [1891], ©1891.

### **Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/aqkgwkcp>

### **License and attribution**

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, through the Medical Heritage Library. The original may be consulted at the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard Medical School. where the originals may be consulted. This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

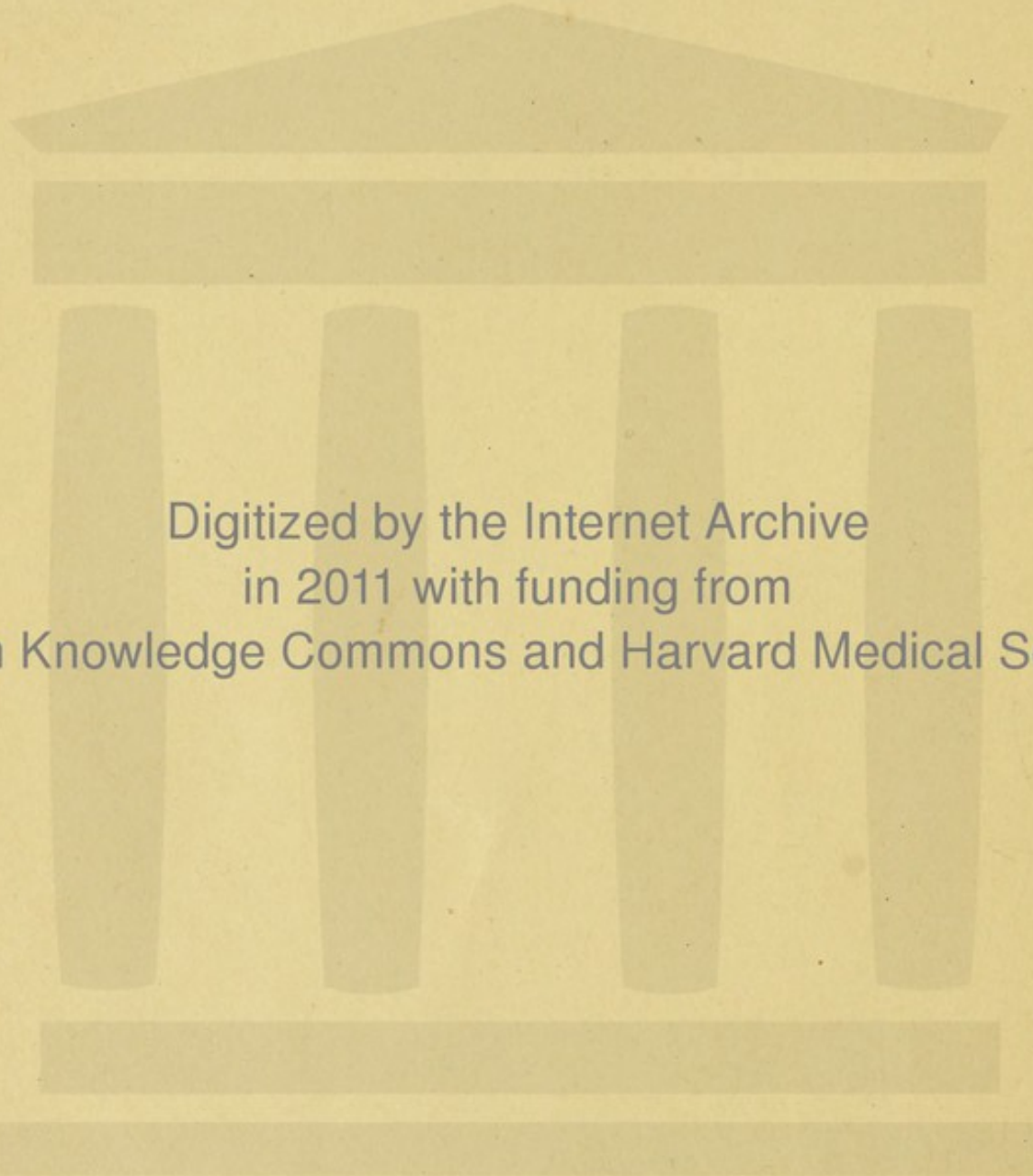
A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY

DR. C. N. PEIRCE.

32. 9. 17.

Chadwick



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2011 with funding from  
Open Knowledge Commons and Harvard Medical School

# SANITARY DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD.

---

A LECTURE DELIVERED BY

DR. C. N. PEIRCE,

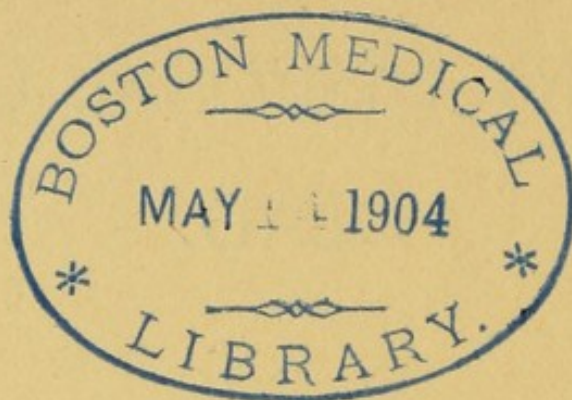
AT

ST. GEORGE'S HALL,

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1891.

---

PUBLISHED BY THE  
PHILADELPHIA CREMATION SOCIETY,  
OFFICE, 242 FRANKLIN STREET.



3356

---

Copyright, 1891, by  
DR. C. N. PEIRCE.

---

MADE BY  
BILLSTEIN & SON.

## PREFACE.

---

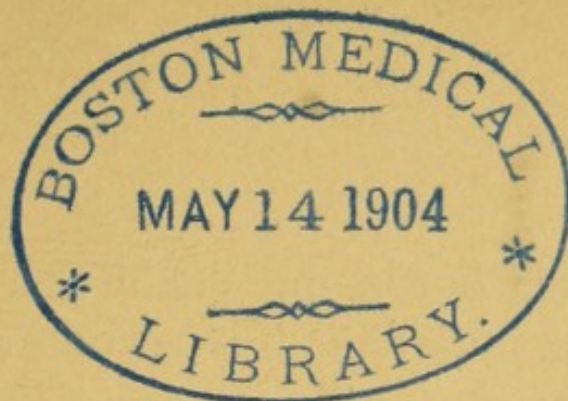
WHEN invited by the lecture committee of the Ethical Culture Society of Philadelphia to read before them a short paper, I was but a few moments in deciding that upon no subject could I more profitably entertain that body for an hour than by presenting an arranged collection of already published statements concerning the ethical and sanitary disposition of the dead.

This pleasurable task was performed without any view of the result being published; so, when the Cremation Society of Philadelphia requested my manuscript, thinking it worthy of wider publicity, I could not surrender it without placing on record my deep obligation to the following authors, from whom I have obtained most of whatever there is of value in the paper. While I have occasionally added a word and at other times omitted one, I trust I have not in any case misrepresented the author from whom I have quoted.

To the following I am indebted: Dr. Parks, "Practical Hygiene;" Dr. Andrew D. White, papers

in *Popular Science Monthly*; Rev. Chas. R. Treat, "Sanitary Entombment;" Sir Henry Thompson, "Our Treatment of the Dead," *Contemporary Review*, January, 1874; Professor Persifor Frazer, Jr., "The Merits of Cremation," *Penn Monthly*, June, 1874; William Eassie, C. E., London, "Cremation of the Dead: Its History, and Bearings upon Public Health," 1875; Rev. Howard Henderson, D. D., LL. D., of Cincinnati, Ohio, "Cremation a Rational Method of Disposing of the Dead," Cincinnati, 1890. To those desiring further information upon the subject than is embraced in this short paper, I would especially direct their attention to the last two publications.

C. N. P.



## Cremation ; or, Sanitary Disposition of the Dead.

BY DR. C. N. PEIRCE.

TO-DAY inaugurates a series of lectures to be given from the platform of the Ethical Culture Society of Philadelphia. A few words regarding its life, aims, and prospects should not be out of place at the present time.

It is a little over six years since a small body of friends met together to organize the Society for Ethical Culture of Philadelphia. They anticipated, and wisely, too, that in this day of active evolutionary and formative processes, some advantage could be gained by a greater familiarity with the forces, both natural and artificial, which are, and have been, from time without date, at work in moulding and elevating the human family toward an ideal life, which it is hoped the distant future has in store for it.

Nor was this advantage to be gained for personal

or egoistic ends, but in the broadest altruistic spirit did they desire, by a united, conscious and persistent effort, to extend the opportunity for such knowledge, so that others, feeling the same need, might be benefited thereby. The work that has been accomplished has been in no revolutionary or aggressive spirit, but simply with the desire that an ideal platform might be established, which would be free from bitterness and bigotry, from which lessons could be given on all subjects having for their object a better or more harmonious adjustment of the relations existing between man and man, and between man's inner and outer self. If we are to judge from the work they have found to do, and the sympathy and aid enlisted from friends, their labors have not been fruitless. While for a portion of the time the Society has been without a regular or established lecturer, it has great pleasure, at the present time, in announcing that in the near future one highly gifted will be the constant occupant of its platform. Those of you who are familiar with the attainments, intellectual and spiritual, of Mr. W. M. Salter, now of Chicago, well know that the Society and its friends have great cause for self-congratulation in securing such services. After the first of February he will be its constant occupant; but until that time varied talent will occupy the platform.

It is to this Ethical Culture Society of Philadelphia that I am indebted for this occasion, which offers an opportunity, and imposes an obligation, the responsibility of which, I trust, I shall not overlook.

The presence of many of you indicates that you have an interest in the subject to be presented ; with such, all that I can hope to do will be to intensify that interest, and make clear to you in my presentation of it that it has, in its treatment, a practical application to everyday life, accompanied with a serious obligation, which we all owe to the present, as well as to future generations.

Nothing is truer than that "he who lives and labors in the interest of his fellows, that their lives may be brightened, that their burdens may be lessened," is, above all others, worthy of the highest praise. If, therefore, I can present this subject to you that you may see it in the light of an obligation to humanity, it will be all that I can desire. Let us all have the hope that our opinions regarding it shall be founded on such understanding as will direct our conduct to social good, and our actions in all things to the promotion of public welfare. If this be our care, we shall certainly be consistent with ethical teaching of the highest type ; and even though we should antagonize well-established customs, and prevailing and popular opin-

ions, we, with others having diverse views, must be tolerated, else little progress would be made in human affairs.

Of the various factors contributing to physical, as well as moral, evolution, not the least important one is conscious, voluntary co-operation—a personal effort to attain an ideal, or to avoid a catastrophe. Where the vital functions are concerned, it matters not whether the motives prompting actions be those of sentiment, humanity, or economy; they (the vital functions) accept no apologies on the ground that neglect of them was unavoidable, or that the reason for neglect was noble.

“The direct and indirect suffering caused by non-conformity to the laws of life are the same, whatever induces them, and cannot be ignored in any rational estimate of conduct.”

It is Spencer who has said: “One of the purposes of ethical teaching is to establish rules of right living; and if the rules of right living are those of which the total results, individual and general, direct and indirect, are most conducive to human happiness, then it is not only absurd, but criminal, to ignore them, whether these results are to be immediate or remote.”

With these few words of introduction, we come directly to the subject of the hour, and shall state it,

as an effort to demonstrate that the "graveyard," or "God's Acre," as it is sometimes designated, is not in harmony with the times in which we live, or with the sanitary demands of the age; that it is an institution, or a custom, prejudicial to the public health, and that sanitary, moral, and ethical, as well as economic considerations, demand its abandonment and removal. That churchyards, graveyards, and cemeteries, when used for the burial of the dead, should in the minds of thoughtful people come to be regarded as one of man's most deadly foes, is neither strange nor unnatural, when the evidence arrayed against them shall be carefully considered. The anxious hours, intensified by alternate feelings of hope and despair, are ended; the labored breathing has ceased; that greatest boon, profound, tranquil sleep, reigns, where a moment ago were life, activity, and suffering. Shall we deceive ourselves with the idea that rest, eternal rest, for the body here begins? No, not for one instant; never was there greater activity in the tissues of that still corpse than at this moment exists. Already a thousand changes have commenced. Forces innumerable have attacked the dead—physical, chemical, vital—only acting in a reverse direction—disintegration rather than augmentation and segregation.

Nature is economical and does nothing without a

purpose. The body, as such, has ended its function, whether prematurely or not is not the question to-day, and its constituents must again be restored to useful elements—must be resolved into carbonic acid, water, ammonia, lime, phosphorus, iron, and sulphur. Nature's object remains unsatisfied until this is accomplished. The question for this hour is, Shall this be done in sixty minutes or less, through the influence of, and with all the grandeur, and beauty, and brilliancy, of the cumulative heat of an imprisoned and condensed sunbeam, with harmless and beneficial results; or shall it through a period of fifteen or twenty years moulder in the earth, polluting everything with which it comes in contact—earth, air, and water—offering habitat and pabulum to the universal scavengers which feed and fatten by the millions on the feculent matter, and therefrom exhale mephitic gases, with which to load the air, and be wafted to the lungs of the living and troubled survivors? An eminent physician of Leeds, England (Dr. Wheelhouse), has said: "We shun, and that most wisely, the presence of those afflicted with infectious diseases so long as they remain amongst us; and yet, no sooner are they removed by death, than we are content, with tender sympathy, indeed, and most loving care, it is true (but with how much wisdom?), to lay them in the ground,

that they may slowly dissipate their terribly infectious gases through the soil, and, saturating that, may thereby re-charge the rains of heaven, as they filter through it, with all their virulence and terrible powers of reproduction in the systems of the living." And it matters not whether the resting-places of those who are now numbered with the majority be as the Potter's field—pictures of poverty, overgrown with brier and bush—or be grounds blossoming with Nature and Art, "crowned with evergreens, tapestried with verdure, dappled with flowers, brodered with box, watered by fountains," and studded with a forest of marble, as spotless as the driven snow, bearing inscriptions of affection and reverence; they are not the less both gardens and garnerers of contagion, yielding pestilential germs, some of which are wafted on the wings of every wind to the unsuspecting homes of the living; while others are entombed for tens, or it may be hundreds, of years, to be at some near or remote period turned up and scattered broadcast, to bring a harvest of destruction and death to thousands who may, thoughtless of danger, have built happy homes. Can it be possible that, unmindful of results, stolid and indifferent to the warnings of danger, we shall persist in placing in jeopardy not only the welfare of ourselves and our families, but also that of generations unborn?

By our present method we make our beautiful hills and valleys the home for seeds of future pestilence, until the suburban districts of every city are so defiled by ghastly putrefactions that homes are driven far beyond their limits to find places of safety wherein to breathe the pure air of heaven.

To sustain this unwelcome picture, let me recite to you a few already well-authenticated and recorded facts, that we may not longer, in ignorance, continue to despoil the fair surface of this beautiful earth, rendering it unfit for the home of millions yet unborn, who are to come as guests, bidden, yet without choice or pleasure as to time, locality, or quality of the entertainment.

Fortunately for sanitary science, cases almost without number are on record showing the terrible influence of inhumation or earth-burial ; and especially is it so where the interred were the victims of infectious or contagious diseases. Wherever the locality containing such remains has necessarily been disturbed, through the growth of population, or for public improvements, the loss of life following has been appalling :

“ In 1828, Professor Bianchi explained how the dire reappearance of the plague at Modena, Italy, was due to an excavation made in some ground where, three hundred years previously, the victims of the plague had been interred.”

“At Eyam, in Derbyshire, England, the digging up of the plague burial-grounds caused an immediate outbreak of the disease, carrying off thousands.”

“The cholera which visited London in 1854 was attributed to the excavations made for sewers in the site where the victims of the plague of 1665 were buried.”

Those of you who are familiar with the history of that devastating dispensation (the plague of 1665), will remember that it was regarded by the church and clergy as a remarkable visitation of Providence, an exhibition of Divine wrath, for the profanation of the Sabbath, in which His vengeance was satisfied by sweeping off more than one hundred thousand from that city.

The great English surgeon, John Simon, had previously to 1854 warned the authorities of what would result from any disturbance of the spot; but his warning was unheeded; hence the result, so fearful.

“In 1843, when the parish church of Minchinhampton was rebuilding, the superfluous soil of the burial-ground was disposed of for fertilizing the neighboring gardens. The result was, the loss of nearly half of its inhabitants.”

“The outbreak of the plague in Egypt in 1823 was due to the opening of a disused burial-ground at Kelioub, fourteen miles from Cairo. Two thousand perished in the village, and Cairo suffered fearful mortality.”

Dr. H. W. Hemsworth states that the exhalations from a single corpse which had been buried twelve

years were known to engender a dangerous disease inoculating a whole convent. Numerous incidents are also recorded where after twenty years' interment results were most unfortunate.

Dr. Domingo Friere, of Brazil, who investigated the cause of the fearful epidemic of yellow fever that a few years ago wrought such ravages in Rio de Janeiro, says: "I came upon the dreadful fact that the soil of cemeteries in which the victims of the outbreak were buried was positively alive with microbean organisms exactly identical with those found in the vomitings of those who had died of yellow fever in the hospitals." The characteristic parasite permeates the soil of cemeteries even to the very surface. From the grave of a victim buried for a year, only one foot beneath the surface, earth, with microscopic analysis, disclosed it thickly charged with yellow-fever germs.

Rodolfo Lanciani, in his work on "Ancient Rome" (in the light of recent excavations), in writing of the sanitary conditions of that ancient city, and of some recent excavations which were being made, says:

"I was obliged to relieve my gang of workmen (excavating archæologically) from time to time, because the smell from that polluted ground, in which thousands of human bodies had been buried for twenty centuries, was absolutely unbearable even for men so hardened to every kind of hardship as my excavators."

The testimony of many prominent physicians is that the malady known as "Roman fever," with which so many visitors to that ancient city are annually prostrated, is due to the fact that the soil primarily, and the atmosphere necessarily and secondarily, are saturated with the emanations of the millions who have been interred within the city limits.

Coming nearer home, we find that in "New Orleans in 1853, in the fourth municipal district, located where previously had been a vast cemetery, four hundred and fifty-two people out of one thousand died of yellow fever—double that of any other section of the city."

In Washington Square, New York City, formerly a Potter's field, Reverend Doctor Henderson states that "the soil is so impregnated with disease-germs, that every tranquil morning a thick blue haze is seen resting over the greensward of this inviting park ; and a physician, familiar by long practice in the locality, has affirmed that it is impossible to rear children on the lower floors of the mansions that surround the square."

"Steadily Brooklyn is belting Greenwood, in which three hundred thousand dead bodies moulder ; and New York is yearly creeping toward Woodlawn ; while the crowded Island graveyards, where multitudes are intrenched, are giving their daily tale of poison to the breezes, which fan the great metropolis that cluster about the Sound and Bay."

Philadelphia holds in her close embrace, Woodlands, Northwood, Laurel Hill, Cedar Hill, Mount Vernon, Mount Moriah, Mount Auburn, Greenwood, Greenmount, Fernwood, Fairhill, and over fifty others, in which nearly, or more probably over, four hundred thousand bodies are to-day held, in various stages of decomposition, polluting the soil, the water, and the air of our goodly city.

The French Academy of Medicine has already published the declaration that "the cemeteries within the limits of Paris, which were once suburban, but are now intramural, are the cause of serious disorders of the head, throat and lungs, which result in the loss of many lives; and in some of the hospitals of the same city, when the strong breezes, which should be grateful to the patients therein, blow from the direction of these silent homes of the dead, a marked exaltation of the disease is so universal that an effort is made to protect the patients from their influence."

Our numerous celebrated bacteriologists, now commanding attention through their curative and sanitary efforts, state positively that diseased germs, or, more correctly, germs having the power of inducing disease, do under favorable conditions survive, and preserve their power of producing infection for almost an unlimited time. In view of all of these facts, is it not

possible—yes, more than probable—that our close proximity to these thousands of silent influences is an important factor in inducing annually the seven hundred deaths (with four times the number brought to death's door) from enteric or typhoid fever, the two hundred deaths from scarlet fever, and three times the number (or six hundred) from diphtheria, five hundred and fifty from inflammation of the bronchii, three thousand from consumption of the lungs, two thousand from inflammation of the lungs, four hundred from croup, and one thousand from cholera infantum—bringing our total number of deaths from all sources to about twenty-two thousand annually? Of this large mortality, it is fair to assume that not less than eight thousand deaths have been largely influenced, if not wholly induced, by the poisonous conditions of the atmosphere, so rendered by the contagious germs therein.

In carefully scrutinizing the long list of diseases terminating with such fatality, certainly a large proportion of them should, in the light of our present hygienic and sanitary knowledge, be regarded as preventable and unnecessarily occurring. Yearly the belief grows stronger that all constitutional or systemic disturbances have their specific germs capable of transmitting the poison; and if this be true, how necessary to use every precaution for protection! So fully did

London authorities appreciate the evil consequences of intramural interments, that in 1873 they passed an ordinance forbidding the establishment of cemeteries or burial-places within five miles of the city limits. The futility of such regulations, however, will be readily recognized when applied to cities with limited land and rapidly increasing population. How many of the cemeteries now within the borders of this city (Philadelphia) were twenty years ago quite beyond its crowded limits ! Yet before a generation has passed away we find their proximity setting at naught every sanitary precaution. The day has long since passed when we can afford to disregard sanitary teachings and the rational demands of hygiene.

The shoulders of an "inscrutable Providence" have, years since, refused to bear the burden of an apology for neglect of duty, indifference, and carelessness. The great dictum, "Cleanliness akin to godliness," states far less than the truth, when disease or pestilence is in the balance. The recent history of sanitation in all civilized countries shows such triumphs, that we marvel that disease could ever have been attributed to Divine wrath, or Satanic malice. To sanitary science and hygiene we are wholly indebted for the fact that the mean length of human life has within a single century been increased from twenty-

three years to nearly forty years. This has been through a series of victories that may well claim our most careful consideration and admiration.

“In the latter half of the seventeenth century, the mortality of London is estimated to have been not less than eighty per thousand; about the middle of this century it stood at twenty-four in a thousand; in 1889 it stood at less than eighteen in a thousand; and to-day, in some parts, as low as fourteen or fifteen in a thousand.” Why should Philadelphia record from twenty-two to twenty-three in a thousand, save from the effects of local conditions which ought to be corrected? Indeed, if we could, from the whole number of deaths occurring in the year, eliminate all those resulting from imperfect sanitation, the mortality would in all probability be reduced to ten or twelve in a thousand, which would still be in excess of localities under strict sanitary regulations.

In our present active interest in civil and religious education, with a city full of churches and priests, full of pious books encouraging pious conduct, full of observances directed to fostering a “religion of love,” a knowledge of sanitary and hygienic requirements, where human welfare is at stake, ought to be all-important as a controlling factor. Yet we must, with some humiliation, recognize the fact that in this com-

mercial age economic considerations have their influence. Fortunately for the cause of cremation and sanitary science, the most extravagant, the most financially exhausting, method of disposing of the dead, when practiced by the middle and poorer classes, is that of earth-burial. In estimating this expense, let us note, first, the acres of land, and their value, now occupied by cemeteries in and around Philadelphia.

In the graveyards already enumerated there are not less than three thousand acres of land, and these, at the moderate valuation of five thousand dollars an acre, are worth \$15,000,000. Add to this a proportionate amount for New York, Brooklyn, Boston, Cincinnati and Chicago—six cities having a population reaching not quite 5,000,000, but with an acreage appropriated for burial purposes of not less than fifteen thousand acres—which at this very moderate valuation, located so near these rapidly growing cities, would be worth more than \$75,000,000; and all of it entirely unproductive, save in a harvest of microbes. It would require but a simple equation in elementary arithmetic to ascertain how much land would be required for 65,000,000 souls (the present population of our country), if 5,000,000 required fifteen thousand acres. But even this waste would be, per capita, a nominal sum, when compared with the actual outlay for interments in all

our large cities, where single graves in public lots cost from fifteen to twenty-five dollars, and in private plots in our best kept cemeteries from fifty to seventy-five dollars each. If we add to this sum the expenses of an average funeral with what are termed the middle classes, in Philadelphia, New York and Chicago, we have for each interment a sum exceeding one hundred dollars, or rather varying from one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars, and in the aggregate amounting to millions, which, if expended for educational and industrial purposes, what would it not do for the people?

But above and beyond all this sanitary and pecuniary sacrifice, is one far more demoralizing to society : I allude to the rivalry for display, or desire to make an imposing demonstration by a long line of carriages, solicited if not paid mourners, and other paraphernalia in which a large proportion of the population indulge to such a humiliating extent, and all of which, with much of the financial outlay, would be avoided by cremation and urn-burial ; the total *necessary* expense of this method of disposing of the dead not exceeding fifty dollars, while thirty-five dollars could be made to cover it.

There is still another economic feature which we approach with some hesitation, because of the repug-

nance with which it will be regarded by many. Nature asserts herself without hesitation, and as she gives freely of her abundance, she will demand in time that it must be returned.

Of the 1,300,000 of our country's population who die annually, with their remains is placed under ground 3,000,000 pounds of the salts of lime in the shape of bone, which must rest for two centuries before it can be made available in the fertilization of the vegetable kingdom ; while, had it been made soluble by burning, it would go almost at once, or in a very few years, into the soil, and help to replenish and beautify the earth. What is true of this country is with much greater force true of those having a more dense population with a limited land-area. If our present method of disposing of the dead should be persisted in until our population reaches 650,000,000, instead of 65,000,000, as it doubtless will in a limited time, from its present rate of increase, the *pollution* of a large portion of our soil will require a marked readjustment of our forces and products, else pestilence will look our progeny in the face.

Prof. Persifor Frazer, Jr., read before the Social Science Association of Philadelphia, April, 1874, a paper entitled "The Merits of Cremation," from which we extract the following :

“There are in Philadelphia (April, 1874) over 700,000 inhabitants, weighing in the aggregate, say, 56,000,000 pounds. The lowest estimate which can be made of the daily waste of this weight of organic life is 1 per cent., which would give 560,000 pounds of material in an eminently fit condition to engender disease. This is swept into the Delaware by 2,800,000 gallons, or 22,400,000 pounds, of water, the most of which is polluted to the extent of poisoning whole neighborhoods when exposed to it, more especially so in summer. The daily contribution of Philadelphia to the cemeteries is (on the basis of the deaths for the week ending Saturday, April 18, 1874), say, 52 persons, or 6864 pounds. The influence of the dead is to that of the sewage as 1 to 3100. The relative influence of sewage and cemeteries on the health of the community can thus be easily seen.” \* \* \* “On the other hand, it must be said that, whereas the sewage water can be made innocuous by a flow of a few miles with exposure to the air, the bodies in a burial-ground increase in number much more rapidly than they can be carried away by decay, so that large quantities of this undigested food of Mother Earth collect in certain places, which cannot be remote from towns, and are, therefore, always destined to be encroached upon by the improvements which continually are going on.” \* \* \* “To avoid these evils of burial, there are no practicable plans but those of decomposition on the surface and burning; and since we cannot give up our dead to dogs and vultures, nor strew our carcasses in the rivers, nor let them disappear under the beams of the sun, we had better burn them.”

One other word regarding the extravagance and ghastly results attendant upon our funeral rites and ceremonies, and we leave this unpleasant recital of the

present and prospective for other thoughts. Of the more than 1,000,000 who annually in this country pass from their homes with the minority to join the majority, a large proportion of them would certainly, in this last act of transformation, hope to do no evil to survivors; nor could they wish to tax unduly relatives and friends who desire to render service in honor of their cherished and affectionate memory. Then let us while in health make it possible that this one last act, and its necessary consequences, shall be so provided for that danger to the living, in offering the final tribute of respect, shall as far as possible be averted. No costly and conspicuous ceremonies; no exposures upon damp ground or to the inclemency of the weather; no poisonous exhalations polluting either earth, air or water; but a quiet, rapid dissolution, pure and beautiful, preparatory to a re-solution which may aid in bringing color to the rose, blush to the peach, and the sweet scent to the violet; and all without incense or balsam. What more happy disposition of our ashes than to feel—yes, to know—that when we are done with them, they will add exquisite perfume to the air, verdure to the grass, and beautiful blush to the luscious fruit?

Familiarity with the history of burning the dead impresses one with the fact that it was of purely sani-

tary origin. It became identified with heathen worship because at the time everything was heathen. The Rev. Mr. Long, of Zurich, insists that religion has no title to mix itself up with the question, as the subject is essentially one of health and must so remain. So prominently, however, did the practice bring forth the idea of purification, that several semi-religious mystifications were born of it. Thus, by some, the body was supposed to be unclean after the soul had left it, and that fire alone could purify it. Others held that by burning the body the soul was finally loosed from the clay, and cleansed from the contaminations which it contracted in the flesh. As these ideas are buried with the past, we will let them there rest, and bring up sentiment born of living issues. "Many of our cemeteries are beautiful promenade parks, and every bright Sunday unsuspecting hundreds make in them little pilgrimages seeking fresh air and health; but only too sorrowful it is that they, by breathing the poisonous emanations from decompositions beneath the velvety turf, loiter in the 'valley of the shadow of death.'"

Darwin and Pasteur have demonstrated that the earth or angle-worms lift to the surface countless bacteria from the putrescence beneath; so by this process alone the air of cemeteries may be loaded with germs

of disease, and, as the Rev. Dr. Howard Henderson expresses it, "gayety over the grave blind revels keep," and the mould of the dead feeds and fattens the turf, and lays on the sward the snares that entrap the living to an untimely fate. "Gilded tombs do worms unfold, and when decay has done its ghastly work, a heap of dust alone remains." "Ashes are but the residuum of burned matter, the indestructible elements of substance, from which the ethereal constituents have been set free." "Every dead substance is the relic-ash of a previous fire, to be in turn itself consumed." "The sands and clays are the product of oxidation." "All life is a phœnix rising from the ashes of a funeral-pyre." "A tree is the mausoleum of its dead leaves." "Each ring of increase is dead wood kept from decay by the vital envelope of its last year's growth."

The human body lives by combustion; every muscular movement, every exhalation, every thought, every touch, every sound, every recognized act or deed—all, all, are at the expense of fuel. "Everywhere in Nature the fire of life burns up all its decay, and prepares it for new growth." Death is but a readjustment of conditions. "Putrefaction is a slow burning. Combustion crimsones the autumnal leaf, kindles the rose upon the cheek, and carnation upon

the lips." Why should *we* shrink from *this*, the most beneficent element in Nature, the brightest and best thing known to man, and without which all life would go out?

In readjusting our methods of disposing of the dead by the adoption of cremation or incineration, it is thoroughly consistent with the wisest evolutionary progress, and is, as just stated, favored by moral, economic, and sanitary considerations. It is a recognition of the demands of a rapidly increasing population. It concerns the living, and calls loudly upon them to look to their duty to the unborn. It will not down at the bidding of ignorance or prejudice; it is entitled to the coolest and most careful consideration from our wisest counsellors, as being the only resort or refuge left to a rapidly growing population, to save it in a short time from becoming one vast cemetery for the seeds of pestilence and ghastly horrors.

For the benefit of those who may not be familiar with the process, let me add that in incineration no fire comes in contact with the body, no flame touches the flesh or bones at any stage of the process. The body, either within or removed from the casket, is placed upon a cradle and noiselessly rolled into a retort. This, the incineration-chamber, built of fire-clay, is heated to about two thousand six hundred degrees Fahrenheit. When the door is opened for its reception,

a beautiful rosy light only is visible. The body is introduced, the door closed and cemented, and immediately all becomes incandescent; all the liquid elements entering into its composition are evaporated, leaving only about four per cent., or a little less, probably, of the matter of which it was constituted—four pounds of pure, beautiful pearly ashes to the hundredweight. These, freed from poison or offence, are gathered into an urn, or such receptacle as desired, and given to the relatives or friends, and by them placed in the ground, in a niche in the crematory, or such other locality as may be dictated by convenience or sentiment.

“There has been no burning of the body as in ancient times, nor as of a martyr at the stake.” “There has been neither smoke nor odor, nor crackling of flame.” All is done silently and with exquisite taste. There has been nothing to offend the sight, sound, or smell—the eye, the ear, or the nose—but in less than one hour the whole process has been completed, which, by the unscientific method, and with the greatest disregard of sanitary requirements, through earth-burial, it would have taken at least fifteen years, and probably twenty, in the soil around Philadelphia, and with such results and accompaniments as have already been detailed.

Our lesson of to-day involves not a question of opinion only, but a matter of fact, a truth, which has derived its importance from the accumulated knowledge of years. Now, will *you* regard it in the light of words spoken by a garrulous or chattering nurse, who betrays his danger to a sick man, or is it a truth the knowledge of which brings with it to your minds a full appreciation of the real situation, which must sooner or later make itself felt, and that more seriously to future generations than to the present?

Are we sufficiently awakened to the enormity of this practice of earth-burial that we shall endeavor earnestly to practically bring nearer to us the time when our much-enduring Mother Earth shall no longer be systematically poisoned? "Are all of us who are favorable to the method of cremation or incineration, willing forthwith to put into writing the desire that our remains shall not be buried, but shall be consumed according to the practice of cremation best attainable? If every individual would, in view of the uncertainty of life, place such a request in his or her desk, or other place of safekeeping, cremation would speedily prevail. The change from burial will otherwise be a protracted one, since few persons have enough strength of mind to run counter to the general

custom, fearing to invoke the displeasure of other relatives of the deceased."

"The most sensitive persons, however, have still a greater repugnance to doing anything contrary to the expressed wishes of the dead. If, therefore, such a wish can be exhibited, it will not only, as a rule, be religiously complied with, but all friends, whatsoever their own opinions, will be amply satisfied."

*Friends, think of it.*

From Chapter II. of Mr. Eassie's publication the following extracts on "Methods of Treating the Dead" are taken :

"The Colchians and Phrygians at one time hung the dead bodies upon the limbs of trees" (Frazer). "And some of the Indians of the plains of North America to the present day do little else, since they expose their dead, after a rude bandaging, upon platforms erected upon the top of tall poles." "Many ancient nations, however, purposely exposed their dead to the predatory instinct of animals. For instance, the Syrcanians abandoned their dead to wild dogs" (Spondanus). "The ancient Ethiopians threw their dead into the water, to be devoured by aquatic animals" (Frazer). "The Parsees, as far back as 400 B. C., and for an untraced time previously, exposed their deceased friends upon high gratings to feed birds of prey, and such 'towers of silence' are in use up to the present day."

Upon Dr. Aveling's authority, he states that "in India they are accustomed to carry the body to the top of a hill and place it upon a stone slab, returning for it in order to bury it when the bones are picked clean." "The Hindoos often expose their dead by the banks of their sacred river to the

attacks of the river monsters." "Casting the body into the deep is another form of exposure. This practice is common with all maritime nations on the occurrence of deaths out at sea." "This method of late has been recommended as a panacea for the ills seen to be consequent upon inhumation." "Many of the ancient peoples buried in caves. The primeval races frequently used caverns once inhabited by extinct beasts." "At the present day the Inguishes of the Caucasus bury in vaults of masonry built above ground." "The treatment of the dead known as embalming was carried on by the ancient Egyptians from apparently the remotest times. They believed in the transmigration of souls, and their return in three thousand years to the same body; hence the practice." "The ancient Peruvians used to dry their dead in the sun, and inter them in a sitting posture, bound in cotton cloth." "A tribe in South Australia place the deceased in a sitting posture near the top of the hut, and keep up fires until the body is dry, when they proceed to bandage it." "The Aino aboriginals of Japan, when a chief dies, lay the body out at the door of the hut, remove the viscera and wash it daily in the sun for a whole year. When completely dried the remains are put in a coffin and buried." "The most persistent practicers of inhumation or earth-burial are the Chinese. They seem rarely to have followed any other system of burial. The secret of their attachment to burial in the earth lies in the fact that they believe that the body must rest comfortably in the grave, or misfortune will follow the family." "There remains now only cremation, the origin of which practice is lost in obscurity. Nearly all ancient peoples observed it, the Chinese and the Jews being notable exceptions to this rule." "The ancient Germans and the ancient Lithuanians burnt their dead, placing the ashes in urns of unburnt clay and burying them in mounds." "In England cremation seems to have been com-

mon, as urns are unearthed from time to time ; also in parts of Ireland and Scotland." "In Hindoostan the system is all but universal ; and in Siam, where the ashes are frequently placed in urns of great value, it doubtless existed from the first peopling of the country." "Scarcely a year passes over our heads without adding to our list of cremation-practicing peoples."

The following is a partial list of illustrious characters, occupying various positions in society, who have spoken approvingly of the incineration of the dead:

Rev. Edward Everett Hale.  
Rev. Phillips Brooks.  
Rev. R. Heber Newton.  
Rev. John W. Chadwick.  
Rev. Robert W. Colyer.  
Bishop Henry C. Potter.  
Rev. D. S. Rainsford.  
Rev. Theodore C. Williams.  
Rev. R. S. McArthur.  
Prof. Brainard G. Smith.  
Prof. D. H. Cochran.  
Prof. Chas. Eliot Norton.  
Prof. Joseph Leidy.  
Charles A. Dana.  
Charles Dudley Warner.  
Hon. Charles Francis Adams.  
Josiah Quincy.  
Abram Hewitt.  
George William Curtis.  
Andrew Carnegie.

Of the above list of notables, Prof. Joseph Leidy was at his own request incinerated May 5, 1891.

ADDRESS OF  
M. M. MANGASARIAN,  
AT THE  
Dedication of the Buildings and Grounds  
OF THE  
PHILADELPHIA CREMATION SOCIETY.

---

THE question of the proper disposal of the dead is of interest to the living. Our ignorance, folly and prejudice cannot hurt the dead, but they can hurt us. The old method of disposal by burial is the method of tradition, of custom, and of the popular creeds ; the new method is that of Science, the apostle of light and knowledge—it is the method of Civilization. . . .

By the erection of this beautiful building your Society has given body to the thought of the philosopher and the wish of the philanthropist. . . .

Of all the teachers of a new idea, of all the prophets of a new order, the world has asked the

stereotyped question, "But what will you give us in the place of the old?" The trustees and friends of this Society should have no difficulty in answering that question: "We give, in the place of the old, the purifying fire lit by Science and Philanthropy; in the place of the dark tomb we offer a luminous chamber; instead of the slow and lingering decay of the grave, a sudden transformation; and instead of the corruption of the sepulchre, behold the immaculate flame which has been worshiped by the ancients as the emblem of deity and regarded by all philosophers as the symbol of the soul." . . .

In your work, which is consummated on this day, I find another excellent tendency. "In death," say the Scriptures, "there is neither rich nor poor." Under the prevailing method of interment this has been impossible. Even in the cemeteries the lines of class and caste, of rank and riches, have been sharply drawn. The spirit of pomp and parade has sought to exhibit its trifling ornaments upon the very brink of the grave. Ah! the vanity of man! What other idol devours as much of the material and moral substance of man as this idol of Show? The poor are made to feel their poverty to the bitter end by the prevailing burial customs. There is more truth than poetry in the saying that "the poor cannot afford to die."

Will it not be in accordance with the teachings of the highest religion to spend the immense fortune which is annually sunk in cemeteries for the education and elevation of the living? The temptation to waste and extravagance is reduced to a minimum by this new method; no injury is done to the dead, while the resources of the living are multiplied. You offer the same retort for the millionaire and the beggar, for the prince and the peasant; the same rosy heat to dissolve their unconscious bodies and return them once more to Nature—to the streams and stars, to the flowers and wheatfields; into the bread which we eat, the clothes which we wear, and the fragrant roses which the maiden carries on her bosom. . . .

Your Society is also helping to remove the blind prejudice of the masses against Science and the ways of Science. It is the mission of Science to bless man, to diminish his fears, to add to his joy and light. We shall be delivered from the thoughts and associations inseparable from coffin-burial, and which are horrible beyond description, when we lay aside our bias and adopt the scientific method. I am sure there are many who shrink from your idea and denounce it as irreligious; but why fear the opposition of prejudice and ignorance, when Science has promised her unfailing support? Who are the advocates of cremation? The

philosophers, the philanthropists, the liberal and enlightened thinkers of every land, Christian and pagan. Who are the advocates of the cemeteries and their disease-breeding contamination? Only the orthodox priests, whose power over the human mind is certainly decreasing. The friends of the old method admit that the cemeteries under the very nose of the cities are a menace to the health of the living; they poison our springs, infect the atmosphere, and propagate germs of disease which Science is seeking to destroy; but they have not the courage to look a new idea in the face.

While they are hesitating, you are acting.

There is one great argument in favor of cremation which cannot fail to influence all: the motive of the intelligent believer in cremation is not a spite against the old creeds and customs, or a desire to be eccentric, nor is it selfish, but purely—and this is a grand, a sincere wish—that no harm may result to the living from his remains. He prefers cremation not for his own sake—it is a matter of little consequence to him how his body is disposed of—but for the sake of the living. The thought that his remains will within a few hours return to Nature to bless the world, instead of being locked up in the coffin to rot and sow the seeds of disease, adds to the peacefulness of his

dying moments. Even in the shadow of death the philanthropist does not forget his brethren: he plans for them to the very last, and his disinterestedness makes even his death an act of worship. . . .

My friends, I believe in your method because it liberalizes the mind, because it is a great economizer; I believe in it because it strips the grave of its terrors, its ghastly pictures—it smooths the passage to death. I believe in your method because it teaches the beautiful lesson of unselfishness to the dying, which adds to the goodness of their character and the fragrance of their memory. I believe in cremation as the only rational and religious method for the disposal of the remains of the dead because it is *necessary* to the health and safety of the living.

To-day you have to struggle against the three hoary enemies of all progress—Ignorance, Prejudice and Fear—but the time is not far distant when humanity will look upon the man who does not wish his remains cremated as one who neglects his duty.

ADDRESS BY  
REV. M. C. LOCKWOOD,

Pastor of the First Baptist Church,  
AT THE DEDICATION OF THE CREMATORY AT  
CINCINNATI, OHIO.

---

THE man who is opposed to cremation because of its pagan origin, is the equal in intelligence of the man who accepts it for the same reason. I am not discussing the virtue of one as compared with the other : I am simply referring to their mutual intelligence. That cremation was a pagan custom is admitted ; but so are earth-burial and sepulture. The embalmed remains of the Pharaohs and the exhumed mummies bear witness that Egypt did not burn its dead. In China the custom was earth-burial. Greece and Rome practiced cremation, at least during the period of their early civilization. It is true that early Christianity opposed cremation, and is responsible for the abolition of the custom ; but they did it from reasons of prejudice and superstition. At first prejudice was the chief element in their opposition ; for,

hating the customs and associations of the old-time mythology, they sought to destroy every custom that was in any wise related thereto. It is possible that if Europe in its paganism had been used to earth-burial, the early Christians would have adopted cremation; and that would have resulted, possibly, in some modern cremationists desiring to return to earth-burial. He whose creed is determined by his prejudices would have thriven better in the fourteenth century than now.

The practice of cremation has not one single reason in the Scriptures for its rejection. It is urged that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried, and that Christ was buried. None of these were buried in the earth; they were sepultured in harmony with the custom of the times. There is no authority in the record of a custom. They wore sandals, or went without hose—is that an imperative duty for us? Biblical customs are not examples. Moral life and ritual of worship may be an authoritative example; but he stultifies himself who converts a custom into authority and insists that it is an example. The body of Jesus was embalmed: why not exact embalming of His disciples?

There is no doubt that cremation was driven out of Europe, and has since been kept out of both

Europe and America, by the doctrine of a physical resurrection, no matter how absurd such a theory of future life may be, both to the theologian or the scientist of to-day. Lord Shaftesbury swept the whole force of the objection out of the way by asking, "What would in such a case become of the blessed martyrs?" And the scientific man of to-day teaches me that cremation does for the body just what earth does, but by a quicker process, so that in the end the same result is attained in both; while cremation provides a way of escape from the horror of slow decay and hideous putrefaction and from the "small, cold worm that fretteth the enshrouded form." The end of both the incineration and earth-burial of bodies is the same, or of bodies buried at sea; each path leads to oxidation. The grave way is one of loathsome festering amid the brotherhood of our degradation—the worms—where we slowly drop to pieces in the mould, to be at last but a handful of dust and ashes. The heated retort reaches the same goal, but by a path less loathsome. The physical-resurrection contingent is the same in both cases.

The superstition which sprang up relating to the miraculous value of the bodies and bones of dead saints enhanced the value of skeletons. Bones were in demand in the markets of the ignorant and the mis-

guided, and the more skeletons that a priest or monk owned, the richer he might be in the comforts of life, or the possessions of his church might be augmented. The stamp of priestly authority was given to earth-burial, and the bodies and bones of the dead became associated with the religious beliefs of the age. This is the method by which burial became the Christian custom of disposing of the dead. Whatever the denomination or creed of a people, there exists no religious or theological reason for being anti-cremationists.

This question of cremation has a sanitary relation, and in so far as sanitation is in the sphere of religion, just so far does cremation demand its advocacy. Bishop Coxe, the most violent opposer of cremation in this country, admits that if cremation is necessary to the health and safety of mankind, it is the duty of all Christians to submit. That is just where the whole question lies; and the duty becomes more than that of submission; for the law of love to our neighbor, the interest in the health and life of the community, demands that we not only submit, but become the advocates of it.

"Oh," says another, "but think of the horror of it!" All the horror you feel is only the result of your education; there is nothing more horrible than the accident of being buried alive. There is no more awful

fear that can possess the mind than to die in the confinement of the narrow house. The possibility of this is averted. And is heated air as awful as the thought of the slow corruption of the loved form? Can there be any sound in this crematory so wounding as that of the earth falling on the coffin-lid? or the grating reminder of loneliness produced by the drawing of ropes and straps away from the lowered coffin? We surround the earth where our dead are laid with all the poetry we can, and our great city cemeteries with all the beauty that we can, and it is but the urgency of a sentiment that seeks to make us forget the rotting mass of decay below the soil.

But no sentiment can rid us of the awful fact that these burial-grounds become the sources of disease and death to thousands who breathe the air that they contaminate. Gen. Butler's article on the yellow-fever plague in the *North American Review* is the latest comment on the necessity of cremation, showing as it does that the bodies are filled in their decay with the power of multiplying and propagating the scourge.

The cemetery system is at best only temporary. The growth of population is so fast that the bodies of the dead must give way to homes for the living.

But, says another, the building of crematories is only undertaken by infidels and skeptics. They are

to be commended, then, for manifesting some intelligence in one direction at least. But the statement is not true. It may be as regards this city ; I do not know. But I am informed that, if it is so, it is due to the fact that the orthodox are so intensely conservative in Cincinnati that they resent all reforms of every description, social, political, moral and sanitary. No intelligent skeptic for a moment supposes that cremation antagonizes religion. The crematories of Washington, New York and Buffalo, or of Detroit and Atlanta, were not builded as a challenge to Christian faith. And the very fact that the crematory company of this city has invited the orthodox pastor of an orthodox church to speak to you to-day, is proof that they do not dedicate this place to the uses of an eternal despair. I know not how the clergy of this city stand on this subject, but throughout the country many of the ministers are giving their support to this movement, notably Rev. Herbert G. Loyd and Dr. Samuel S. Mitchell, of Buffalo ; also Mr. Haweis, of London, the author of "Ashes to Ashes : A Cremation Prelude." These have been active in this reform movement.

There is one more Christian reason for advocating cremation, and that is the enormous amount of money expended or sunk in cemeteries. It is a pity

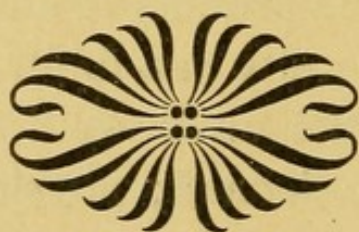
that death should not only bring sorrow to the poor man's home, but that it should be a calamity to his purse. I know more than one man in this city who has lost his children, and who carries not only a sore heart, but the burden of a heavy debt. The widow's and the orphan's scanty purse is heavily drained by the customs of our burial system; it is to be hoped that this will bring in a better and less expensive system. I have known of a house in this city where the body of a child was kept until putrefaction began, because of the inability of the father to provide a proper burial. It is said that more money is spent in funerals in the United States than there is expended for public schools. It is further stated that funerals cost more annually than the value of the combined gold and silver yield of the United States in the year 1880.

So upon every side cremation has that to commend it to the thoughtful and the good. As much of sentiment can cluster around the crematory and its emblems as around vaults and graves. To-day our very cemeteries are filled with the emblems of the cremation customs of the classic age. On the marble monuments are urns in which are no ashes, and the inverted torches which are borrowed symbols of the better custom. A beautiful vase for the ashes of our

dead is a more lasting and fitting memorial than an expensive coffin which is buried out of sight. It were more beautiful to wreath a cluster of roses about the vase of ashes than to tie a bunch of immortelles to the door of a foul and gloomy vault! It were far more beautiful to think of our dead lying in the rosy light of the retort than in the churchyard mould and rot!

For myself, believing as I do in immortality and the resurrection of the dead, I care not what becomes of this physical body. It is only the link or bond by which my personality is adjusted to the physical processes of this world. That bond broken, that link severed, I am willing that it shall be disposed of in any way that shall best serve those who are yet upon the earth. I am the product of an eternity, and nothing less than an eternity can fulfill my destiny. "We are correlated to the unknown." The limitations of the material can be defined; physical changes may be understood; we can at least name them and observe them; but the projection of our nature into the world of spirit may abide as unshaken in all the beauty of its hope in the heart of man as it grieves by its urned dead, as by the brink of the yawning grave. There is as much room in God's universe for the love and joy and unselfishness of noble spirits as there is for

the dust and ashes that encased them. Death is the limit of our vision ; but with God there is no death. "Unto Him all live." And whether I lay my dead in a churchyard or gather up their ashes in a funeral urn, my hope shall ever light the way along some shining path for them that leads at last to where all they have loved and longed for shall come and put its arms about them and be theirs forever !



## Opinions on the Incineration of the Dead.

---

ST. PAUL'S RECTORY CHESTNUT HILL,

PHILADELPHIA, September 10, 1890.

DEAR SIR :—I am perfectly willing to go on record for myself individually, and have no hesitation in saying that from almost every point of view, and chiefly from a sanitary point of view, I regard incineration preferable to earth-burial. It accomplishes in an hour or two precisely the same results as require years by the rotting process, and accomplishes those results, according to my way of thinking, in a more satisfactory way. The only so-called theological objections which I have heard urged against incineration have appeared to me without any weight, and some of them have a fair title to be called absurd. It is an honorable, reverent and cleanly disposition of the bodies of the dead ; it is a vast protection to the bodies of the living in ways which every sanitarian knows perfectly well.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) J. ANDREWS HARRIS.

PHILADELPHIA, January 22, 1890.

DEAR SIR :—It gives me much satisfaction to have an opportunity to express publicly my earnest approval of cremation as a mode of disposing of the bodies of the dead. I strongly desire to promote this reform. It must certainly be forced upon our communities before long by the dangers incident to the enormous accumulation of human remains, in all stages of decomposition, about our and other large cities. When the

peril from this source becomes duly appreciated, especially as it exists in Philadelphia, where our water supply is so obviously exposed to contamination from the cemeteries along its course, a safer custom will be imperatively demanded by all thoughtful people.

While it costs, at present, some moral effort to adopt the method of cremation, I am persuaded that it will ultimately come to seem, æsthetically, even more attractive than burial. We cannot now let our imagination follow the remains of our dead. By the system of cremation they pass through no process of decay, but by a purest conceivable mode of dissolution swiftly exhale. In several instances with which I have been familiar, the remains of persons, who had themselves so directed, have been disposed of by cremation. In each case, their relatives have assured me very emphatically of the refinement and tenderness of all the incidents of the process as actually conducted, and of their full conversion to the reformed method.

I urge it upon all, as a duty to the public, to encourage its adoption.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) JOSEPH MAY,

Pastor of the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia.

1624 MOUNT VERNON STREET,

PHILADELPHIA, PA., January 14, 1891.

MY DEAR SIR:—I am glad to express my approval of cremation as a substitute for burial in disposing of the bodies of the dead. It seems to me that cremation is preferable on every account. Even on grounds of sentiment, heat, the great purifying force, is far pleasanter to contemplate than decay—a process associated with corruption. And considered from the point of view of reason and common sense, there can be no question of the advantage of cremation.

During the past year I have officiated at two funerals when the bodies of the deceased were cremated, and in observing carefully the process, I could not see anything which need offend the most critical taste, but, on the contrary, there was gratifying exemption from many unpleasant features of earth-burial. I cannot doubt that this reform will commend itself more and more to thoughtful people. The Philadelphia Cremation Society, in my judgment, is a most beneficent institution and one that deserves the encouragement of all public-spirited people in this community. The society has done well in adopting a plan which permits the providing for cremation upon such easy terms.

I take satisfaction in having been enabled myself to arrange for the final disposition of my body by this method, and I desire to let my influence be exerted in behalf of so important a reform.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) REV W. I. NICHOLS.

3502 HAMILTON STREET,

PHILADELPHIA, March 6, 1890.

MY DEAR SIR :—I am decidedly in favor of cremation. In my opinion, every consideration is in favor of it. There can be no doubt of its sanitary usefulness. In this respect it must tend to the saving of life, especially in large cities. When the mind becomes accustomed to it, it must be much more agreeable to think of the cast-off garment of the material body being restored to its original elements by the pure process of super-heated air than the customary one of dissolution and corruption. It would also tend to lead the mind to dwell less upon the material body and more upon the spiritual body, which constitutes the real man and which continues to live in the human form in the spiritual world, its destined home. It must also in time work a favorable change in the conduct of funerals,

which are often expensive and made excruciatingly painful by the services and especially by the interment. I see no objection to cremation in any respect, but everything in its favor. It will require time to gain the favor of public opinion, but in the end it must succeed. Very truly yours,

(Signed) REV. CHAUNCEY GILES.

WEST WALNUT LANE, GERMANTOWN,

PHILADELPHIA, January 31, 1890.

DEAR SIR:—In reply to your favor of the 21st, it gives me pleasure to say that I believe cremation to be hygienically the proper method of disposing of the dead.

Very truly,

(Signed) REV. CHARLES WOOD.

148 EAST FORTY-SIXTH STREET,

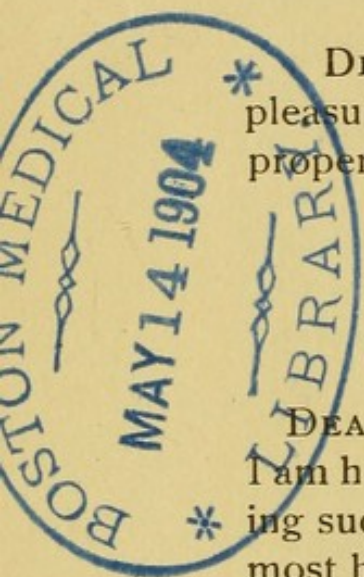
NEW YORK, January 8, 1889.

DEAR SIR:—In reply to your note, I can state very truly that I am heartily in sympathy with the Cremation Society, considering such disposition of human remains as the wisest, cleanest, most healthful and economical method of disposing of what is no longer of any use, and must in time become a positive source of injury. If graveyards continue to be filled, the cities of the dead will in time become more populous than the cities of the living, and will threaten the existence of populous communities. Justice to the living, and the sentiment we cherish for the dead, seem to me best satisfied by the quick diffusion of the shell they no longer inhabit, and the possession of that inurned residuum which, like a lock of hair or remnant of a robe they have worn, we may keep and guard.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. C. CROLY.

("Jennie June.")



## Extracts from "Medical Reporter."

---

What DR. WM. HUNT says.

Hygienically speaking, he is of the firm opinion that cremation is the only right and proper method for the disposal of the dead. Of this he thinks there can be no doubt. The popular prejudice against cremation, he says, is most absurd. Whether the body is buried or incinerated, it is cremation, all the same; the only difference being that in the one method the combustion is very slow, and in the other very rapid. Ultimately the body becomes dust, and it is merely a question of, perhaps, twenty odd years or a few hours. Regarding the desires of his family, he would be apt to follow their requests as to the disposal of their bodies, but would not for a moment hesitate to incinerate them, should they desire so. Dr. Hunt does not believe in graveyards, in visiting and mourning over the graves of our dead, or in covering them with flowers. He prefers to think of the dead as they have been when alive, and not associate their memory with the horror of death. He most heartily advocates the introduction of cremation into this country.

DR. HENRY HARTSHORNE states:

He is very favorably impressed with cremation. He heartily favors the entire destruction of the dead body. Its preservation, such as embalming or mummifying, is most distasteful to him. For it to be speedily reduced to its natural

elements is pleasant and proper, both æsthetically and sentimentally. Our present methods of disposing of the dead are far from what they should be. The open grave, the lowering of the casket, the weeping relatives, the rattling of the earth upon the coffin, are all most revolting. If incineration does away with the painful and unnecessary adjuncts of death, it is sentimentally as well as hygienically far superior to inhumation.

What MISS FRANCES E. WILLARD says in her "Glimpses of Fifty Years."

I have the purpose to help forward progressive movements even in my latest hours, and hence hereby decree that the earthly mantle which I shall drop ere long, when my real self passes onward into the world unseen, shall be swiftly enfolded in flames and rendered powerless harmfully to affect the health of the living. Let no friend of mine say aught to prevent the cremation of my cast-off body. The fact that the popular mind has not come to this decision renders it all the more my duty, who have seen the light, to stand for it in death, as I have sincerely meant in life to stand by the great cause of poor, oppressed humanity. There must be explorers along all pathways, scouts in all armies. This has been my "call" from the beginning, both by nature and by nurture ; let me be true to its inspiring and cheery mandate even "unto this last."

---

*From Julia Thomas, Conservatory of Elocution and Physical Culture, New York.*

MY DEAR SIR:—Success attend your worthy efforts, and right speedily ! We want protection for the living, and the best way to secure it is to cremate not only our dead and decaying, cast-off garments of clay, but everything that infests

the air and soil and water with the germs of sickness, disease and death. We, the ladies of the Health Protection Association, are doing good work in agitating the subject of cremating the garbage, and can report some good results already. Come to our aid, and we shall be glad to cast our influence with you! My sister and self were long ago converted to a faith in cremation. One has such a horror of rotting slowly back to the elements of one's material being! Who does not prefer the sweeter, cleaner, swifter process of "rosy heat"? A few years ago the upper Delaware was flooded with the melting snows of spring, and the turbid, swollen stream overflowed its banks and washed out a number of graves in the country burying-grounds. When the floods had abated, dead bodies and skeletons were found strewn along the banks and dangling from trees, which had been partly inundated. The sight was most shocking to the friends of the deceased and demoralizing to every passer-by, but making a most impressive object-lesson in favor of cremation. We, who were witnesses of this event, are haunted even to this day by the horrible sight.

Most cordially yours,

JULIA THOMAS.

*From E. C. Seguin, M. D., New York.*

419 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, Feb. 1, 1889.

MY DEAR SIR:—In reply to your question as to my opinion of cremation of the dead, I would say that I entirely approve of it for general reasons, and also on the score of hygiene and the prevention of disease.

Yours respectfully,

E. C. SEGUIN, M. D.

*From Mrs. Lippincott ("Grace Greenwood").*

15 EAST 59TH STREET, NEW YORK, Jan. 20, 1889.

DEAR SIR:—I have given a great deal of serious thought to

the subject of cremation, and heartily endorse all movements in that direction. The world, even the Christian, must come to it finally—though it denounce it now ever so sternly as “a heathen custom.” The world must come to it, or see the above-ground living poisoned by their under-ground dead. For economic as well as sanitary reasons I would advocate cremation. I saw much of the working of the system at Milan; saw that it took a great burden of care and expense from poor families, bereaved and left in straitened circumstances. Surely, it is the simplest, the surest and purest manner of rendering “ashes to ashes”—of giving back our mortal part to the immortal elements.

Respectfully yours, GRACE GREENWOOD.

*From Charles A. Dana, Editor of “The Sun,” New York.*

NEW YORK, Feb. 16, 1889.

DEAR SIR :—It is my judgment that cremation is the most rational and appropriate manner of disposing of the dead.

Yours truly, C. A. DANA.

*From the Rev. R. Heber Newton, D. D., New York.*

GARDEN CITY, L. I., Jan. 29, 1889.

MY DEAR SIR :—Yours of January 19th is at hand. I am glad of an opportunity of expressing my interest in the work of the Cremation Society. For many years I have thoroughly believed in cremation—on a variety of grounds. Having tried to make my life one of usefulness to my fellows, I object to the possibility of injuring any one after I am dead. The thought that what I cannot take away with me to a higher form of life is to be left as a means of poisoning life, is abhorrent to me. I prefer that my body shall be so disposed of as to put this out of the question. The religious objection has always been nonsensical to my mind.

Believing thoroughly in a life to come, I have not the slightest notion of that higher life being conditioned in any possible way by the way in which we get into it. Nothing but the stupid prejudice of a blind orthodoxy could allow any notion of this kind to have weight. In so far as it does have weight, it ought to be exposed and ridiculed. I have also for years had the intensest horror of thinking any one dear to me undergoing the noxious process of decomposition, as we have made sure that it shall be made noxious by our whole mode of interment. I want those I love to pass from this life to a higher life without any such abhorrent decomposition of the form once dear to me. On every hand cremation has commended itself to my judgment, and I am sure that it is destined to prevail in the future. I expect to be disposed of thus myself, and do not know of any expression of opinion which I could offer that would have more weight than this.

Yours truly, R. HEBER NEWTON.

*From the Rev. Wm. Hayes Ward, D. D., LL. D., Editor of  
"The Independent."*

NEW YORK, Feb. 14, 1889.

MY DEAR SIR:—I am aware of no argument against cremation that deserves consideration, and I regard that method of disposing of the bodies of the dead as intelligent reason and unperverted taste.

Very truly yours, WILLIAM HAYES WARD.

*From the Rev. Phillips Brooks, D. D., Boston Mass.*

233 CLARENDON STREET,

BOSTON, MASS., Feb. 16, 1889.

MY DEAR SIR:—I believe that there are no true objections to the practice of cremation, and a good many excellent reasons why it should become common.

Yours truly, PHILLIPS BROOKS.

*From the Rev. Howard Henderson, D. D., LL. D., of Trinity  
M. E. Church, Cincinnati, O.*

I made one of the addresses at the laying of the cornerstone of the Crematory of the U. S. Cremation Co. (Limited). I wrote an article in favor of cremation in the *New York Christian Advocate*. There is nothing in cremation that is anti-Scriptural. It is not opposed to the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, else what will become of the martyrs that have perished at the stake and the thousands of Christians who have been consumed in burning buildings and ships?

It is simply a question of sentiment, sanitation and economy. It is to my mind more æsthetic than earth-burial. I have never seen an argument against it except that it destroys the evidence of felonious poisoning, and this can be evaded by a chemical analysis of the contents of the stomach, which is not more objectionable than the process of embalming; and if such a test were made by experts in every case, it would add largely to a knowledge of the pathology of disease, and thus contribute vast benefits to the living. There is no real objection to cremation other than that arising from prejudice based on long usage and ignorance of the process of incineration by evaporation produced by incandescent heat. Putrefaction is a slow burning (*eremaca in sio*), and is chemically the same thing done by a protracted *rot* through years, as that performed by rapid oxidization of the solids and fluids by intense heat in an hour of time. Science smiles at the apparition which misapprehension conjures, as it does at many illusions held and hugged by the ignorant. Let the friends of cremation be patient, adopting for their guidance the words of Paul: "Though I give my body to be burned and have not charity, I am nothing." Let the foes of cremation examine the sub-

ject, and candid judgment will compel a dispelling of every objection the imagination has created. Time is the great truth-teller.

HOWARD HENDERSON.

*Miss Kate Field's Reply to Letter Sent Her by the Company.*

I am a cremationist because earth-burial poisons earth, air and water, and consequently breeds disease among the living. Much of what is called malaria is nothing more nor less than the result of cemetery gases generated in the vicinity. Many a New England town is now subject to zymotic diseases because the inhabitants are drinking up their ancestors' remains in the sparkling well water, which is considered healthy merely because it is clear. This is no indication whatever of purity. Cremation is not only the healthiest and cleanest, but the most poetical way of disposing of the dead. Whoever prefers loathsome worms to ashes possesses a strange imagination.—*From the Evening Telegram, January 12, 1889.*

*From William A. Hammond, M. D., of the Sanitarium for Diseases of the Nervous System, Washington, D. C.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 27, 1889.

DEAR SIR :—I have for many years past been heartily in favor of the cremation of the dead. So far as I can influence the matter, I shall be cremated myself at the proper time.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM A. HAMMOND.

DIAMONDS.

WATCHES.

I. Herzberg & Bro.,  
PRACTICAL WATCHMAKERS AND JEWELERS,

S. E. COR. EIGHTH & ARCH STS.

—ESTABLISHED 1861.—

A well-selected assortment of Diamonds, Watches, Clocks, Jewelry, Spectacles, Opera Glasses, Solid Silver and Silver-Plated Ware, at moderate prices.

Quality guaranteed as represented.

**REPAIRING & DONE.**

Bronze Cremation Urns furnished to Crematories at wholesale.

SPECTACLES.

SILVERWARE.

DEUTSCHE APOTHEKE.  
EMIL JUNGSMANN,  
APOTHECARY.

---

Rare Chemicals, Elegant Pharmaceutical Preparations.

A COMPLETE LINE OF

The S. & J. Antiseptic Dressings, Gauzes,  
Surgical Sponges, Cottons,

Ahles' Felt Splints, Hypodermic Syringes,

Pocket Cases, Thermometers,

—AND—

GENERAL PHYSICIANS' SUPPLIES,

Ligatures, Drainage Tubes, Silver Wire, Etc.

---

S. W. CORNER FOURTH AND NOBLE STS.,  
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

BRANCH STORE, 220 VINE STREET.

The Compounding of Physicians' Prescriptions is our Specialty.  
None but competent clerks employed. Charges moderate.  
Goods delivered to all parts of the City.

 A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. 

---

A Respectable Funeral at moderate rates can be obtained by applying at the Main Office of the

**FUNERAL • REFORM • ASSOCIATION.**

**MAIN OFFICE,**

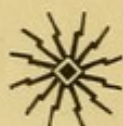
242 Franklin Street.

Furnishing Undertakers.

---

**BRANCH OFFICES,**

77 NORTH THIRTY-EIGHTH STREET,



741 GRAY'S FERRY ROAD,

1037 SPRING GARDEN STREET.

## Special Notice to Advocates of Cremation.

---

In order to make cremations more popular and less expensive to the public in general, the Funeral Reform Association of Philadelphia offers the following:

On the payment of sixty (60) consecutive monthly assessments of one dollar (\$1.00) each, the Association will provide for

The services of an undertaker.

The preparation of the body.

A suitable furnished casket, or coffin.

The use of a hearse and two carriages.

A certificate of cremation and a receptacle for the ashes.

The contracts of the above Association are guaranteed by the Philadelphia Cremation Society.

# PHILADELPHIA ✦ CREMATION ✦ SOCIETY.

Office, 242 Franklin Street.

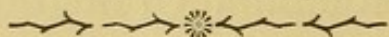


## Crematory and Columbarium,

East Washington Lane, Germantown.

A SHORT DISTANCE FROM WALNUT LANE STATION.

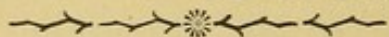
TAKE TRAIN FROM 9TH AND GREEN STREETS.



B. TRAUTMANN, M.D., PRESIDENT.

H. E. KEILIG, MANAGER.

JOHN B. MENCKE, SECRETARY.



ORGANIZED MARCH, 1887.

BUILDING COMPLETED OCTOBER, 1888.

TO answer numerous inquiries, and to give general information—for which there seems to be an urgent need—in regard to our methods of disposing of the bodies of the dead, this circular is issued.

This æsthetic method of the disposition of our dead is highly endorsed by the professors of our medical institutions and eminent physicians and clergy.

The building erected on the grounds of the Cheltenham Hills Cemetery is the finest of its kind in the United States, and the only one which contains a Chapel, with a seating-capacity for three hundred persons. It has an extensive Columbarium, with niches for the preservation of the ashes of the dead, and has the most approved apparatus for the incineration of bodies.

Notice should be given to the Society, either direct or through the undertaker, fifteen hours before the incineration is to take place.

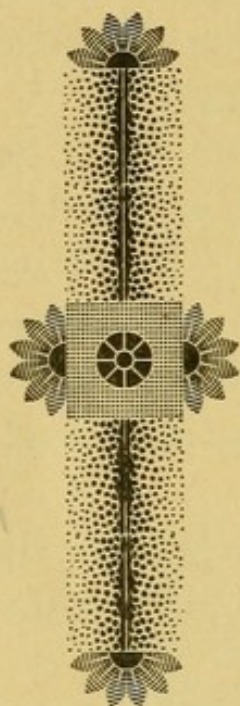
The retort in which the corpse is placed is heated to a temperature of 2600 degrees Fahr., and the confined heated air reduces the corpse to clean, white ashes in about ninety minutes. This will, possibly, correct a popular fallacy—that the corpse comes in direct contact with the flames.

Carriages will drive out Broad Street, Old York Road, and Limekiln Pike to Washington Lane and the grounds.

Our coach meets the following Sunday afternoon trains: 1.35, 2.15 and 3.10 P. M.; on weekdays, 1.45 and 2.30 P. M.

DID YOU FIND THIS BOOK INTERESTING?

---



Possibly you may want one printed; if so, we should be pleased to tell you what we know about BOOKMAKING from a mechanical point of view. Or you may need PRINTING of another description. No matter what it is, we can serve you, be your wants large or small.

**Billstein & Son,**



**PRINTERS,**

**41 N. TENTH STREET,  
PHILADELPHIA.**



**TYPOGRAVURE WORK A SPECIALTY.**

