

¶A strange and ghastly experience.

## BURIED ALIVE

A CERTAIN man by the name of Abner Sneed, of Denver, awoke one day to find himself in a narrow oblong box, lined with white satin.

He could see this much out of the corner of his eye. He was, of course, startled and frightened by the sight, and tried at once to rise, but he found that, even with great effort, he was unable to do so, and that he was unable to move any part of his body but his eyes. He tried to call out, and was astounded to discover that while he could plainly hear everything that was going on around him he was incapable of making a sound.

He could hear voices. By listening he discovered, to his horror, that he was consciously attending his own funeral services, and that he was listening to his own funeral sermon.

He suddenly felt very weak and faint—too weak to keep his eyes open any longer. And so he closed them again and lay quite still—barely conscious. Finally he was again aroused to objective consciousness by hearing the words "Grandview Cemetery," spoken in a subdued bass voice.

He now felt quite calm, and he remembered thinking how strange it was that he should be amused. He had always detested funerals, and had never been known to attend one before.

Presently he could hear the lid of the coffin being fastened on. He could hear the screw-driver occasionally slipping out of the slots in the screws and rubbing against the wooden box.

And now they were bumping the casket down the front steps. He could tell that the pallbearers were having some trouble in handling the coffin, and at one time the box was almost dropped on the pavement. Sneed was a big fat man.

At last, he was able to open his eyes again, but as he could see nothing in the darkness he closed them again. He now began to experience great difficulty in breathing. And then finally there came a great roaring noise in his ears, which kept increasing in intensity until it finally ended in a terrific explosion. That is the last he remembered until he awoke as the box was being lowered into the grave.

Summoning up his last ounce of strength, with a will born of desperation, he was able at last to let out a frightful scream. As he did so, a hand was suddenly placed across his mouth, and he could hear the dentist

say in a hoarse, sepulchral voice:

"My gosh, I pulled out the wrong tooth! I suppose we'll have to give him the gas all over again."—*Arthur Foster, condensed from Modern Tempo.*

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## Mental Age

THE oft-quoted statement that the average American has a mental age of fourteen years is grossly misunderstood.

Intelligence tests merely demonstrate the ability to learn and to solve problems. They take no account of knowledge, experience, skill, and common sense. They do not measure wisdom.

A glib but shiftless and irresponsible man might obtain a high rating in an intelligence test, whereas a substantial citizen, although considered a successful and desirable member of his community, might be classed among the fourteen-year-olds.

"Mental age," as used by psychologists, is a highly technical term. Although the psychologists are not in agreement, it is generally conceded that full mental maturity is reached at sixteen or seventeen years. The "capacity to learn" is then as high as it will ever be. If this is kept in mind, the fourteen-year average for the general public does not seem so bad.

But, though the growth of pure intelligence may cease at fourteen or sixteen, the accumulation of knowledge and experience continues as long as a person lives. Good citizens are people whose behavior can be forecast. The permanence of civilization is dependent on the actions of the masses—their thrift, patriotism, industry, and judgment. These are qualities that are developed throughout life.

Unfortunately, the fourteen-year idea has been so twisted out of its technical meaning that we have editors and builders of radio programs struggling to reduce standards so that their product may make a universal appeal. The stupidity of such efforts is clear when we realize that though the "mental age" of a fourteen-year-old girl and forty-year-old woman may be the same, there probably is as much difference between them as between a puppy and a wise old dog.—*The William Feather Magazine.*