**“‘The Open Grave’” The Bible Echo 15, 15-16.**

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In the city of Hanover, Germany, there is in one of the churchyards a grave which attracts the attention of hundreds of visitors every year. Pictures of it are to be found for sale in nearly every stationer’s shop, and it is known far and wide as “The open grave.” The history of it is in brief this:- {BEST April 16, 1900, par. 1}

More than a hundred years ago a woman was buried there, and the following inscription (whether by her own direction or not, I do not know) was placed on the lowermost stone of the tomb: “This grave, purchased for eternity, must never be opened.” The grave, as will be seen from the cut, was covered with heavy stones, the top one being a solid block that doubtless weighs not less than a ton, and all the stones were firmly bound together with iron bands. But no human device can hinder the working of the power of life. Either a seed fell into the grave before it was closed up, or else a shoot from a tree penetrated the grave from beneath, and in obedience to the law of life, proceeded to make its way to the light. {BEST April 16, 1900, par. 2}

Slowly and imperceptibly, but with irresistible power it forced its way between the huge stones, and burst every iron band. Now there is not a single stone left in its original position, although no hand of man has ever presumed to try to move them. {BEST April 16, 1900, par. 3}

A vigorous birch tree is now growing from the open grave which was to remain closed to all eternity. The tree is flattened where it comes in contact with the huge covering stone, so that it fills the entire aide of the grave, but immediately above the block it assumes the natural, round shape, and is about fifteen inches in diameter. {BEST April 16, 1900, par. 4}

There is in the same churchyard another grave that has been opened in the same manner by a small locust tree, but it does not attract the attention that the first one does, since it has no inscription and no iron clamps. Both however teach the same thing, namely, the power of life. {BEST April 16, 1900, par. 5}

How easily the voice of God sounding from heaven can rend all the tombs! That voice which at the last day will shake the earth, and open every grave, is but the same voice which in the beginning said, Let the earth bring forth grass and trees; and although no sound of it is heard, that Word is able, as we have seen to break every bond. That is the power of the resurrection. {BEST April 16, 1900, par. 6}

But the power of the resurrection of the last day is only the power which Jesus Christ, who is risen from the dead, exerts in every believer. He is near to every soul, with all the power of His resurrection life. “The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the Word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Romans 10:8, 9. {BEST April 16, 1900, par. 7}

That Word, which at the last will open every grave, and whose power is shown in the bursting of the iron bands that were designed to keep the Hanover grave closed, is able to burst every bond that would hold any soul down to this earth and its grovelling life. Jesus still comes as of old, anointed with the Holy Spirit, “to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” Who will listen to Him? “Hear, and your soul shall live.” {BEST April 16, 1900, par. 8}

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