

My Fellow Laborer.

By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

CHAPTER I.—(CONTINUED.)

A year after my marriage my wife unhappily became the victim of a bad accident in a cab, as a result of which our child John was a cripple from his birth. To this unfortunate babe, Miss Denely, or Fanny, as we called her, took a violent affection, which, as the child's intelligence expanded, was amply returned. Indeed, he cared more for her than for his mother and myself put together, and I think that the cause of their mutual attachment was to be found in Fanny's remarkable strength of body and character. The poor, weak, deformed boy rested on solid depths of nature, as some by faith are able to rest on Providence, with a sense of absolute security. However much pain he was in he would become quiet when she came and took him in her strong arms and nursed him. Oddly enough, too, it was almost the same thing with my wife.

She had never got over the effects of her accident, and the shock of the birth of our crippled boy. Indeed, as the years went on, she seemed to grow weaker and weaker, and to rely more and more absolutely on Fanny.

The germ, small as a mustard seed, which has now, after so many years of experimental labor and patient thought, grown up into the great tree of my discovery, lay in my mind in the form of a dormant speculation from the very commencement of my medical career. After my marriage it began to grow and take root there, but for some years I went on with my everyday practice, which was that of a consulting doctor in the city, and said nothing about it. The fact was that the whole seemed too wild, and I was afraid of being set down as one of those enthusiasts who spend all their lives in chasing a shadow.

At last, however, my secret grew too heavy for me to bear, and one night, after dinner, acting on some sudden impulse, I began to unfold it to my wife and Fanny. At first my wife was much interested, and said that it all sounded like one of Poe's tales, but presently, when I got more to the intricate parts of my theory, for it was nothing but a theory then, she fell into a brown study, and after a while broke into the conversation. I thought she was following my line of argument, and about to question it, and was rather disgusted when she said:

"Excuse me, Geoffrey, but did you remember to send that check for the coals?"

I suppose I looked put out, at any rate I stopped abruptly.

"Don't be vexed with me for interrupting, dear," she went on, "but I want to know about the coals, and haven't been able to get a word in edgewise for the last twenty minutes." "Quite so," I replied, with dignity. "Pray don't apologize; no doubt the coals are more important than my discovery."

"Nonsense, dear," she answered, with a smile; "of course, if there was anything in what you say, it would be very important. But if your story is true, you are as bad as that man Darwin, who believes that we are all descended from monkeys, and what we are told in the Bible about Eve being made out of Adam's rib falls to the ground. So you see it must be nonsense, and the coals are the most important of all."

Now my dear wife was one of the sweetest as she certainly was one of the best, women in the world, but on one point she was always prepared to lose her temper, and that point was Adam's ribs. So, being aware of this, I held my tongue, and after talking a little more about the coals, she said that she did not feel well, and was going to bed.

CHAPTER II.

ALL THE time that I had been holding forth, until my eloquence was quenched by the coal question, Fanny was sitting opposite me, watching my face with all her eyes. Evidently she was interested in what I had to say, though she sat so silent. She was now seventeen or eighteen years of age, and a very fine young woman indeed, but a remarkably silent one.

When my wife had bidden us good-night and gone, I filled my pipe and lighted it, for I was ruffled, and smoking has a soothing effect upon my nerves.

"Geoffrey," said Fanny, when I had finished, for she always called me Geoffrey, "is this idea of yours a new one? I mean, has it ever entered anybody's brain before?"

"So far as I am aware," I answered, "it is the one exception that was wanted to prove Solomon's rule—it is absolutely and completely new." (This has subsequently turned out to be the fact.)

"If I understand you rightly, your idea, if it can be established, will furnish a rational explanation of the phenomenon of life."

"Quite so," I answered, for her interpretation was in every way accurate, almost pedantically so.

"And," she went on, "the certainty of the practical immortality of the soul, or rather of the 'ego' or individual identity, will follow as a necessary consequence, will it not?"

"Yes. Individual immortality of everything that has life is the keystone

of the arch. If that is wanting there is nothing is my discovery."

"And this immortality will be quite independent of any known system of religion?"

"Certainly, as most people understand religion, namely as typified by the tenets of a particular sect, but not by any means independent of natural religion, and on the other hand altogether dependent on the existence of a supreme, and in the end, all-triumphant power of good, which, if my theory can be upheld, will then be proved beyond the possibility of a doubt."

Fanny thought for a moment or two, and then spoke again.

"Do you know, Geoffrey, if you carry this through, you will go down to posterity as one of the greatest men in the world, perhaps as the very greatest!"

I knew from the tone of her voice that she meant what she said, and also that if all this could be proved, her prophecy would probably be fulfilled.

"Yes," I said, "but I suppose that to work the whole thing out, and prove it, would take a life-time. To begin with, the premises would have to be established and an enormous amount of special knowledge acquired, from the groundwork of which, and from the records of thousands of noted cases of mental phenomena, that it would take years to collect, one would have to work slowly up toward the light. A man would be obliged to give his entire time to the subject, and in my case even that would not suffice, for I am no mathematician, and, unless I am mistaken, the issue will depend almost entirely upon the mathematical power of the investigator. He could not even employ anybody to do part of the work for him, for the calculator must himself be imbued with the spirit that directs the calculations, and be prepared to bend them this way or that, to omit this factor and to pick up the other as circumstances require. Now, as you, know I am little short of a fool at mathematics, and therefore on this point alone I am out of the race, and I fear that the Secret of Life will never be discovered by me, though perhaps I shall be able to put some one else on the track of it."

"Yes," said the girl, quietly, "that is true enough, but you forget one thing. If you are not a mathematician, I am, and I can enter into your ideas, Geoffrey, for I believe that we have grown very much alike during the last four or five years—I mean in mind."

I started, for both her statements were perfectly accurate. The girl had remarkable mathematical faculty, almost approaching to genius. I had procured for her the best instruction that I could, but she had now arrived at that point when instructors were of no further use to her. In those days, of course, there were not the facilities for female education that there are now, and though it is not so very long ago, learning in woman was not thought so very highly of. Men rather said, with Martial: "Sit non doctissima conjunx," and so her gift had hitherto not proved of any great service to her. Also she was right in saying that we had grown alike in mind and ways of thought. She had come into the house quite young, but young as she was, she had always been a great companion to me. Not that she was much of a talker, but she understood how to listen and to show that she was giving her attention to what was being said, a thing that in my opinion a very few women can do. And I suppose that in this way, she, in the course of time, became thoroughly imbued with my ideas, and, in short, that her mind, as I thought, took its color from my own. At any rate, it did so superficially, and I know that she would understand the drift of my thoughts long before anybody else did, and would even sometimes find words to clothe them before I could myself.

"Why should we not work on the Secret of Life together, Geoffrey?" she said, fixing her dark eyes on my face.

"My dear," I answered, "you know not what you do! Are you prepared to give up your youth, and perhaps all you life, to a search and a study which may and probably will after all prove chimerical? Remember that such a thing is not to be lightly taken up, or, if once taken up, lightly abandoned. If I make up my mind to understand it, I shall practically be obliged to give up my practice as a doctor to do it; and the same, remember, applies to you, for I should prove a hard task-master. You would have to abandon all the every-day aims and pleasures of your sex and youth, to scorn delights and live laborious days, on the chance of benefiting humanity and for the certainty of encountering opposition and ridicule."

"Yes," she said, "but I am willing to do that. I want to become somebody and to do something with my life, not just to go out like one little candle in a lighted ballroom and never be missed."

"Very well, Fanny, so be it. I only hope you have not undertaken a task beyond your strength. If you have not, you are a very remarkable woman, that is all."

At that moment our conversation was disturbed by the sound of a person falling heavily on the floor of the room above us, which was occupied by my wife.

Without another word we both turned and ran up stairs. I knocked at the door, but getting no answer, entered, accompanied by Fanny, to find my dear wife lying in her dressing gown in a dead faint before the toilet table. We lifted her up to the bed, and with great difficulty brought her round, but this fainting fit was the commencement of her last illness. Her constitution appeared to have entirely broken up, and all we could do was to prolong her life by a few months.

It was a most heart-breaking business, and one on which even at this distance of time I do not care to dwell. I was deeply attached to my wife; indeed, she was my first and only love in the sense in which the word is generally used; but my love and care availed but little against the forward march of the Destroyer. For three months we fought against him, but he came on as surely and relentlessly as the tide, and at last the end was upon us. Before her death her mind cleared, as the sun often does in sinking, and she spoke to me so sweetly, and yet so hopefully, that her tender words almost broke my heart. And yet it was a happy death. I have seen many people die, but I never remember one who was so completely borne up across the dark gulf upon the wings of child-like faith. All her fears and griefs were for me, for herself she had none. When at last she had kissed her boy and bade him farewell—thank Heaven he was not old enough to understand what it meant—and said her last word to me, she sent for Fanny and kissed her too.

"Good-bye, my love," she said; "you must look after Geoffrey and the boy when I am gone," and then, as though a sudden idea struck her, she took the girl's hand and placed it in mine. "You will just suit each other," she said, with a faint smile, and those were the last words she spoke.

Fanny colored and said nothing. I remember thinking afterward that most women would have cried.

And then the end came and left me broken-hearted.

It was the night after the funeral, and I was walking up and down my little study, struggling against a distress that only seemed to further overwhelm me the more I tried to bear up against it, and thinking with that helplessness bitterness that does come upon us at such times, wrapping us, as it were, in a mist of regret, of the many little things I might have done to make my dear wife happier while she lived, and of the irreparable void her loss had left in my life. It was well for her, I was sure of that, for what can be better than to sleep? But in those days that certainty of a future individual existence, which I have now been able through my discoveries to reach to, was not present with me. It only loomed as a possibility at the end of an untraveled vista. She was gone, and no echo came from where she was. How could I know that I had not lost her forever? Or, even if she lived in some dim heaven, that I too should make my way thither, and find her unchanged; for remember that change is death! It has all passed now. I am as sure as I write these words that at no distant date I shall stand face to face with her again, as I am that the earth travels round the sun. The science that has unalterably demonstrated the earth's course has also vindicated the inborn instinct of humanity so much attacked of late days, and demonstrated its truth to me beyond the possibility of doubt. But I did not know it then.

"I shall never see her again, never!" I cried in my agony, "and I have nothing left to live for!"

"Perhaps you will not," said a quiet voice at my elbow, "but you have your child and your work left to live for. And if there is anything in your discovery, you will see her through all the ages."

It was Fanny, who had come into the room without my noticing it, and somehow her presence and her words brought comfort to me.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE EXPOSITION.

Architecture of the International Show to Be Held in Omaha in 1898.

The general scheme of the architecture of the Exposition is the creation of the architects-in-chief. Unlike other American exposition architecture, elaborate color effects will characterize it. Briefly stated, the buildings and colonnades will present the aspect of a Pompeian rather than that of a white city. The arena the architects have chosen for a display of the highest artistic effect will be pitched in the great rectangle known as "Kountze tract," which is 650 feet wide and half a mile long. It lies between Sherman avenue and Twenty-fourth street. On the South line Twentieth street enters this tract midway, and here will be erected the arch of states, the main entrance to the grounds. A lagoon extends the entire length of the rectangle. At the west end will stand the government building, flanked by imposing colonnades. The lagoon at this end will be a trefoil or three-lobed lake, fully 200 feet across. The colonnades on either side converge toward the west, creating thus a false perspective greatly enhancing the effect of distance. The greater buildings of the exposition will be situated on either side of the lagoon running east to Sherman avenue. Midway on the north side the administration arch, for which a contract has been let, will be constructed. At the east end will be a grand staircase, forming a magnificent architectural finish to the ensemble of the picture, rising to a viaduct spanning Sherman avenue. The viaduct leads over into the amusement section, which will be devoted largely to concessionaries.

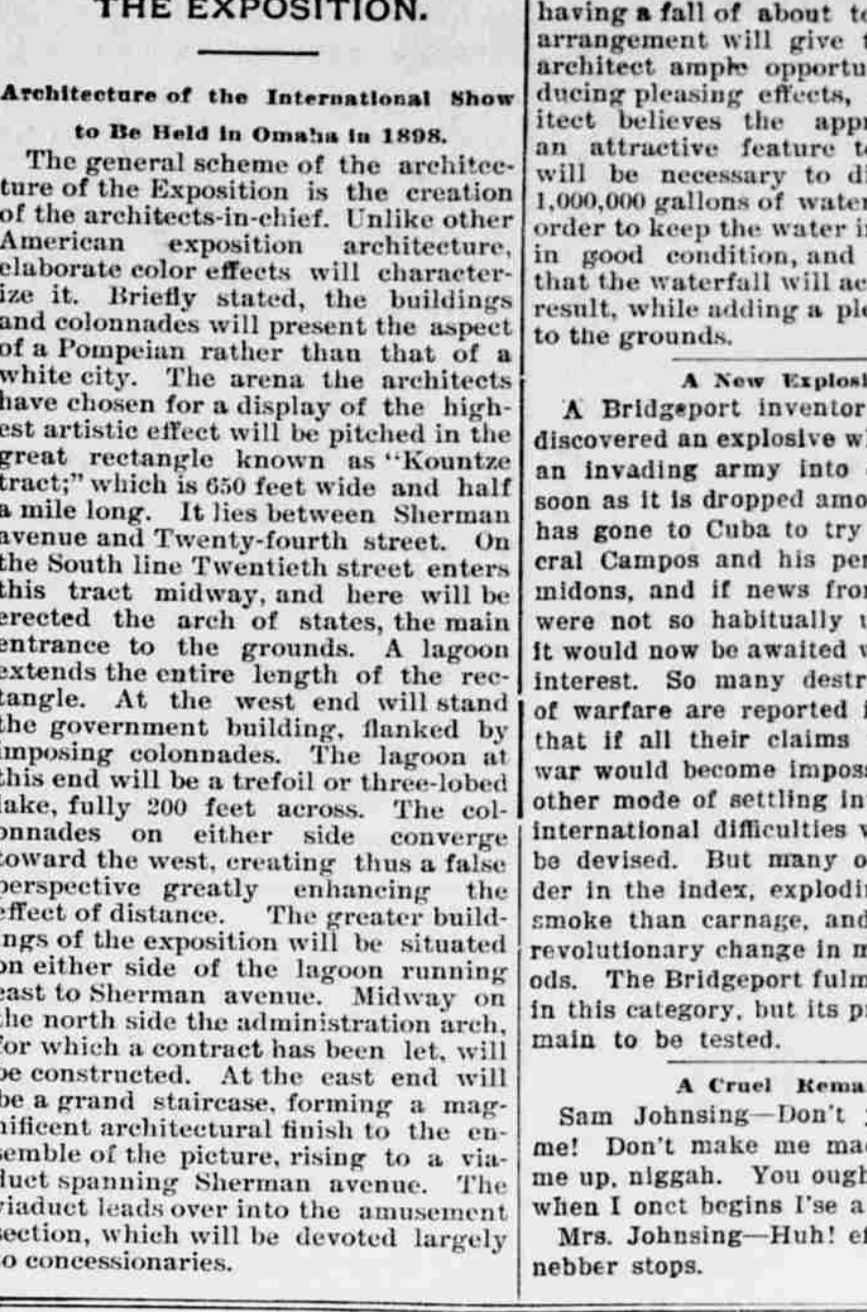
A New Explosive.

A Bridgeport inventor says he has discovered an explosive which will blow an invading army into cats' meat as soon as it is dropped among them. He has gone to Cuba to try it upon General Campos and his peninsular myrmidons, and if news from that island were not so habitually untrustworthy it would now be awaited with increased interest. So many destructive agents of warfare are reported in this period that if all their claims were realized war would become impossible, and another mode of settling internecine and international difficulties would have to be devised. But many of them thunder in the index, exploding with more smoke than carnage, and effecting no revolutionary change in military methods. The Bridgeport fulminant may be in this category, but its pretensions remain to be tested.

A Cruel Remark.

Sam Johnson—Don't you fool wid me! Don't make me mad. Don't stir me up, niggab. You oughter know dat when I onct begins I see a wild beast.

Mrs. Johnsons—Huh! ef dat's so you nebber stops.



THE ADMINISTRATION ARCH.

The managers have determined upon the construction of the following list of buildings:

- Administration building.
- Agricultural building.
- Mines and mining building.
- Manufactures and liberal arts building.
- Machinery and electricity building.
- Auditorium.
- Transportation building.
- Dairy and apiary building.
- Railway terminal building.
- Live Stock buildings and pavilion.
- Poultry building.

The total cost of these buildings is estimated at \$500,000 and the total cost of preparing the grounds at \$500,000. Work will begin just as soon as preliminary plans can be made and contracts let.

It has been decided that the buildings shall be given the tint of old marble, and the staff turned out of the factories will be colored to produce this effect. These "slabs" will be on an immense scale and many of them will be works of art in themselves. Intricate carving and classic sculpture will be imitated to a nicety and the buildings will be such as could only be found otherwise in the most beautiful buildings of the old master. Statuary of heroic size will surmount some of the main buildings and these will all be done in staff. The imposing columns of the long colonnades and of the beautiful porticoes facing the main court will be constructed of the same material. The handsome bas relief sculpture adorning the pediments of the main buildings will be moulded of staff and the lions couchant and rampant surveying the main court from their lofty pedestals will be poured out of a huge pot and not won from the bowels of mother earth by the hand of the sculptor.

The railroad terminal building will be situated at the base of the bluff defining the east edge of the section of the exposition grounds devoted to concessions. Two broad stairways follow a zigzag line up the face of the bluff. These stairways will be about forty feet apart and the space between them will be converted into a waterfall. The beautiful portico facing the main court will be constructed of the same material. The handsome bas relief sculpture adorning the pediments of the main buildings will be moulded of staff and the lions couchant and rampant surveying the main court from their lofty pedestals will be poured out of a huge pot and not won from the bowels of mother earth by the hand of the sculptor.

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There Was No Danger.

It was midnight. Massive clouds obscured the moon and stars, and the silent, deserted streets of New York city presented a dismal appearance as the occasional gas jets flickered in the gloom. Two bold burglars had entered the Bank of Good Hope and were ransacking its vaults, when they suddenly ceased.

"Hush!" said one. "I hear footsteps on the street; wait here till I get a peep."

He crept to a shaded window and peered into the darkness. He saw two figures approach; but as soon as he could discern who they were he stepped back briskly and whispered:

"We're safe, Bill; 'tis no one but the police."

The Cowboy's Lasso.

The cowboy's lasso is made by cutting a rawhide into thin strips and half tanning them with the hair on. These strips are then stretched over a block and braided into a rope, the strands being pulled very tight. The lasso is then buried in sand for a week or two, and absorbs moisture from the ground, which makes it soft and pliable. When taken out of the ground it is stretched out, and the hair is sand-papered off. It is then greased with mutton tallow and properly noosed, when it is ready for use.

Her Reasoning.

"John," exclaimed the nervous woman, "do you think there is a burglar in the house?"

"Certainly not. Why, I haven't heard a sound all night."

"That's just what alarms me. Any burglar who wasn't foolish would keep perfectly quiet so as not to excite our suspicion. Indeed, John, I do so wish you would get up and look through the house!"

Opinions Change.

When a man gets old enough to know himself thoroughly he begins to entertain cynical opinions of the whole human race.—*Indianapolis Journal.*

Victors to Lincoln Park in Chicago.

Will be delighted with the souvenir book of this beautiful spot now being distributed by the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Company. It is a magnificent publication of 96 pages full of overflowing with delicious half tone pictures of one of Creation's most charming places of resort for citizens of the Great Republic. No stranger visiting Chicago should be without a copy of the "Souvenir of Lincoln Park." It can only be procured by enclosing twenty-five (25) cents in coin or postage stamps, to Geo. H. Heafford, general passenger agent, 410 Old Colony Building, Chicago, Ill.

England Has Unwelcome Immigrants.

Lord Lyon Playfair recently stated in the house of lords that since 1891 200,000 pauper aliens, 17,000 of whom were Russians and Poles had landed in Great Britain, against an immigration to America of 179,392.

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