The Disembodied Spirit

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Common sense—hard, practical common sense—is a great and important factor in this world's concerns. I am not a common-sense person myself—though Geraldine will tell you I am a man of uncommon sense—but it is to common-sense people that I address myself—people who say, if they ever so far forget themselves as to read "Rappaccini's Daughter," for instance, or that other story by the gifted son of his gifted father, which hides its weird fascination under the name of Archibald Maimaison, and you ask them if they like the stories "Oh, of course not; I never heard of such improbable things. Why, how is it possible for a man—" etc.—it is to these people I write.

I live in the enterprising western city of Kalamanti. As my family and Geraldine's family have lived there many years, we are well known, and any of my neighbors, among whom are a judge of the district court, retired major general of the army, a United States senator and other persons of undoubted veracity, can affirm the truth of the strange incidents, of which I am the principal subject. Geraldine will say that this is not the only case in which I am the principal subject—royally assuming for the once—but I digress. Geraldine says I always take too much time in getting at the point of the story and, as Geraldine is the only critic of whom I am afraid, here goes:

I, James Henry Rettew, commonly called Harry, was about 26 years old in the year of our Lord, 1901. I was a sleepy and (people say) a dreamy, abstracted young man. Geraldine thinks I am handsome. She is alone in her belief—unless I agree with her in this as in most things. I was possessed of a little fortune and was a well-informed young man of studious bent, having read largely in a rather desultory way. My favorite study was the spiritual essence, or soul of man, especially my own.

It is a thing, I believe, most people have—though Geraldine says you have to take it on faith in the case of a great many people. What was it? Where was it? This pervading vital force within me? How did it exist within my body? What kept it there? Was death the result of a disassociation of the two? Was no man capable of ever separating the one from the other? These are but a sample of the speculations in which I indulged. And I actually found myself in the way of solving some of these problems at last. Rummaging in the library of a deceased philosopher, I came across a treatise on this very subject by a sage of ancient times, the learned Egyptian Archidechus. No, you will not find his name in the encyclopedias. I have purposely altered it, lest anyone should search for the pamphlet and finding it, become as I was—but I anticipate. I seized upon the old moth-eaten parchment volume with avidity.

This rare—I do not think there was another copy in existence expect the one I read—and wonderful book treated of the spirit or essence of life as distinguished from the gross and visible body; the writer held that it was possible to separate the one from the other, in other words, according to Archidechus, the spirit might leave the body and return to it at pleasure; in fact, the writer knew of such a case and cited it; he also gave minute directions for accomplishing this wonderful feat. I shall not reveal them to you, nor to Geraldine, though that is the only secret I do not share with her, so beware how you confide in me.

Of course the thing was ridiculous, no such separation was possible, so I reasoned. There were the directions, however—they fascinated me. I was always an imaginative fellow and a great tryer of all sorts of strange experiments, why should I not try this one? I confided my intentions to no one, not even Geraldine. I locked myself up in my room and devoured the old book. Great stress was laid upon the faith necessary and the condition of the mind. It was stated that any violent emotion might be of great assistance at the final moment of—shall I call it dissolution?

Now I was at peace with all the world except John Haverford. Haverford was in love with Geraldine Holabird, but as I felt sure of her affection I was not able to get up any violent jealousy on his account. Geraldine has since told me if she had known I felt so confident of her affection she would have supplied me with several emotions on that score of an exceedingly violent nature. I don't believe it.

However, I complied with the other directions and I even contrived to assume a reasonable amount of faith, but I could not quite manage the separation. I could apparently concentrate my vital force on one spot, for instance, but exert myself as I would I could not break the tie. The idea possessed me, I could think of nothing else. Geraldine says I was the most intensely unsatisfactory lover at this time that one could imagine, and that she had serious thoughts of giving me up for John Haverford.

Our love, which was a secret affair—and none the less sweet for that, by the way—was violently opposed by the heads of both our houses, there being some grudge between them. Although I was devoted to her and she to me, as I now know, though I did not at the time, yet I had never dared to take more of a lover's privilege than a respectful salute upon her hand. Geraldine was a tall and extremely dignified girl, and how she ever came to meet me clandestinely and write me those little notes—I have them yet—I don't know. She says she doesn't either.

But to come back to my experiment. My want of complete success preyed upon me. I grew thin, lost my appetite, could think of nothing but that. This, I imagine, was one of the reasons for my final success. Geraldine says I ought not to have said that, as it will spoil the denouement. However, it is too late now. One afternoon more than usually discouraged at my repeated failure, when I was about to consign the volume to the fire as a false prophet, my sister, who acted as our Mercury, threw a note into my room from Geraldine. I opened it, I must confess, rather listlessly.

Good heavens! Her father had discovered my last letter, he was furiously angry, swore she should marry John Haverford and she was now locked in her own room; I would recognize it by the white ribbon hanging on the window sill and I must do something soon, for her father was terribly angry and she loved me and me only, her own Harry—and you know the rest! (Geraldine protests against these unflattering allusions to her notes.)

What happened a moment after, or how it happened, I am not prepared to state. One thing I do know, I found myself in the street and without a thought of how I came there, was hurrying toward Geraldine's house. With reckless speed I ran heading full tilt into a lady of my acquaintance. The concussion nearly stunned me. What was my surprise as I hastily took off my hat to apologize for my carelessness to see the young lady calmy walk past me, apparently unconscious of my presence and giving no evidence of having been in collision with me! This rather astonished me, but Geraldine was so much in my mind that I dismissed it and hastened on. It was not far to her house, and sure enough, there was a white ribbon fluttering from the window I knew to be hers.

In my reckless desire to do something for her I opened the gate and walked into the yard; that is, I found myself there and of course could have come no other way. I am not much of an athlete and could not have jumped the fence. These reflections did not [illegible] me at the time, but the next thing which happened did astonish me. While I was standing there in the walk, wondering [illegible] the front door opened and old Mr. Holabird came out. His face was red with anger and he was armed with a thick club, presumably for me. Now, I am not a very brave man—though Geraldine thinks me a perfect hero—and I confess I trembled. However, I walked up to him and said, "Mr. Holabird, your daughter—"

He absolutely did not see me, and as he passed me, with excess of courage I laid my hand upon his arm, but he took no more heed of that than of my voice. What could have been the matter?

I began to feel a little alarmed, and gave myself a good pinch to see if I were awake, the usual recourse of people in a like situation—Geraldine says that no one ever was in a like situation before. I certainly was awake for the pinch hurt me. Marvelling more and more I decided to go into the house. The old gentleman was my most dangerous opponent and with him out of the way I felt I could brave the rest of the household. If I could get at Geraldine I hoped to persuade her to fly with me, and I did not doubt once we were safely married her father would forgive us, or if he would not, I should not greatly care, so long as I could have Geraldine.

"THE FAMILIES, THE SERVANTS, EVERYONE, CAME RUNNING IN."

Thinking thus I walked up to the door and, placing my hand on the bell, gave it a good strong pull. The little silver-plated handle did not move an inch. I rubbed my eyes and tried it once more—no effect! I then sat down to consider. Was all the world bewitched? I racked my brain until the door opened and one of the children ran out. She came over to the chair I sat in and dropped into my lap. I got out of the chair in a second, just how I could not say. I am not over fond of children of that age.

"Why, Jennie," I cried somewhat indignantly, "what do you mean by jumping on my lap in this unceremonious manner? Where is Geraldine? Go tell her I want to see her at once."

I was getting angry, but would you believe it, that child went on playing with her doll and completely ignored me! It was too much. I wondered if the whole town were in a conspiracy to drive me crazy. In despair I resolved to see Geraldine at once and at the risk of being shot for a burglar I turned to the door the little girl had fortunately left open and walked in.

As I entered the hall my foot slipped on the marble tiling and I fell heavily against an exquisite bisque head standing on the newel post. When I picked myself up, sufficiently sore from my fall to be convinced that it was a real one, the bisque figurehead was standing safely and smiling at me—it was a laughing head—in a way I conceived to be particularly exasperating. I was so excited by this time that I struck it a furious blow with my fist, and still that infernal head stood and grinned at me!

If I did not see Geraldine soon I felt that I would go mad, so I marched upstairs until I came to the door of her room. I knocked gently on the door—there was no sound. I tried the handle, with the same illsuccess as before. This was the last straw. I confess that I stood at that door and shouted and screamed and kicked it—pounded on it until I sank exhausted on the floor—and still no thought of my real condition entered my head.

It happened in my present position that my eyes were just on a level with the keyhole. I peeped in. There was Geraldine. I could see her plainly and in another moment I saw her take a letter from her pocket, kiss it passionately and burst into a storm of sobs and tears. I was so wrought up by this time that in spite of my fatigue I jumped to my feet and in another second I found myself by her side.

She was clad in some soft white wrapper, her hair all unbound, and was kneeling with her face in her arms on a chair. I was inexpressibly touched by her heart-broken attitude. I had never been anything but a very formal lover as I said before; however, I thought the circumstances might warrant me in waiving a little ceremony—especially as she evidently needed a comforter sadly, so I walked quickly over to her and laid my hand on her shoulder.

"Geraldine," I said. "My darling, I am here to help you * * * Geraldine, won't you speak to me?"

There was no answer and no intermit to the sobs and tears she was pouring on my letter. I thought this was pushing shyness to a distance, and I had never suspected her of being shy. However, as she made no objection to my hand being on her shoulder, I thought that was a good sign, and I knelt down beside her and slipped my arm around her neck and said:

"Geraldine, dearest do not cry so * * * courage * * it will be all right. * * " Pause. "Won't you speak to me? Please, please, just look at me!" Longer pause. "Geraldine!" I shouted savagely, "look at me at once or I'll leave you forever!"

No movement! What did it mean? I rose and dropped into a chair, remarking:

"I'll sit here and look at you till you do get up and say something to me; if your father comes in here and kills me!"

So I waited and watched her. Presently she raised her beautiful eyes, red with weeping, fixed them straight on me and without the slightest sign of recognition, not even the fear that would have filled them had I been a stranger. What could be the matter?

I rushed over to the long swinging mirror in the corner determined to look at myself and see what was wrong. I stood directly in front of the glass and glanced at its bright surface to make a last effort to solve the mystery. Reader, I will solemnly assert that when I looked in that mirror, expecting to see myself, I was not there!

There was nothing reflected there but the room and contents and Geraldine beyond, completely oblivious of me. She had taken a small picture of me she had and was alternately looking at it and pressing it to her heart. This evidence of an affection for me which I did not think she entertained, was certainly very gratifying and at any other moment would have filled me with happiness, but in the light of the fact that I was not there, where I felt myself to be, I was too horrorstruck for anything else.

I stood mechanically glaring at Geraldine, and the glass which did not reflect me, and at myself. I could see myself with my own eyes perfectly, hear my own voice distinctly, or touch myself with my own hands, in fact, I could see and feel as well as ever. I resolved to make one more effort.

"Geraldine," I said softly. "Geraldine," louder. "Geraldine!" in a perfect scream. "I am going to kiss you this moment!"

She was lying back in a large chair, her hands listlessly crossed in her lap and her eyes closed. I walked firmly over to her, hesitated a second, and then bent over and kissed her upon the lips. She says now it was very ungenerous of me to have taken advantage of her, but I submit that I had given every possible warning of my intentions and besides I was wrought up to such a pitch by the events of the afternoon I scarcely knew what I did; so I kissed her again and again, and this did really have some effect upon her. At first she blushed a warm, beautiful crimson, and as I kissed her a second and a third time, she started, raised her head, opened her eyes with a little scream, and said:

"O, I must have fallen asleep and dreamed he was here. * * r I suddenly felt a kiss, it seemed. * * * O, Harry, Harry, why do you not come and help your girl?" And her head sank back in the chair, and tears came again into her eyes. "O, Harry, why are you not here?"

I was nearly frantic by this time.

"Geraldine," I said, "I am here. I did kiss you, really and truly, a moment ago."

But she paid no attention, and even while I was speaking kept up her little agonized appeal for me to come and help her. I rushed to the window, leaped out on the porch, jumped recklessly to the ground, dashed right into the arms of Mr. Holabird, ran through the streets to my own house, burst into the house, tore up the stairs to my room, and saw—what?

Myself, calmy and composedly lying back in the chair, with Geraldine's letter in my hand! This was too awful. I sank down in the other chair, and as I did so my eyes fell upon the volume of the learned Archidechus. The mystery was solved! There in the other chair was my physical body, and in this one I sat, a disembodied spirit!

The explanation was so simple and evident it brought great relief to me. Everything was explained. Of course no looking glass could reflect the spirit of a man; no one could feel him—or it—or hear him or see him; of course, he could not open doors or strike people or lift anything, though, to be sure, no door could prove a barrier to such an ethereal immaterial entity as a disembodied spirit.

That accounted for my finding myself in Geraldine's room in spite of the locked door, for the child sitting down on my lap, for the bisque head smiling at my buffet, for Geraldine's ignorance of my presence. As to the kiss—well, love was the highest and noblest sensation, love such as we felt for each other, and as nearly a spiritual ethereal feeling as any human one could be, so when I kissed her her spiritual being had responded to mine. This explanation fell easily in with the rest.

As far as I was concerned I was, to put it plainly and simply, only my feelings and sensations. I was a wandering sensation. Doubtless my spirit took the same form as my visible body, but it was a thing so utterly immaterial as to be absolutely invisible to the human eye. I could talk, walk, see and hear—because I had all my sensations with me, the guiding essence of my brain, too; but, really, my voice, for instance, was not audible, because when I opened my spiritual mouth it was only with the sensation of speaking, and no real sound was made; or, to put another explanation before you, my voice had become refined in proportion with the rest of me and was pitched in such a sound wave as the human ear was not capable of receiving and concentrating.

At that moment this seemed very interesting to me and I settled myself comfortably back in my chair and laughed long and loudly. Of course, I could go back into my own body at any time and matters would straighten themselves out at once. I sat speculatively contemplating my body. It was an interesting moment.

My body was sitting in the chair in exactly the same position I had been when I left it, or rather, I should say, we had been when I left it. I bent over and touched it—or him. He left warm and natural, but not as if asleep. There was no beating of the heart, no rise or fall of the breast as in breathing; the eyes were open and fixed, but not glassy; the joints apparently flexible, though, of course, I could not have moved one to see—in short, my body presented every appearance of suspended animation. I resolved not to try to get back into my body just at present and was still sitting there wondering about my double self when the door opened and my sister, the one who brought the letter, came in; she was my favorite, and we were great friends. She glanced at me, and, supposing I was asleep, drew a chair over to the window and waited for me to awaken.

The fire was burning brightly in the grate and, as ill-luck would have it, a bright little coal sprang out and fell on my lap—that is, the lap of my body. It seems that there was yet some sort of a connection between us, because while the coal burnt into the leg of my body it was I who felt the sensations. I rushed over to myself and attempted to brush it off. Of course I could not. The pain was really unbearable and, forgetting my state, I called to Mary, my sister; of course she did not hear me! This was a worse dilemma than before. I decided at once to resume my proper condition, when, horror of horrors, I found that I did not know how.

It was true—I had been so constantly occupied in endeavoring to get out of myself as it were, that I had completely omitted to learn the way to get in! This was worse than anything previous. I forgot all about the glowing coal which was still burning me, in the dreadful possibility which rose before me. Suppose they should bury me, would I suffer the pangs of suffocation forever, or at least until my body resolved itself into its primordial elements? I knew, of course, my spirit would never die, and if my body did turn to dust, would my spirit go with those of other departed beings as the bible teaches us, or would the fact that I had taken my spirit in my own hands, as it were, condemn me to wander forever in my present state?

I certainly felt my spiritual hair turn gray. What would become of Geraldine? Would I ever see her again or would she ever see me? Would she at last forget me and marry some one else and force me to stand powerless looking on? I ground my spiritual teeth in rage and anger and clenched my spiritual hands and swore—but what was the use of swearing? I could not do anything. I was too utterly ethereal, too entirely disembodied to even haunt anyone, too ephemereal for a ghost even! Oh, horror! I thought my brain would give way. I thought of everything I could recall to help me out.

I had dabbled a little in hypnotism and had experimented surreptitiously on various members of my family, principally my sister Mary, and with some effect. Now, hypnotism is the controlling of one will by another. This will is an essential attribute of the spirit; there is nothing gross about it. It is true that the weakest and most physically imperfect specimens of this twofold race of ours sometimes possess the most powerful wills; plainly, then, body, physically considered, had nothing to do with this will power which is the secret of hypnotic force. Apparently I had my will power in better shape for use than at any other time in my corporate body. I had it separated, under command and could concentrate it more easily and advantageously. I would try it.

I got up, made the usual passes and ordered Mary to come and throw that coal off my leg. She did so at once. I was delighted. She stood abashed and silent in the presence of the (to her) hidden force controlling her. It flashed upon me in an instant I could cause her to open the volume of Archidechus and turn the pages for me. Joy! No sooner said than done.

I sat beside her and willed her to do as I directed. I hastily made her turn to the part which treated of the resumption of the relationship. A new disappointment awaited me—the learned Archidechus stated that the individual in the case he studied had never assumed his normal condition and that the means of doing so were entirely unknown to him. That took away my last hope.

Mechanically I released Mary from the influence and then waited to see what she would do. Her glance fell upon me and she looked at me wonderingly.

"Why," she said, "how long Harry sleeps!" She touched him on the shoulder. "Harry! Harry!" and then she looked in his face and screamed.

The family, the servants, everyone, came running in. They filled my little room, and after narrowly escaping being crushed to death by our fat cook, who hysterically sank back in the chair in which I was sitting, I walked over to the corner of the room and waited. They picked him up and laid him on the bed and tried all the simple remedies they knew to revive him. One poured brandy down my physical throat—imagine the sensation in my spiritual one—another chafed my hands; one wetted a towel and struck me repeatedly with it; the old-fashioned feather was held under my physical nose—imagine my spiritual sensation a thousand times intensified and judge what I suffered.

I wished they would go away and bury me decently and let me alone; it was too much to endure quietly. I tried to hypnotize the whole lot, but unavailingly. Finally the futility of their efforts dawned upon them and they sat down to wait while one went for a doctor.

Doctor! I thought contemptuously what could he do unless indeed they might find a stray spiritualist who could fulfill his promises and perhaps summon my spirit back into its earthly shell. Sure, never had I seemed so sweet to myself. If I ever got back to myself again I made a solemn vow never to leave myself on any pretext.

Presently the door opened and my father came in. My mother was long since dead; the old gentleman was almost heartbroken; he sat down beside me and took my physical hand. I would have given worlds to comfort him. Different members of the family stood around the room talking in low hushed whispers of the dreadful fate that had befallen me, exchanging reminiscences about me, extolling me for many virtues I never possessed. There was some consolation in hearing what a noble fellow I was. I have not heard it before nor have I heard it since—except from Geraldine. Finally the door opened and the doctor entered; he could do nothing whatever, as I had foreseen—he actually pronounced me dead—and a few hours later I found myself neatly laid in a coffin in the parlor—that is my physical body was.

I took the most comfortable chair, when no one else wanted it, of course, and waited for further developments. This was growing interesting and I had become somewhat resigned to the hopelessness of my situation. I noted several curious facts. After a while I got very sleepy, intensely so, and lay back in my chair and closed my eyes and tried to sleep. It was no use, I could not. And yet I never so longed to go to sleep in my life. The fact was a spirit could not sleep, and it was my body there in the coffin which felt sleepy—but I must suffer for it. It was the same way with hunger. I was hungry, I actually got so desperate as to go out in the pantry and look at the cold chicken and boiled ham there, I could easily smell them, but as to eating—Oh, it was horrible! I do not know how I got through the night.

The next day I could do nothing but sit and look at the people who came to see me and hear what they had to say. I have forgotten to mention that in my condition I seemed to have as one of its attributes a peculiar faculty of divining the real thoughts of the people who came to look at me. Among them was John Haverford. He was actually glad to see me, so at least I read his thought. Geraldine thinks I must have been mistaken—at any rate the sight of him filled me with so much rage that I rushed over to him. I threatened him; I did more, I struck him, kicked him, nothing of which he was sensible. It was too bad.

Geraldine did not come. I waited heartbroken for her. Would she come? The old man surely would not keep her. He was a pretty good fellow, after all—he is devoted to our youngest daughter now. I thought he certainly might bring her. I did not go out. I could not bear to leave my lonesome looking body in the coffin. I had no heart for further adventures, anyway. I was intensely cramped from lying so long in one position—when I die I am going to be cremated; no more coffins for me. My wife, says, however, she will not hear of that.

Geraldine told me afterward that she passed the day in longing for me to come and take her away, and wondering why I did not; beside being continually impressed with a premonition that something was going to happen. Finally toward night on the second day of my anomalous situation, Mary—good and faithful Mary—bethought herself to go and tell Geraldine. On hearing the news that noble girl, promptly fainted. She recovered herself, however, and, through Mary's aid, managed to get out of the house and come down to see me.

I was looking at myself very dejectedly in the parlor, half dead from loss of sleep, hunger and thirst, and wholly crazy from loss of love and all my dreaded prospects—I surmised they would bury me tomorrow—when I heard the outside door open, a familiar and yet nervous step sounded in the hall, and then the parlor door opened. I had recognized the step. It was Geraldine, but how changed! I forgot myself and my trouble, and as she threw herself down on her knees and clasped me in her arms and kissed me, I suffered for her agony a thousand times worse than for mine. Great heavens! Was ever man in such a predicament? I bent over her in despair, and as she turned her face up in prayer I kissed her lips again. She sprang to her feet and screamed.

"Oh, he is not dead, I am sure of it. I felt him kiss me! I cannot be mistaken! Mary, send for papa, and tell him to bring his newest and most powerful storage battery along. I am sure Harry is not dead. Hurry! hurry!"

So it was from Geraldine herself that this new idea of torture emanated. Oh, why could they not let a disembodied spirit alone in its peaceful misery! An electric battery could do no good, and it would be worse than the burnt feather.

Old Mr. Holabird was an electrician and an enthusiast. He would have sacrificed his best friend to an experiment and consequently did not hesitate to come and try upon me, whom he had hated so bitterly previous to the unfortunate dissolution of partnership between my body and spirit. He was soon in the parlor and the servant followed after him with the battery. He was angry and astonished at seeing Geraldine, but his experiment was too engrossing for much time to be wasted upon her.

Having obtained the consent of my poor old father he began taking off my shoes and then my socks—I blushed crimson—at least my spiritual entity did—my physical body, I must confess, betrayed no evidence of shame at the exposure, and before Geraldine, too! Mary and father and the rest of the family looked on with anxiety and little apparent faith. Geraldine stood beside me resting one hand against my breast and gazing at me as if not to lose the faintest sign of life I might show. Her father, all business and energy, attached the wires with a reckless want of ceremony, I thought in wretchedly bad taste. I must confess I hoped from the result of this experiment but faintly; however, there might be something in it, so I stood with my arm around Geraldine and my head resting upon her shoulder—spiritually, of course—as the connection was made.

I was quiet enough for just one-millionth of a second till I felt the power of the current. It was awful. Worse than any other experiment; I groaned in anguish while that fiendish old man made the current stronger and stronger and that miserably placid body of mine lay there as calm and as unfeeling as a log, while I was in torment. I flew at the old man, clenched my hands in his hair, grasped him around the throat, did everything and yet had to bear a current strong enough to have killed a dozen men, added to which was the anguish of feeling my last hope vanish. I was doomed.

The scientific fervor of old Holabird was at last satisfied, and he allowed the current to die down to one of much less intensity, merely keeping, as he said, a little on in case of an emergency. A little! I felt like ten tooth aches run into one, but was so much less than before that it seemed almost like a caress in the first moment of relief.

While I was standing there helplessly wondering what they would do with me the old man walked up to Geraldine, who stood wringing her hands, looking at me, with her last hope gone, too, poor girl, and said:

"Come, Geralding, we must go, the man is dead."

"Liar!" I shrieked, but no one heard me.

"And there is no use of staying here," he continued, "I tell you you must come! I promised John Haverford that you would see him tonight, he asked for your hand and I consented today."

Oh, I could have begged him to turn on the electricity again; each pang fate had in store for me was worse than before. Geraldine answered gloriously:

"But I have not consented."

"What difference? I say you shall marry him!" he said, grasping her wrist.

"And I say I will not. I will be faithful to my dear dead Harry here."

"Nonsense; you shall marry Haverford; you must."

At this moment a strange thing occurred. Geraldine wrenched herself away from her father, threw herself upon the physical half of me and whispered, "I'll die with him, first."

Something passed over me as a blinding lightning flash and behold! the body in the coffin struggled, sat up, clasped a trembling arm about Geraldine and exclaimed:

"I am not dead, Geraldine, and you, you infernal old villain, get out of my sight! Take off the battery and give me something to eat and drink."

The spirit had entered my body again. My love for Geraldine and her love for me had wrought the miracle, just as anxiety for her and love for her had wrought the first change. Aye, through love the world is made and destroyed.

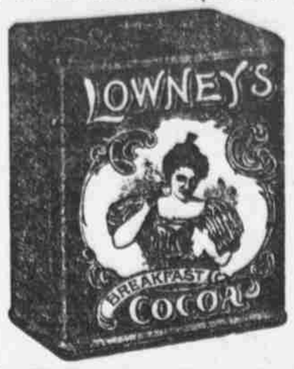
There is nothing more to tell. My story was so circumstantial people generally believe it, in spite of the learned doctors, who hold it to have been merely a case of suspended animation. In my mind and Geraldine's, however, there is no doubt about it. Besides, does not the learned Archidechus say—but never mind, if it were not for this affair Geraldine says she might have been years finding out her heart, as she did when she thought me dead, and her father never would have consented to our marriage as he did.

He is very kind to us now, and we are very happy, and have only one anxiety, lest my spirit should ever take to wandering off again. Geraldine says if it does she will marry John Haverford—who is still pining for her—but I know that is only a threat to prevent the dissolution of partnership, as she confesses in private that she would never marry anyone but me—never!

I am very fat and well now, and have burned up the parchments of the learned Archidechus, and am training myself to utterly disbelieve such things. The memory seems like a faint dream, in the light of our present happiness, for Geraldine is the loveliest and sweetest of wives, and she says I am the best of husbands. And giving her that last word, I lay down the pen.

Gold Medal

At Pan-American Exposition.



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BOSTON CLUB WOMEN WORRIED.

Caused a Hotel to Be Closed and the Manager Sued for $50,000.

Club women all around Boston, as well as the temperance workers in the district, relates the Boston Post, are considerably stirred over the fact that the closing of the Albany house at Brighton this spring through the representations of a number of club women to Governor Crane has resulted in the bringing of suits demanding $50,000 damages from these women, and the husband of one of them, by Timothy F. Buckley, lessee of the hotel.

Mrs. Francis B. Hornbrooke, one of the defendants, said concerning the suit: "We were asked by members of the Brighthelmstone club of Brighton to aid in abolishing a nuisance there, known as the Albany house. Fifteen of us, including representatives of the Watertown and Allston clubs, together with five from the Newton federation, early in June waited upon Governor Crane. There was no written petition drawn up, or anything of the kind. Mrs. Bates of Brighton simply told the governor the situation in a few words and we all seconded it. Three days later we saw by the papers that the Albany house was closed, and from that time until this I have thought nothing of the matter; in fact, I had completely forgotten the incident.

"This is really too ludicrous to talk about," continued Mrs. Hornbrooke, smiling; "why the man won't dare to take the case to the courts; if he did, he will be cutting his own throat. We have all the facts on our side; this wasn't started in a hurry-flurry, sentimental sort of way, you understand; we went at the wiping out of this place in a systematic, business manner.

"It was simply a hearing before the governor of the state; a private hearing, in which a few women desired to tell the officials of the commonwealth just what was going on at Brighton. The governor listened to us, with the result that the Albany is at present not running. I think Mr. Buckley, or whoever the man is, had better sue Governor Crane—that is the man he wants to deal with."

Mrs. C. M. Wilson, president of the Watertown Woman's club: "I was delegated to represent my club when representatives of other clubs met ours. The Young Men's assembly protested against the liquor license being granted, and the women were against the hotel license on purely moral grounds."

Mrs. Electa N. L. Walton, honorary president of the West Newton Educational club: "We went before the governor to give our moral support. We felt that a place such as was described to us should not exist. We were glad to learn afterward that it had been closed."

Miss M. Caroline Wilson, president of the Watertown Woman's club, said that their protest was not against Mr. Buckley, but against the Boston & Albany railroad corporation, as they were the owners of the property in question.

When asked why the women of Watertown interested themselves in a Brighton hotel, Miss Wilson replied, because the place was near the Watertown line, and also because the Brighton women had asked their aid in the fight for morality.

Chairman Clark of the police board refused to discuss the case. So did Governor Crane.

Mr. Buckley said:

"Yes, I have entered suit for $50,000 against these women; $40,000 for injury to business, and $10,000 for personal damages to reputation."

POINTED PARAGRAPHS.

Chicago News: To err is human and to lie about it is more so.

Intelectual improvement is apt to warp a woman's shape.

Even the pessimist is momentarily happy in his unhappiness.

This would be a gloomy old world for cats if women could pur.

The string tied around a man's finger is merely a forget-me-knot.

Some music hath charms to hold a man if he is chained to the spot.

Speaking of home rule, what's the matter with that of the first baby?

In matrimony one and one make one, but in divorce one from one leaves two.

"Fair and warmer" is the prediction the weather man lays up for a rainy day.

Girls should never flirt in public until after they have a strangle hold on the art.

Some men don't know they are beaten until long after other people make the discovery.

If the beauty of the average man's mind isn't more lovely than his face it is entitled to sympathy.

There is no objection to a woman having a great command of language if she knows when not to use it.

When a small boy gets into trouble there's generally a stick in it; when he grows up and trouble gets into him there are generally several "sticks" in it.

WHEN LIFE'S AT STAKE

The most timid man will take any chance of escape. The slender rope dropped down the precipice, the slippery log over the abyss, anything that offers a chance of life, is eagerly snatched at. The end the man seeks is safety. He cares nothing for the means to that end.

There are thousands of men and women whose lives are at stake, who are hindered from accepting the one means of safety by foolish prejudice.

Doctor Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery has been the means of restoring health to many men and women whose hollow cough, bleeding lungs, emaciation and weakness seemed to warrant the statement of local physicians—"There is no cure possible." Why should prejudice against a put-up medicine hinder you from trying what has cured thousands of suffering men and women?

"Only for Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery I think I would be in my grave to-day," writes Mr. Moses Miles, of Hilliard, Uinta Co., Wyoming. "I had asthma so bad I could not sleep at night and was compelled to give up work. It affected my lungs so that I coughed all the time, both day and night. My friends all thought I had consumption. My wife had taken Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription and it had helped her so much she insisted on my trying his 'Golden Medical Discovery'—which I did. I have taken four bottles and am now a well man, weighing 225 pounds, thanks to Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery."

The sole motive for substitution is to permit the dealer to make the little more profit paid by the sale of less meritorious medicines. He gains; you lose.