### THE SIX DUMB-BELLS OF CASTLE SCHRECKENSTROHM. BY DAVID SKAATS FOSTER.

# Author of "Crisis in Oldendorf."

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PART L

How like human nature was the nature of that fox who having through some misfortune lost his tail, tried to persuade all his brether foxes to the curtailment! The reason of my same curtailment! The reason of my making this philosophic reflection will appear as the present story is develop-

This is not a study of character, an analysis of motives, an autopsy of ideas. It is simply a narrative, a stringing together of incidents, of rapid changes and of swift happenings, in the order in which they occurred

Furthermore, every word, every tota of what I have here set down, is the truth, the bare and naked truth. Some of these incidents may appear, to the prosale and humdrum reader, as some-what stattling, as being improbable, and inclining toward the supernatural. Startling and fantastic they may be, improbable they may seem, but I hold that they are in every sense strictly possible, and that they follow exactly and in every particular the immutable mws of pature

laws of nature.

It came about in this manner: I was traveling in Germany two or three months ago, and, in an evil hour, it came into my head to go a hundred miles or thereabouts out of my way, to make a call on an old college friend of mine, whom I had not seen in several years. That man was Jack Jenkins. In some romantic way he had become acquainted with and married a German acquainted with and married a German girl of noble birth, a certain Fraulein Hilda von Waldeck. It was this insane fillida von Waldeck. It was this insane, idea of renewing an old friendship, and this particular idea always is insane, which submerged me in the sea of troubles from which I barely escaped with life and honor.

Jenkins was the United States constant of oldershort, the residence town of

sul at Oldendorf, the residence town of the petty principality of Andel Schwartzburg. It was at Oldendorf that Jack met and married his wife. After the wedding, the fair but obsti-nate Hilda declined to leave the place of her birth, and my friend made the best of it, seemed his appointment as consul and settled down in this sleepy

station and gave me what seemed a hearty welcome. For a few minutes I thought him the same frank, rough-md-ready, forial chap whom I had always known; but I soon began to notice something of a change in him. There seemed, at times, to be a sort of restraint in his manner; there was, it struck me, often a felse note in his discourse. He was more subdued and he seemed to have grown ten years older than he should have grown in the space of time since I had seen him last.

creature like her, and I must go straightway with him and see her, Now, I was not particularly interested in Hilda excepting as I naturally would be in something which belonged to a friend of mine. My benedict acquaintances have often bored me by detailing the perfections of their wives, and I suppose I have shown that I was lored and have been considered very unsympathetic and brutish; but what is a fellow to do, when he knows that these detards. like the ancient mariner, these dotards, like the ancient marrier, the from compulsion, and that sever the eights of what they say is false-lood or only imaginary? I came there to see him, to talk with him about the told times, ten years before, when we mine; the partitions were not over and about the the and I could were not determined. sunked together, and I did not care a tig about Hilda; but of course I couldn't tell him so, and therefore he had his av and dragged me off at once to his

ouse to meet his wife.

I shall say very little of Fran Hilda
son Waldeck Jenkins, for the reason
hat she figures quite slightly in my
ate. She was tall and not half badlooking, and I could easily see how a man of my friend's yielding and en-thusiastic nature might imagine her to be an angel. I say imagine, because, of course, you know, she wasn't; none of them are, and some of them are quite

So much for her appearance. As to

her character, well, I will only say that pearce ten minutes had claused e'er I felt the most hearty commiseration for John Jenkins. The fact was that he was comletely under petticoat rule. He gave no opinion, made no assertion without meanwhile glancing toward her for signs of her aproval. The fact was, as I soon saw, that the man breathed only because he thought that it was her pleasure for him to do so. Almost immediately after the first Almost immediately after the first words of greeting, after the first ordinary and necessary remarks and questions, my bachelor position was assaulted by my treacherous friend; and in this he was ably seconded by his wife. He would have it that I must marry at once, and he cited their own beatific condition as an unanswerable and irresistible argument. Would that e could have seen the irony of it! Not content with extracting a prom-

from me to the effect that I would think the matter over, they descended to the details and produced from their recollections the names of divers and numerous German beauties, any one of whom would be a proper incumbrance for me. The whole assortment, properly arranged and labeled, was to shown me upon the following after-

Not if a train leaves Oldendorf tontorrow morning," said I, to myself. After tea I gladly accepted Jack's invitation to go down to the market place and see a balloon ascension.
"You will not be long, love?" said

Frau Hilda, in a caressing tone, but with a peculiar glance in her eyes. "Only an hour, dearest," answered Jenkins, and with that we went out. After leaving the house Jack seemed to resume something of his old hearty manner, and I began to think that I would be able to take some comfort with him. We threaded a labyrinth of narrow, ancient and crooked streets, and at length emerged upon the mar-ket place, which was almost filled with the people of the town, anxious, like

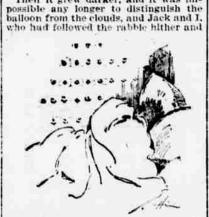
ourselves, to see the balloon go up.
It was about seven o'clock of an August evening. The air was balmy and the dusk was beginning to settle down. it strange, at first, that any ene should make an ascension at hour, but it was not strange at all, for the balloonist was in the employ of the military authorities, and he purposed to make some experiments with electric searchlight or some other kind of light, or burn some kind of fire, the result of which might be found useful in the

military operations of the empire When we arrived they had about finished inflating the balloon, which was swaying back and forth above the heads of the people, in about the center of the square. We gradually pushed our way through the crowd until we came quite near to it, and I saw that it was rather small and capable of bearing aloft but one person. After a delay of fifteen or twenty minutes the aeronaut appeared and signified his readiness to make the ascension; but he did not go The balloon went up without wait-

It was a laughable accident, but I did not wonder at it. I must rather have been surprised if it had not happened. It was the most natural thing in the world. The roof was guarded on the street side by an iron fence or railing curiously wrought with leaves and spikes, and the balloon it, and, besides this, they had tethered it to a neighboring post with a rather.

small-sized rope or thick cord. These precautions they supposed to be per-fectly adequate, and they perhaps would have been under ordinary circumstances, but when the balloon was fully inflated and the aeronaut had removed several of the sand blags preparatory to getting into the car there came along a smart gust of wind, the great silk dome bobbed suddenly to one side, the rope which tethered the car broke like a piece of string and the machine was a piece of string and the machine was out of reach before anyone had pres-ence of mind enough to seize it.

For some reason or other, probably because it was weighted too heavily, it rose only to an elevation of about a hundred feet; then it floated away over the heads of the populace, first this way and then that way, as different puffs of wind took it; and the crowd scurried along in its wake, with their chins in the air and their mouths open, and a great many ran up into the buildings and say and the profes with the fooland got out on the roofs, with the fool-ish idea that they might capture it. Then it grew darker, and it was im-



STUFFED THE SHEET INTO MY EARS.

hither in their erratic chase, gave the

thing up and turned our steps home ward old German city.

Well, I arrived at Oldendorf after a roundabout and tedicus journey, and, Jack, who expected me, was at the reation and gave me what seemed a been parted from har whoreas he had sisted in calling her; whereas he had promised to return in an hour. I gave the matter naturally no concern, but with my companion it was different. He fairly led me on a run to his house. On the way he seemed to be distrait and recognized by answered my remarks. preoccupied, he answered my remarks at random, and it was very evident that there was a weight of goodly dimen-sions upon his mind, "Why," thought I, "will a man, who is born to the nobil-ity of freedom, voluntarily, yes, long-ingly, make a slave of himself to a crea-His talk, like the letters he had writ-ten me, was all of Hilda. It was Hilda this and Hilda that; there was never a at the anticipation of her displeasure?" When we arrived at the house, Frau Jenkins received us calmiy and with a suspiciously gentle tone. With me she was coldly, but studiously polite and I, noticing that her manner had still further depressed my unhappy friend, took leave of the couple with all hastenessities and stilling that her manner had still further depressed my unhappy friend. possible, and retiring to my chamber, threw off my clothes and crawled into bed, for I had had a trying day of it, and proposed to get a good night's rest.

It was not to be, for just then the Jenkinses commenced to talk. That is

> from John Jenkins. At ten o'clock I turned over toward the wall, and stuffed the sheet into my ears, and still I heard it.
> Their door was opened and closed. and in that moment I heard the words: "Six months ago, you would not have forgotten. If I could have believed mother—" the rest of the sentence being lost by the shutting of the door, I arose and paced the moor in vexation, for the dull and wearing murmur of the value gave as six as a sentence of claims. the voice gave no signs of abating.
>
> More than aught else I fear a talking woman, and in my misery, I yet gave thanks that I was not tethered to

k, and I could very well dis-

tinguish the tones, the manner and the

indections, without the words them-selves reaching me. Her voice was low,

it was plaintive, but at the same tim insistent, and it was monotonous; and, ever and anon, came that one protest-

ing, defensive and melancholy word

At eleven I flung myself upon the bed, and fell asleep and dozed awhile, and then the voices stopped, and I suddenly awoke, as one does on a steam ship when the crew stops revolving. I felt a sense of blessed comfort, but it was only for a moment. She was apparently but resting. Once more that stream of words commenced to flow. She was off again. I noticed now that there came no response from the cul-prit. That meek and deprecating punctuation had ceased entirely. Was he dead? The supposition was most

At twelve there was no change, and I arose and dressed myself completely and opened the French window and looked out into the night. In Olden-

plausible



REACHED DOWN TO CUT THEM BOTH.

dorf, some of the best and most aristo cari, some of the best and most aristo-cratic people lived in abartments over the shops, and my friend's apartments were so situated. My room was in the third story, and the French window, which I had opened, led out upon a flat roof, which was inclosed on three sides by brick walls, and the fourth side of which faced upon a street. I had noticed this roof and this area when I was in my chamber before tea. They seemed different to me now. There was something there which I had not seen then. The area now was almost filled with something vast and globular and vague and vascilating. I stepped out upon the roof and advanced toward this monster, which, as I approached, took the appearance of a great yellow rubber ball, twelve feet and rodiameter; and it suddenly flashed upor me that I had found the runaway bal-

I did not wonder at it, nor was I surprised. It was the most natural thing in the world. The roof was guarded on the street side by an Iron

this iron work, so that the aerial ship was safely housed and concealed be-

tween these three walls.

My first feeling was one of propri-etorship. It was clearly mine by all etorship. It was clearly mine by all the laws regarding salvage and treas-ure trove. It struck me, somehow, that the first thing to do was to entangle the rigging where it had caught and to got the thing ship shape. When it was wrecked, so to speak, upon the railing, several of the many cords which held the car had become unfastened or un-hooked from the ring or hoop above, and the car had tilted over, and had rumped its contents—eight bags of sand—upon the roof. I righted the wicker car and disentangled several of the cords by which it should have hung, and refastened them to the hoop at the bottom of the balloon then, as it was a warm night, and I was somewhat heated by the exertion, I took off my coat, and because it was the handlest place, threw it into the car. Very soon there remained but two of the cords to disengage from the ironwork. The straining of the balloon made it so difficult that I threw one leg over the edge of the car and bore my weight upon it. so as to slacken the cords. Even then I could not get them I. So I took out my knife and reached down and cut them both with one stroke. The balloon was now free. I knew it, be-cause in one second, if lifted me about fifty feet above the top of the build-PART II.

This was not what I wished or intended. It was also not what I ex-pected; but I did not wonder at it, nor was I at all surprised. I should have known that if the balloon could carry eight twenty-five pound bars of sand or two hundred pounds altogether, that there would be no difficulty about its getting away with me, who weighed something less than a hundred and sev-enty-five. The only trouble was that I did not think of this fact until I had cut those last two cords and all at once found myself floating over the house tops, with one arm and one leg thrown over the edge of the car and with both hands tightly gripping the It only arose to an elevation of sev-

enty-five or eighty feet from the ground; from which fact, I argued, that some of the gas had escaped, oth-erwise, the weight being less, it would have been more buoyant and gone higher.
The wind had now changed, and the

balloon jogged along at a pretty lively rate, in a direction which would soon bring it over the market place, from which it had originally started. I now thought I should be more comfortable if I could get into the car, and I made the effort to do so, but it was a ticklish operation, as I had to squeeze in be-tween the cords which held it. Be-sides this, the car itself tilted over so abominably every time I tried to get into it, that I soon gave up the idea and decided to ride it out as I was. Being resigned to this situation, I now began to feel more at my case, and really to find some pleasure in this, to me, novel mode of traveling. There was a full moon that night; but there were many clouds floating across the heavens, so that sometimes the streets below me were lighted up, and at oth-er times were shrouded in darkness. I halooed at two or three belated pedeshalooed at two or three belated pedes-trians who were passing beneath me, and noticing their astonishment and dismay at being thus hailed from the clouds above their heads, I took pains to accost others in the same manner. Two old ladies who were plodding homeward by the light of a lantern which one of them carried were so startled by this diabolical summons from the upper air that they dropped from the upper air that they dropped the light and took to their heels as if they were competing in the Olympian

In about five minutes I had passed beyond the town in a southerly direction, and in four or five minutes more began to float above a dense black for est which seemed limitless in extent. I had heard of a great forest thereabout, containing many square miles, a forest which was the domain of a strange and fierce old German noble, the Graf von Schreckenstrohm. This was undoubtedly it. It had descended to him directly from an ancestor who lived in the Thirteenth century; a feudal baron, who bore the sobriquet of



BEHELD HIM CALMLY SITTING IN THE CAR OF THE BALLOON.

It was also said that the present Graf only the forest and the great feudal castle which stood upon an island in the midst of the Schreckenstrohm, but also the peculiarities which gave to his

ancestor that playful nickname,
I was thinking about these matters
as I sailed along, at the rate of about twelve miles an hour, over the tops of the fir trees and pines. I was also thinking about Jack and his wife, and wondering what they would suppose of my sudden and unceremonious de-parture. I also wondered whether Mrs. Jenkins was still talking, and the thought of that made me quite con-tented with the peculiar situation in which I found myself, though I was getting tired and felt very lame from sticking to the same position, and having to hold on so tightly; and would willingly have got off at some way sta-tion and rested until the next balloon

came along.

After I had passed over the tops of the forest for a mile or so, I became conscious of the sound of a roaring river, which increased in volume as I proceeded. Then there seemed to be a break in the woods, and I saw beneath me the gittering white foam of a mad and mighty torrent. At the same time, there rose before me, from a rocky island in the midst of the flood, a great, half-ruined, medieval castle, with round towers and turrets, with keep and barbacans and parapets galore. Gray and stern and spectre-like it loomed up before me, and it seemed as though I was about directly over it.

The direction which I was now taking would bring me immediately above a wide embrasured parapet, which stretched between two towers. At its present altitude, the balloon would present altitude, the balloon would clear it but a few feet. I at once decided that this was the way station I was looking for, and that I would alight there. When I was within fifty feet of it, I beheld a man in his shirt sieeves, standing behind the parapet and watching me approach. Some persons might have been astonished at this, but I did not wonder at it in the least. There was no reason why he least. There was no reason why he should not be standing on the roof of this castle at midnight in warm weather, if he wished.

As the balloon came up to him, he As the balloon came up to him, he sprang up and caught hold of the car. At the same moment, I dropped like a cat, upon all fours, upon the roof. When I arose and turned to accost him I beheld him coolly situation in the case. I beheld him coolly siting in the car of the balloon, which was already passing over the battlements at the further ing over the battlements at the further side of the castle. I ran across the stone platform to the edge, and called out to him that he had my coat, and that he must come back. He waved his hands to me with exaggerated politeness.

Then I shook my fist at him, and he laughed immoderately and shouted back just as he was disappearing that I might use his.

I might use his.

I was not surprised that the man had gone off in the balloon. There was nothing to wonder at, for he might have his own peculiar and sufficient reasons for doing so. At the same time, however, I did not go to the length of supposing that he had climbed up on the ton of the castle with the express purpose of watching for balexpress purpose of watching for bal-loons, and with the idea of taking the first one that came along.

first one that came along.

I noticed a doorway opening upon the platform, from one of the great round towers before mentioned. The door was ajar, and I thought that it was probably by this means that the man had come uot upon the roof. I went to this doorway and looked in, At first, it was as dust as Freshas but my eyes. it was as dark as Erebus, but my eyes becoming accustomed to it, I perceived



I LOOKED DOWN A LONG PAS-SAGEWAY.

that there was a faint light coming up from somewhere below. I could also make out the outlines of a spiral stair-case leading to those lower regions. Not being of the mind to remain where I was all night. I groped my way down these stairs, the light growing brighter as I proceeded, until, after descending as it struck me, about thirty feet, I came to another open deorway, through which I entered a great square bed chamber, furnished and decorated in the style of some age long passed away. The bed was a large four-posted, canonical with heavy either. pied affair, draped with heavy silken curtains. The tiled chimney place was big enough to roast an ox, and the walls were covered with stamped leather and with dingy tapestries, which flapped and undulated in a ghostly manner, with the current of air that came down the stairway. Upon a massive table of black oak, in the center of the room stand a city. center of the room, stood a silver candelabrum, with four wax candles, three of which were burning. A half unpacked portmanteau lay open upon a chair; several masculine garments were scattered about the apartment, and these, together, with a strong olor of tobacco, showed that the chamber had been lately occupied. From this, to the conclusion that its tenant had been the man who had gone off in the balloon, was a logical step. A brown velvet coat was among the garments velvet coat was among the garments already spoken of. This was undoubtedly the coat he had bade me use in the place of mine. I tried it on and found that it fitted me very well, which was not surprising as the man appeared to be about my size. I should ment on the fact, also, that I gathered from the short acquaintance I had with him that he was about my age. he was about my age.

There was only one thing that I now

There was only one thing that I now wanted, and that was sleep. I wanted it badly and I wanted a great deal of it. So without more ado I flung myself upon the feathers of the great four-poster, and almost immediately fell into a sound and dreamless slumber. When I awoke, the sun was shining brightly through a narrow, deeply emprasured window high up on the wall brasured window, high up on the wall opposite me. I looked at my watch and ound that it lacked but a few minutes of ten o'clock. I arose and dressed hastily. I could hear the surging of the Schreckenstrohm, as it swept past the castle, but no sounds of life from the building smote upon my ear. This struck me as rather singular, and made me more anxious to reconnoiter the premises. With the well-appointed paraphernalia of my predecessor I made careful toilet; for the reason that I had become a guest of the castle under what might be considered somewhat peculiar circumstances, and I wished o create as faorable an impression as ossible, upon my first appearance.

When I had finished, I summoned to my aid what small stock of effrontery I was possessed of, and entering the staircase of the tower and descending to the story beneath, I passed into an apartment directly under the one I had occupied. This room was light and airy, and from the view which I got from the windows, I now judged that I was upon the ground floor. This chamber seemed to be devoted to implements and trophies of the chase. Several pairs of antiber seemed to be eral pairs of antlers, some of them enormous in size, were posted above the doorways; the head of a wild boar, with glistening tusks, was mounted above a cabinet in the further corner, and upon one of the walls was displayed an as-sortment of muskets, bell-monthed pis-tols and blunderbusses and hunting pikes and blades, so ancient and curious that it would make a collector burst with envy to look at it. Without lingering to inspect them, I

opened a door opposite to the one I had entered and found myself in what appeared to be a refectory of the castle. The walls were covered with landscape paintings, as it seemed to me from a cursory glance, by the best German artists of the Seventeenth century; but that which most pleased my fancy was a breakfast table in the center of the room, spread with linen of snowy whiteness, set with a profusion of sil-ver, and best of all, furnished with a collation, smoking hot, and evidently prepared for one person.

As I entered here, I was certain that

saw a doctor close at the farther end of the room. I stepped quickly to this door and opened it, and looked down a long passage way without seeing anyone. Then I went along this pas-sage and entered several pantries and offices, still without coming upon a living thing, and I began to be perliving thing, and I began to be per-plexed, for all this time I had not heard not a sound, save the dashing of the torrent against the rocks outside, and I was not accustomed to being waited upon by ghosts. I now concluded that the closing of the opposite door, as I entered the room, was done by the pressure of air. As I pushed one door open the other one closed. That was

all there was of it, and it was a most simple thing.

I was not surprised when I found the meal already prepared and waiting for me. There was nothing to wonder at. It had, without doubt, been got-ten ready for the man. When they ten ready for the man. When they heard me moving about in my chamber, they supposed he was coming down and had placed it upon the table. I had his coat upon my back, and it seemed to me eminently logical that his breakfast should adorn my stom-ach. With this philosophical reflec-tion, I sat down and made short work of the fruit and coffee rolls. And though set before me in such a fan-tastic and ghostly way, very tangible and satisfying and declicious I found

After I had finished I lighted a cigar and lounged about the room for ten minutes or so, thinking surely that some servant would come whom I might interrogate. But none appear-ed; neither did I hear the least sound ed; neither did I hear the least sound indicative of life in that part of the building near met. I then went up in my own apartment, as I had begun to think it, and examined the belongings of its late occupant. On looking at the portmanteau I found that it bore upon

the outside the initials: "A. von D. Munich." At about this moment, also I discovered in one of the pockets of the coat which I were a letter, the en-velope of which was postmarked Ol-dendorf and addressed to Herr August dendorf and addressed to Herr August von Dunkelheim at Munich. I had now discovered without doubt the name of the man who had stolen my balloon, and by reading the letter I felt morally certain that I could find out a great many things about the castle and its inmates, always providing that it had any. I, however, restrained myself from taking the letter from its envelope, reserving the right from its envelope, reserving the right to do so at some future time, should occasion warrant it.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

SHE DUDN'T LIKE SMOKE. But the Young Man Did, and He Won His Point. From the Mail and Express,

On a Third avenue car this morning an inoffensive young man sat on the back seat and puffed at a cigar of the El Cabbage brand. At Grand street a little, wiry, nervous woman boarded the car. She paid her fare in pennies and then turned upon the young man. "You are no gentleman," she sa'd. 'I ain't a lady, either," said the young man, cheerfully.

"I only wish your father was here," "I only wish your father was here," ejaculated the woman.
"Lucky for him he ain't," said the young man, "seeing it's leap year."
The passengers laughed and the conductor snickered. The woman was angry. She began to abuse the conductor and threatend to report him. "What have I done?" asked the conductor plaintively.
"Why don't you put that man off?"

"Why don't you put that man off? wrathfully demanded the woman. "He'

smoking."
"He has the right to smoke," said the conductor. "Read that sign." The woman read, and then, with a very red face, said: "Well, you have been inso-lent, anyway, and I shall report you and have you discharged." "You may make your complaint, madam," said a fine looking old gentle-

madam. said a line looking old gentle-man, who had listened to the forego-ing, "but it will receive to attention." "Who are you?" snapped the woman. "Merely one of the directors of this road," said the old gentleman. The woman blushed and left the car. "Are you really a director of this road?" asked a reporter for the Mail and Express. "Nit." chuckled the old

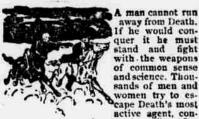
### LITTLE BOY BLUE.

The little toy dog is covered with dust, But sturdy and stanch he stands; And the little toy soldler is red with rust, And his musket molds in his hands. Time was when the little toy dog was new. new. And the soldier was passing fair. And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue

Rissed them and put them there. . "Now, don't you go till I come." he said,
"And don't you make any noise!"
So toddling off to his trundle-bed
He dreamt of the pretty toys.
And as he was dreaming an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh, the years are many, the years are
long.

But the little toy friends are true. Aye, faithful to Little Boy Blue they

Aye, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place.
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face.
And they wonder, as waiting these long years through.
In the dust of that little chair.
What has become of our Little Boy Blue Since he kissed them and put them there.
—Eugene Field.



women try to es-cape Death's most active agent, con-away. They flee sumption, by running away. They flee from one climate to another, and from one end of the world to the other, forgetting their demon is within them and not to be escaped from by a change of locality. Consumption has been pronounced incurable. It is not. It is curable and without change of climate if the proper remedy is resorted to, in reasonable time.

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in the last twelve, months."

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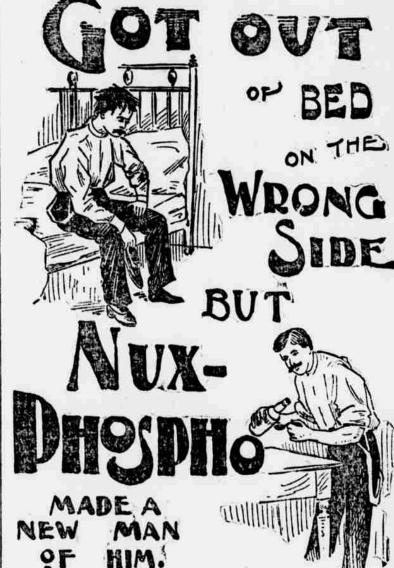
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