

Answer This Question

When shown positive and reliable proof that a certain remedy had cured numerous cases of female ills, wouldn't any sensible woman conclude that the same remedy would also benefit her if suffering with the same trouble?

Here are two letters which prove the efficiency of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Red Banks, Miss.—"Words are inadequate to express what Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done for me. I suffered from a female disease and weakness which the doctors said was caused by a fibroid tumor, and I commenced to think there was no help for me. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound made me a well woman after all other means had failed. My friends are all asking what has helped me so much, and I gladly recommend Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound."—Mrs. Willie Edwards.

Hamstead, Maryland.—"Before taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound I was weak and nervous, and could not be on my feet half a day without suffering. The doctors told me I never would be well without an operation, but Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done more for me than all the doctors, and I hope this valuable medicine may come into the hands of many more suffering women."—Mrs. Joseph H. Dandy.

We will pay a handsome reward to any person who will prove to us that these letters are not genuine and truthful—or that either of these women were paid in any way for their testimonials, or that the letters are published without their permission, or that the original letter from each did not come to us entirely unsolicited.

What more proof can any one ask?

For 30 years Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has been the standard remedy for female ills. No sick woman does justice to herself who will not try this famous medicine. Made exclusively from roots and herbs, and has thousands of cures to its credit.



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THE ALTENBURG CASE

By GEORGE DYRE ELDRIDGE

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THE CALL ON THE PHONE.

Dr. Grimbleshaw, at the age of thirty and with an assured income of fifteen hundred a year, began to allow himself some of the luxuries of life, or what he was wont to look upon as luxuries at the age of twenty-five when his income was but a precarious five hundred. In doing this, however, he was obliged to shut his eyes to the fact that he still owed money, some of it dating from his college and medical school days. Still, he held that a man who remains single at thirty is preordained to perpetual bachelorhood and is entitled to take some chances. By that time "the skull has hardened"—that was his expressive phrase—"beyond the point where any woman should be asked to break through, on the chance of finding something, or nothing, inside." With nothing to save for, except to keep himself off the town in his old age, he held it legitimate to increase expenditure step by step with income.

"That's the way," he put it, "to create interest in your keeping on living. If there's something nobody can get hold of till you're dead, they'll want you dead. I shouldn't expect to be murdered, but I don't want to become a temptation."

For a country town like Lancelboro his rooms were actually rather luxurious. For instance, he had set the pace with a Turkish rug for his sitting room, and couches and chairs that invited to a greater restfulness than usually falls to the lot of a hard-working country doctor. His taste was possibly, not of the purest, but much could be forgiven on the score of subdued colors, and when there was added, of an evening, the dance of the firelight, and the softening of the aspersive glare of the electric bulb by a simple shade, one saw that it needed only the touch of a woman's hand to make the room something more than merely habitable.

Grimbleshaw was increased in a long, soft woolen robe; his armchair was ample and comfortable, and his slippers feet were raised from any possible floor drafts to toast pleasantly before the wood fire. The whisky at his elbow was far better than is sold in the little town like Lancelboro, and the unlighted cigar had an air of contributing its share to the equalization of outgo with income. A ponderous treatise on some newly discovered disease, which was rapidly becoming fashionable, lay ostentatiously beside a modestly bound novel, that might, however, be depended on to hold its own in the struggle of duty with inclination.

Grimbleshaw took up the cigar with the loving touch of one who foregoeth the joy of the first breath of sweet smoke when—

"Tingle, tingle, tingle," went the telephone bell.

He turned partly around and glanced at the instrument dubiously.

"There's nobody sick enough to want me as badly as that," he muttered speaking as a lover of ease to himself, cursed with the conscience of a doctor.

"Tingle—ingle—ingle—ingle—ingle," went the bell in a mad riot of demand.

"Oh, Lord," he grumbled, "if it's as bad as that she'll be dead before I can possibly get there!"

His use of the feminine pronoun bespoke experience.

Just as he reached the telephone another mad tumult began, and he got the full buzz and rattle of it through the receiver.

"Yes, yes, yes! I'm here!" he called.

"Yes, this is one, naught, four, who wants me?"

"Eight, four, two, go ahead," came the innocent squeak of the central demon.

"Hello!"

"Hello! Is that Dr. Grimbleshaw?"

"Yes! Go ahead!"

"There's been a buzz-z-z-z-z—Man—buzz-z-z-z-z head; buzz-z-z-z-z come buzz-z-z-z-z."

"Hold on! I can't hear you," Grimbleshaw interrupted. "If you'd talk in your natural voice we might get ahead. Start over again!"

"There's been an accident—yes, I've got that. You'll have to repeat the rest."

"An accident; a man's neck broken? Oh head! Put on some sticking—What? Skull fractured, you think? I'm sensible. Can't you be sensible enough to talk in your natural voice? Yes, I've got that much—that there's been an accident and you think the man's skull is fractured and that he's insensible. Don't ring off! Hello, central, central! Burr-r-r-r-r-r! Oh, central, who was that who just rung me up? Eight, four, two? Altenburg? Out on the Plains road? Thanks!"

What did it mean that he, of all men should be called from John Altenburg's, and on this particular night of all nights?

II.
WITHIN THE HOUSE.

Grimbleshaw, who was not a little flattered that old John Altenburg, rich and eccentric, should call him from among the several physicians in Lancelboro, tried to deceive himself by grumbling at having to leave his cozy fire-side on such a night. The wind had risen and was driving the sleety rain against the windows in a most uncomfortably suggestive manner. It swept with unbroken force across the plains, and the sleet stung like needle points wherever it found the skin.

The house loomed large across the night before they reached it, a blacker patch upon the general blackness. It stood some distance from the road,

in the midst of rough fields, and the driver was authority that the rutted way was villainous. "It's jest a leetle wuss'n the bare fields would be."

At the turning in from the highway a smoky lantern was set upon the wall to prevent their missing the way.

"He's afraid we might tramp on the grass," said young Barber, the driver.

The doctor leaned from the buggy as they crept toward the house, seized with a sense of the weird loneliness that hung over it. The boy, speaking in a low and somewhat awed tone, told him that Altenburg, since his wife ran away and left him, lived almost alone, a deaf old housekeeper, who did all the indoor work, and a French Canadian, who slept in the barn and attended to out-of-door affairs, making up the household. It was evidence of a care with which the village looked after everybody's business that so much information could be had of such a household. Still, it was conceivable that if so fearful an accident had happened, there would be some unusual stir about the place, which, in fact, was still and dark, as if deserted. The boy felt the oppression and ceased his chatter.

They were almost on to the house before they caught a tiny spark of light from a candle in an uncurtained window. The boy whispered that it was a window of the kitchen.

"Find a shelter for the horse and then come to the kitchen," said the doctor, as he stepped gingerly on to the slippery doorstep. "I can't tell how long I'll be here."

He gave a rap with the old iron knocker, merely to signal his presence, for, without waiting an answer, he pushed open the door and stepped into the kitchen. The door had not been closely shut, for a narrow wedge of sleet lay along the floor and glisten in the light of the feeble candle, which flared and threatened to go out before the sudden blast from the opening door.

Closing the door Grimbleshaw turned to study the situation, holding the candle high above his head for that purpose. The room was dim and cavernous, with a great gaping fireplace filling half the opposite side. The furnishings were of the plainest, and so few as to give a still more empty look to the vast space. The carefully heaped up ashes of the fireplace showed that the fire had been covered for the night.

Under an instinct for warmth and dryness the doctor crossed the room and raked open the ashes. Then, from a meager pile by the chimney side he drew some pieces of pitch pine and a stick or two of hickory, and in a moment or two had a blaze that lighted the room and dispelled no inconsiderable part of the gloom.

Young Barber came stamping in and reported the barn locked. He had tied the horse in the shed and blanketed him.

"Thar hain't another light nowhar," he averred. "They must be a-tendin' that feller in the dark."

Grimbleshaw lighted a second candle and opened the door leading to the main part of the house. The room he entered was even more scantily furnished than the kitchen. It ran from side to side of the house. The floor was bare, save for a strip of rag carpet that stretched diagonally to a door, beyond the great chimney, which opened apparently to the front entryway. There was an old-fashioned secretary between the two front windows and a half dozen cheap chairs. Besides these articles and the shades to the windows, there was no pretense of furniture. On the wall, at the side of the secretary, and looking strangely out of place in such surroundings, was the telephone.

Grimbleshaw's foot struck something that rolled off the carpet and rattled sharply over the bare floor, making a hideous noise amid the intense silence that prevailed. He held his light low and saw a battered tin candlestick, in which, by the grease that had guttered down the side, was held the end of a common dip. The odor of greasy smoke was still perceptible.

A drop of something fell from the stick as he raised it and splattered on his boot. A glance showed the stick covered with blood from a pool on the floor, into which it had rolled.

Startled as Grimbleshaw was, he retained presence of mind to realize that a sight of the blood would terrify the lad, and it came to him that there might be that here to which he would want a witness. So he set down the stick and went on toward the hall door.

As he opened this sharp blast of wintry air struck his face, and on the threshold of the opened outer door he saw the figure of a man, but whether he was going out or coming in he could not tell. The man turned at the gleam of the candle and called out in a strangely melodious voice, which he apparently tried to make gruff:

"Hello, I thought you were all dead! I've been pounding at this door for a week. I want to see Judith Calden."

"Judith Calden?" He repeated the name with a start. "Come in and shut that door, or my candle'll go out! Judith Calden doesn't live here. This is John Altenburg's."

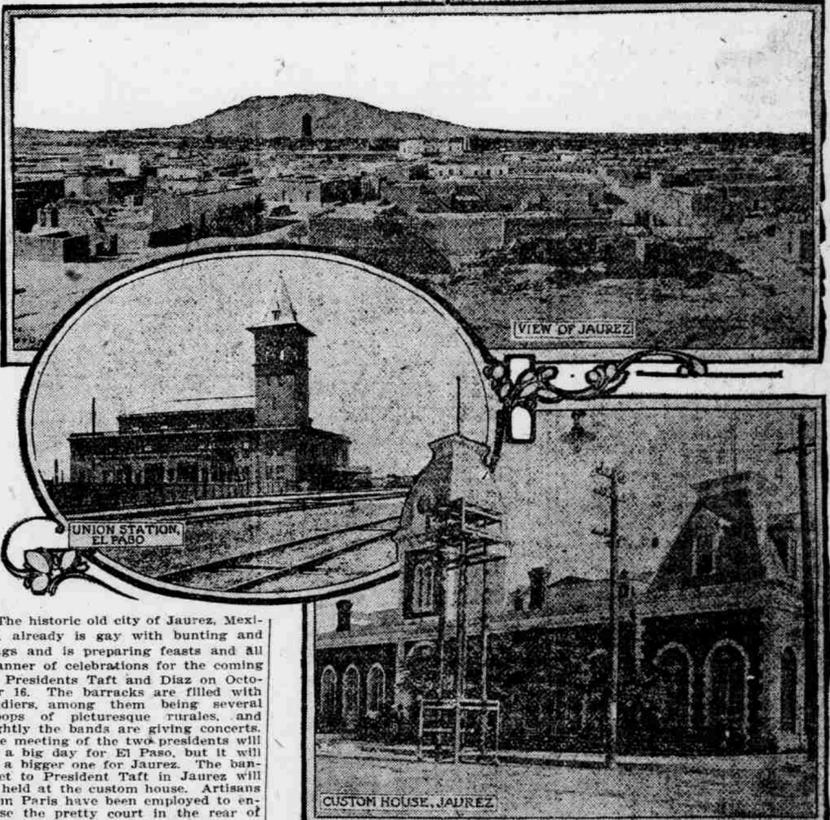
"That's right," said the man, who paid no heed to the warning, but kept in the shadow of the door frame. "Old John Altenburg's."

Just then a sharper blast extinguished the light, which Grimbleshaw had been trying to hold so that he could see the other's face.

"There you are, just as I told you!" he exclaimed, sharply. "Now, will you shut that door? Here, Phil, go to the kitchen and light it and get some matches."

While the lad was gone they stood in the black darkness, neither spoke. The man did not close the door, nor so far as Grimbleshaw perceived, did he move. Yet when Phil returned there was no one there but themselves. The man had slipped

VIEWS OF JAUREZ, MEXICO, AND EL PASO, WHERE PRESIDENTS TAFT AND DIAZ MEET



The historic old city of Jaurez, Mexico, already is gay with bunting and flags and is preparing feasts and all manner of celebrations for the coming of Presidents Taft and Diaz on October 16. The barracks are filled with soldiers, among them being several troops of picturesque rurales, and nightly the bands are giving concerts. The meeting of the two presidents will be a big day for El Paso, but it will be a bigger one for Jaurez. The banquet to President Taft in Jaurez will be held at the custom house. Artisans from Paris have been employed to enclose the custom house in glass for the entertainment. General Diaz will cross the river and meet the President of the United States at the Union station, and later Mr. Taft will go to Jaurez.

where he will be the guest of the president of Mexico and the city of Jaurez. The accompanying pictures give a good idea of the appearance of the Mexican city with its odd architecture and adobe houses.

away noiselessly.

Grimbleshaw stepped hastily out on to the doorstep, but the pelting of the sleet, which threatened again to put out his light, showed him the folly of attempting pursuit, and he stepped back, shut the door and turned the key.

The entryway was not more than eight feet square. Three doors opened into it and a winding stairway ran upward. Opposite the door by which he had come was the approach to a room on the other side of the house. A turn of the knob proved the door to be locked.

"Humph," he muttered; "they lock the inner doors, but leave the outside ones unlocked. We'll try upstairs."

He went up slowly, and as he did so caught an occasional gleam of the light in little drops and splashes that he knew to be of blood. Naturally he connected the blood with the call over the telephone, and it was clear that whoever had been hurt had been carried up these stairs. Still, the amount of blood in the room below perplexed him. He directed Phil sharply to hold the light above his head, for he wished to prevent his discovery of the blood before the cause could be made clear.

At the head of the stairs and directly over the locked one below was a door. On this he gave a rap, and then turned the knob. It, too, was locked. He listened, and was convinced that he heard a stealthy step within, as if some one were stealing away from the door. Then he rapped again, louder than before, but equally without effect.

At that he turned and went along the hall, past a window above the front door, to the door of the room above that in which he had seen the blood. This was slightly open, and he pushed it back with his foot, holding his candle above his head to throw the light as far as possible within.

He saw a great chamber, cavernous and dark, save as his light penetrated it. At the farther side was a huge high-posted bedstead, on the white counterpane of which he fancied he saw a dark outline that suggested the form of a man. He leaned forward to get a better sight when Phil gave a shriek, dropped his candle, which was extinguished by the fall, and turned and fled down the stairs. Before Grimbleshaw could rally from the start the shriek gave him, something or someone darted past him, knocking his candle, in turn, to the floor, and followed the boy with almost noiseless steps. It seemed to Grimbleshaw, listening in the dark, that he heard the swish of drapery as the fleeing figure passed the turn in the stairs, but even then he admitted the risk that imagination might, under the circumstances, play him.

The boy clearly kept on through the room below, but Grimbleshaw could hear the unknown fumbling at the knob of the front door. This recalled him to himself, and he sprang to the stairs under an impulse to seize the fugitive. Even as he felt his foot on the first step he realized the supreme folly of such an act. On this he retraced his steps, moving instinctively on tiptoe, and found his candlestick and also Phil's. In groping for them his hand touched two or three wet, sticky spots, which he knew to be blood.

Then he suddenly remembered that Phil had not given him the matches, and he had no means of gaining a light short of the kitchen. The noise below had ceased, but whether because the fugitive had unlocked the door and escaped, or because he was lying in wait for him to come down he had no means of finding out much of the event. The question opened up most unpleasant possibilities.

III.
IN THE UPPER CHAMBER.

Although the awkwardness of the situation appealed strongly to Grimbleshaw, it was clear that there was but one thing possible to do, a condition that makes tremendously for sim-

ilarity. An injured man, possibly a dead one, was in the room before him; the opposite room was locked; there was no light to be had short of the kitchen, to reach which he must descend the stairs and cross the hall and the room where the secretary stood. Something awaited him at the foot of the stairs, which the silence that followed the rattling at the door only made the more terrifying.

Cautiously, step by step, he descended the winding stairs. At each step he stopped and listened, his terror of uncertainty being so great as to make him almost wish to catch some sound to tell him that something living shared the darkness with him. He reached the last step. He stopped and out of the blackness came that strange preception of human presence which is neither of hearing nor of sight. It was covering at the farther end of the hall, near the bolted door, and he knew its position so exactly as to be certain that he could walk over and put his hand on it. Instead of doing so, he walked past it, entered the room with the secretary and closed the door behind him. The possibility that he should grapple in the dark with this unseen thing did not appeal to him.

The fire was blazing brightly in the kitchen fireplace and was as a breath of life to a man sick almost unto death. The boy, Barber, was not there and the opened outer door showed the way he had fled. Grimbleshaw relighted his candle, found two more and a supply of matches and by a strong exercise of will power forced himself to return to the upper room.

As he crossed the room adjoining the kitchen his eye fell on the telephone and it came to him as a revelation that there was means in summoning assistance, which would at least be companionship. Pressing his finger against the connection knob he gave the handle a half dozen quick turns. There came only the dead burr of the handle as he whirled it around. He seized the receiver and placed it to his ear. There was not even a buzz of life. It was as if dead, too—he shuddered at the comparison that flashed into his mind.

Instantly the meaning of this new development came to him. The house was absolutely isolated from every living connection. Yet less than an hour before he had held talk with it and had been summoned through this very instrument, now dumb and dead. That the instrument had been purposely disabled admitted of no question. He failed of courage, or desire, to carry the thought to its logical conclusion.

For the space of a breath he was divided in purpose between advance or retreat, and only the sense of professional duty to the injured man upstairs was powerful enough to turn the scale. The fact that he had been summoned might be interpreted as indicating that the man who best knew the extent of the injuries did not think the other past help and was not disposed to prevent help being given. That being the case his course was plain. In any event, it was his duty to know, and anything less than knowledge was clearly dereliction.

When he again opened the door into the entryway the same cold, icy blast, as formerly, struck him and nearly extinguished his light. The outer door, which he had bolted, again stood open and the hall was empty. In the very corner, however, where some subtle sense had told him that something, or somebody, covered, lay in a rumpled heap a sheet of white cotton. Above was the ominous blackness of the stairway and upper hall, which might conceal any terror-creating shape.

This time he did not look or even close the door. He had less fear for what might be without than for that which might be within, and there was something reassuring in knowledge of an open way of retreat more direct than through the kitchen. Before going upstairs, however, he tried the door of the lower room, and on reaching the upper hallway tried the second door. Each

was fastened, as before. Then he passed into the farther room, giving a quick glance about to detect, if possible, any further intruder.

Like the rooms below, it was sparsely furnished, but the great bureau was of mahogany, as was also the four-poster he had noticed before. On this was stretched the form of a powerful man, who by appearance was close on to seventy years of age. He was clothed in an ordinary suit of coarse material, but the clothing had been loosened at the throat. An ugly cut, gaping and bloody, extended along the left side of the head, and the physician's trained eye saw that at one point the skull was crushed in. He recognized the man for John Altenburg, usually spoken of as "old John Altenburg," the owner of the house and farm.

(To be continued to-morrow.)

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