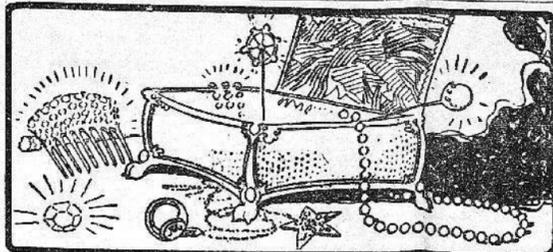


# BRITZ OF HEADQUARTERS

By MARCIN BARBER  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS



# WOMAN ESCAPES OPERATION

Was Cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound



Elwood, Ind.—"Your remedies have cured me and I have only taken six bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I was sick three months and could not walk. I suffered all the time. The doctors said I could not get well without an operation, for I could hardly stand the pains in my sides, especially my right one, and down my right leg. I began to feel better when I had taken only one bottle of Compound, but kept on as I was afraid to stop too soon."—Mrs. SADIE MULLEN, 2728 N. B. St., Elwood, Ind.

Why will women take chances with an operation or drag out a sickly, half-hearted existence, missing three-fourths of the joy of living, when they can find health in Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound? For thirty years it has been the standard remedy for female ills, and has cured thousands of women who have been troubled with such ailments as displacements, inflammation, ulceration, fibroid tumors, irregularities, periodic pains, backache, indigestion, and nervous prostration.

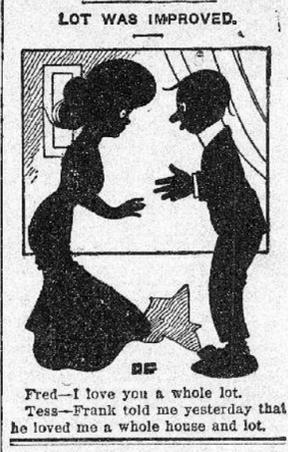
If you have the slightest doubt that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will help you, write to Mrs. Pinkham at Lynn, Mass., for advice. Your letter will be absolutely confidential, and the advice free.

**Proper Treatment.**  
"I have a terrible cold," he complained. "My head feels all stopped up."  
"Have you tried a vacuum cleaner?" she queried sweetly.—Jude.

**TO DRIVE OUT MALARIA AND BUILD UP THE SYSTEM**  
Take the Old Standard GILBERT'S TONIC. You know what you are taking. The formula is plainly given on every bottle, showing it is simply Quinine and Iron in a tasteless form, and the most effective. For grown people and children, 60 cents.

**He Knew Jim.**  
Jim had made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer the world and came back to the Tennessee town dirty, worn out and hungry.  
"Uncle John," he said melodramatically, "I came home to die."  
"No, do not say that," said unsympathetic Uncle John, "you came home to eat."—Success Magazine.

**A Matter of Creed.**  
"Two men were disputing over their respective churches," says the Slater News in reviving an old story which is still good. "One was a Baptist and the other a Presbyterian. Finally one of them called a neighbor who was passing and asked his opinion as to which was the better church in which to be saved. 'Well, neighbor,' he said, 'son and I have been hauling wheat for nearly forty years. There are two roads that lead to the mill. One is the valley road and the other leads over the hill, and never yet has the miller asked me which road I came, but he always asks, 'Is the wheat good?'"—Kansas City Times.



**The Flavour of Post Toasties**

Is so distinctly pleasing that it has won the liking of both young and old who never before cared much for cereal food of any kind.

Served direct from the package—crisp and fresh, and—

**"The Memory Lingers"**

Postum Cereal Company, Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich.

## SYNOPSIS.

The story opens with a scream from Mrs. Missioner in the opera box of the Metropolitan. Missioner's necking has scattered the diamonds all over the floor. Curtis Griswold and Braxton Sands, society men in love with Mrs. Missioner, rush up the stairs. Griswold, who is supposed to be the celebrant, snatches up the diamonds. A Hindu expert later pronounces all the stones substitutes for the original. One of the missing diamonds is found in the room of Elinor Holcomb, confidential companion of Mrs. Missioner. She is arrested, and the real criminal, Missioner's belief notwithstanding Mrs. Missioner's belief in her innocence. Meantime, in an uptown mansion, two Hindus, who are in America to recover the Maharano, discuss the case. Detectives Britz takes up the case. He asks the co-operation of Dr. Fitch, Elinor's fiance, in running down the real criminal. Britz learns that duplicates of Mrs. Missioner's diamonds were made in Paris on the order of Elinor Holcomb. While walking Britz is bound and gagged by Hindus. He is imprisoned in a deserted house, but makes his escape. He is convinced that the Hindus are materially interested in the case. Pretending to be a reporter, Britz interviews the Swami as to the rare diamonds of India.

## CHAPTER XIII.—(Continued.)

Britz frowned slightly as he read the message, then with a heavy fountain pen that fairly raced over the paper, and, addressing his far-away assistant by his cable word, he wrote: "Logan, Paris. Was Maharanees made there, too?"

Britz tapped a bell and looked up as a Headquarters patrolman opened the door.

"Rush this down to the Western Union office," he said. "Take it yourself, and see that it goes at once."

It was when his thoughts were tangled in the tightest of knots that a card was brought to him by the twin brother of the heavy-footed bluecoat who even then was supposedly on his way to the Western Union office with the cable to Logan.

"Show him in," said Britz after a glance at the name; and, as his visitor entered, he swung his feet from the desk, advancing halfway to the door, and extended his hand cordially.

"How do you do, doctor?" he said. "I hope I see you cheerful."

A wan smile broke the fixity of the doctor's countenance for an instant, and he shook his head slightly.

"I don't see how there can be any cheer for me," he said, "as long as that poor girl is a prisoner in the Tombs. When are we going to get her out?"

"I know just how you feel about it, doctor," said Britz sympathetically. "But you'll have to leave that in my hands for the present. Miss Holcomb must stay where she is awhile longer."

"But surely," persisted the physician, "it cannot be necessary to leave her there forever to establish her innocence. You know she is guiltless; I know it; Mrs. Missioner knows it, and it would not take much to bring all her acquaintances to the same view. Why must we wait?"

"Now, let us talk," said Britz. "You and I have fenced long enough along this line; let's get down to business. You know something about chemistry, that's certain. Do you know enough about it to tell me whether any progress has been made in recent years in the manufacture of paste jewels?"

"Can't say I do! haven't been much interested in that line until this outrageous attempt to prove Miss Holcomb a thief."

"Well, it's about time you did," said Britz meaningly. "I don't see what good it is to a girl to have an M. D. for a lover if he can't be of any more use to her in a case of this sort than Elks of the Hardware Club, or Jenks of the Retail Grocers' Association. Now, you know how these false gems are made, don't you?"

"I know pretty well," and Fitch gave him the formula with which the minute men of the jewel trade were familiar for purposes of self-protection.

"Well, I'm quite free to tell you," continued Britz, "that the whole question of Miss Holcomb's stay in the Tombs depends on our success in finding out who made the Maharanees diamond. I know who turned out the other stones—had Logan over there for several weeks in Paris, you know. The detective then sketched rapidly for Fitch the detailed information sent to him by his assistant across the water.

"But I cannot get a line on the Maharanees diamond. I've been over every place in this neck of woods—in fact, I've gone over the whole country with a fine-tooth comb. I've had every important city in Europe canvassed, and the sum-total of all these inquiries is that nobody knows any live man who could make an imitation of the real Maharanees anything like good enough to deceive Simple Simon. Now, you just got that scientific thinking apparatus of yours going, and help me puzzle out the problem. We know there was a fake Maharanees diamond. It was ground to pieces under Griswold's heel in Mrs. Missioner's opera box. It was picked up by a man from the Orient—this Swami—whatever his name is, the sort of combination priest and scholar who says he's here to spread the propaganda of the Buddhist faith among the elect of New York society. Sands saw the diamond; Miss March saw it; Griswold saw it, and, of course, Mrs. Missioner herself had it in her own hand. There is no

doubt about its existence. In fact, here is a piece of it now," and he showed Fitch a flake of the false diamond. "But you don't know, and I don't know what we have both got to know, and that is who made it, where it was made, by whom was it made, why was it made, and for whom was it made? The sooner we work out that end of the game, my dear young man, the better it will be for that little girl up in Centre Street."

The doctor's eyebrows began to contract. There was a peculiarity in the facial gesture. Something was going on in his scientifically inquiring mind. The brows drew together until their separate lines curved into the form of a minute interrogation point; little knobs of skin gathered under the wrinkles; his eyes focused until they almost crossed. He clasped his hands behind his head and studied the ceiling. A rather long silence followed. Smoke spiraled from the detective's cigar and eddied upward. The detective's keen glance was leveled at the doctor's intellectually sharpening face.

It was in a reminiscent tone that Fitch at last spoke.

"When it comes to guessing, I'm no good," he said. "I haven't been trained to guess. The little I know is the result of careful study and patient analysis; but there are a few things besides pharmacopoeia in my mind and memory, and one of them may help us a little." He shifted his position until he turned a square front to the detective.

"Way back in my ambulance days," he said, "there was a case that your question reminds me of. It was one of the first I had after I went to Bellevue. It was a call to a queer little old shop in Fourth Avenue. You remember that row of rookeries flanked up with second-hand furniture stores, art dens, old curio shops, and so on, on the west side of the avenue, somewhere in the Twenties?" A nod from Britz was the only reply. "Well," continued the doctor, "this call was to one of those curiosity shops. It was kept by a queer little old chap who must have starved himself to death to carry out some object he had. He sold curios for a living, and played at alchemy for amusement—cracked, you know. At any rate, he wasn't all there. His neighbors looked on him as a harmless lunatic, and in spite of his solitary habits, he was pretty popular. It was owing to this popularity that he didn't die in the back part of his own store with all the busy traffic of a busy city just a few rods outside. A neighbor heard a noise like an explosion and, running in, found him on his back all covered with some chemical that was turning his clothes into porous plasters. The neighbor turned in an ambulance call, and I was the answer. I found the old man half suffocated and wholly unconscious, and as I was pretty nervous from inexperience, it was about all I could do to bring him around. I wanted to take him back with me, but he wouldn't have it; said he was just as well off where he was; didn't like the hospital anyhow and wouldn't go, so I fixed him up where he was. Afterward, in the exuberance of my youthful zeal, I called on him outside of working hours, and kind of looked after him. He pulled through all right, but he was a pretty badly charred old person for a long time after that. As soon as he was well enough to take care of himself, I left off going there, and that is the last I have seen of him."

"What caused the explosion?" asked Britz.

"I believe he was experimenting with some chemical—couldn't get him to tell me anything about it; he got mad as a hornet every time I touched upon it. I learned, however, from neighbors that he was interested in precious stones, and in his later years the idea became firmly fixed in his mind that if he only tried long enough, spent money enough, mortified the flesh sufficiently, he would be able to make diamonds."

"What sort of stuff did he succeed in making?" asked the detective.

"You can search no further," said Fitch. "I never got a look at any of it. His cranklets would never make any sort of admission to me about the stuff he was making. All I know is that man who told me about the experiments was quite positive that was the crack in the old chap's brain—that he could make diamonds, and could make them just as well in a few hours as nature could in a thousand years."

"So the explosion must have been—?"

"Some fussing around with the ingredients he was going to convert into gleam and glitter. That's all I know about it. There you have it. Now, what do you make of it?"

"Well," said Britz as he put his heels to the floor with a click, "what we'll make of it won't be made down here. I'm glad that memory of yours worked in the long run; but it might have saved me an extra hazardous 'joy ride' if it had worked sooner. Come along!" and he moved toward the door.

"Where are you going?" asked the physician.

"To the Bleecker Street station," replied Britz, "and from there to

Fourth Avenue as fast as the local can take us. Guess we won't wait for a taxi."

"Then you think," said Fitch eagerly, "there may be a clew in what I've told you?"

"What's the use of thinking," almost snapped Britz, "when we can know? There's just one way to know, and that's to go. Come, let's go."

As they walked briskly down the Headquarters building, Britz paused at Manning's office, pushed a button and, when the door swung open, thrust his head in long enough to say:

"See you later, Chief; going uptown for a little while."

"Still fighting it out on that line, eh?" was Manning's return.

"Yes," said Britz calmly, "and it may not take all winter either."

The detective and the doctor were so absorbed in the subject as they raced down the subway stairs that they did not notice a dark-faced man who, after a keen glance at their faces, hastened east in Bleecker Street and sprang into a waiting cab at the next corner.

CHAPTER XIV.

Old Friends.

Bruxton Sands was as genuinely astonished as a man of deliberateness could be when a clerk entered the private room of his office suite in a Bowling Green skyscraper and told him a lady wished to see him. He was about to instruct the clerk to ask for the lady's card when, glancing over the youth's head, he glimpsed a golden gleam under a big hat with sweeping plumes through the doorway and in an instant was crossing the threshold with both hands extended.

"My dear Doris!" he said. "This is really good of you. Things were getting a bit dull this morning."

Mrs. Missioner smiled in that per-

dash with her for the freedom beyond the great steel door. For an instant that impulse almost got the upper hand of her common sense. Had not Sands been there, she might have done something so foolish as to complicate her young friend's position still further in the eyes of all the city's newspapers and their readers. As it was, she increased the tenderness of her caresses, and sought to soothe Elinor's agitation with little love words such as had long been common in their daily intercourse. But this tenderness only recalled to Elinor all the affection, safety, and shelter she had left behind her in Mrs. Missioner's home, and at the thought she broke into uncontrollable sobs.

The millionaire's discomfort was augmented a thousandfold by this scene between the women. He shifted his weight from one foot to the other, crumpled the rim of his derby hat until it bent like the brim of an Alpine, and at length, unable to view the girl's distress with anything like equanimity, he walked to the other end of the reception-room and stood looking through the giant latticework at the tide of traffic in Centre Street.

It was not until the widow had restored Elinor's calmness, not until she had assured the trembling prisoner of her love, confidence, and full belief in her innocence a hundred times, not until their emotion had affected even the matron long inured to human woe, that the girl saw Sands. His sturdy bulk, the square set of his shoulders, the uncompromising fidelity in his strong face, gave her a new sense of pleasure. Surely her case could not be desperate with two such loyal friends to defend her! For the space of a star-flash, she forgot even Fitch, although her love at that moment was hastening uptown with Britz in quest of the missing thread that should lead to her vindication. Still with her arm around Mrs. Missioner's waist, she extended her hand to Sands, and thanked him in a way more effective than any mere girlish prettiness for the proof of his faith in her that he had given in coming with Mrs. Missioner to see her.

"Not that it would take much persuasion to make you accompany Doris anywhere," she said with a smile, and she was not at all remorseful when she noted the dark flush of pleasure that spread over his features. "But I cannot help taking comfort in the fact that you have come to see me, and that very evidently it had cost you no struggle to do so. If all of you could only know what these long weeks have been to me, you would understand how deeply the sight of old friends affects me. Here I have been in a world apart. The poor creatures who share this dreadful home with me only make my situation worse, for I can do nothing for them, and yet the sight of their misery distresses me beyond words."

Elinor did not know how much she had been spared by the consideration of the warden in assigning her to a tier of cells in which the more brutal inmates of the Tombs never were confined. She had had only a glance of the nether depths. Grave though the charge against her was, the good old man whom an accident of politics had placed in control of the prison, had recognized from the first that she was of finer mould than anyone who had been entrusted to his custody in his whole term of office, and he had seen to it that her eyes and ears were not assailed by the sights and scenes of the blacker depths. Years passed, and Elinor was a woman of much graver maturity ere she knew how much of misery she had escaped.

The visit of Mrs. Missioner and Sands did Elinor so much good that, when they went away, it was with a lighter heart she returned to her cell, with renewed courage she steered herself to await the efforts of the good friends and the devoted lover she knew were working to clear her name of the frightful charge Donnelly and Carson had lodged against her.

Her confidence in Dr. Fitch was not misplaced, for in the short time when Mrs. Missioner in her limousine was speeding back to her home in Millionaires' Row, and Sands, in a brougham, was returning to his office in the Bowling Green building, Fitch and Britz were standing on a Fourth Avenue corner a short distance north of Twenty-third Street, gazing with dismay at a twenty-story skyscraper that stood on the site of the little old curio shop to which duty had called the young ambulance surgeon years before.

"You are sure this is the place?" asked the detective.

"Absolutely," said the doctor. "I went over there to get some brandy for the old man when I was working him out of his stupor."

"Well," said the sleuth, "so far as that old curio shop is concerned, we're up against it; or, what is worse, we're not up against it. We are confronted by this steel and stone monstrosity, and I guess there's no use wasting time making inquiries there; but there may be a few old-timers with memories along this block, and we'll see what we can find out. You take that side of the street, and I'll take this."

Britz and Fitch went into one shop

that she has broken any law of God or man!"

"Are you sure this is wise, Doris?" inquired Sands gravely. As he stood beside her, it was difficult to control the impulse to pour out before her the adoration he felt at sight of her new loveliness. She had never seemed more beautiful than when she was moved by sympathy for the girl who at that moment, doubtless, was wondering if she had forsaken her.

"Wise or not," returned the widow, "I shall do it. Something tells me she is in need of sympathy, this very day. Why, Bruxton, how do we know what effect this dreadful incarceration might have upon her? It may warp her entire nature; it may wreck her health. Please do not try to dissuade me. I have made up my mind to see her, and I shall go there at once."

It was a short dash for the auto up Broadway, up Centre Street to the Tombs, and it was with little difficulty that Sands obtained for Mrs. Missioner permission to see the prisoner.

Elinor came around the corner of the corridor with more animation in her step than it had shown in many a day. She had hardly been able to believe her eyes on reading Mrs. Missioner's name on the card thrust through the grating of her cell. Long ago she had made up her mind that the chain of circumstances, or perhaps an enemy, had sown in her kind friend's mind suspicion that she was guilty. As the days rolled on and she received no word from Mrs. Missioner, the conviction grew upon her. Even this very day she had given up the hope of rehabilitating herself in the eyes of her employer. Not that it was an employer she mourned in loss of Mrs. Missioner's confidence. The rich widow was her friend; had been her family's friend, and had been the first to offer her a refuge in the ter-

rible days following discovery of the fact that her kindly, gentle father, after a lifetime of high endeavor, had left her without the provision she knew he always intended to make.

"Dear Mrs. Missioner!" cried Elinor, hastening toward the widow as she read affection and complete belief in her countenance. "You have done many lovely things for me, but this is quite the dearest! It seems hard even to picture you in such a place, and the reality—"

"You poor child!" exclaimed Mrs. Missioner, hardly controlling her voice. "What about yourself? If it is distressing to me to come here, it is terrible for you to be here. How can you stand it?"

"One learns to stand many things," she answered, "when fate commands; yet if anyone had told me a few weeks ago that I could so much as retain my reason in a place like this! Now that you are here, it seems far easier. Oh, but it is good of you to come!"

The widow took the girl's hands in her own and patted them softly as she whispered words of encouragement. She could not trust her voice to speak for the first few moments. As she looked at Elinor's slender grace and the deathless honesty in her soft, gray eyes, the horror of the girl's situation came home to her with redoubled force. It was by a mighty effort, and by that alone, that she prevented herself from sweeping the girl into her arms and making a

vading way that long ago had penetrated to the very core of the millionaire's inner consciousness. That smile illuminated Sands' somewhat gloomy features. He welcomed Mrs. Missioner to a comfortable chair beside his broad desk, swept aside the heap of formidable papers with great gold seals and fluttering legal ribbons, and leaned back in his chair, content to wait a century for his visitor to speak again, provided her smile should continue to beam upon him.

"No, it is not about investments," said Mrs. Missioner, noting the restrained inquiry in her admirer's eyes. "I felt I had to talk to somebody about Elinor; and Dorothy, you know, is too amably responsive to be of any use. Bruxton, what am I to do about that girl?"

"I'm sure I don't know," he said at length. "I suppose something ought to be done."

"I don't care what the detective says!" exclaimed Mrs. Missioner, "I am not going to let Elinor Holcomb think any longer that her friend of years believes her to be a thief. It is unbearable! The man told me that I must not interfere in the case if I expected him to vindicate my secretary; but I am not going to be governed by anyone to that extent. I am going to see Elinor to-day. I am going straight to that terrible place and assure her that even though I permit her to be kept there, I refuse to entertain for a moment the idea



Britz Frowned Slightly as He Read the Message.

of a father's timely warning.

The Winsome Charms of the Right Girl Exceed All Possible Horror of Heredity.

"Well, sir," said the old gentleman, "I presume you have come to ask me for my daughter's hand?"

"Yes, sir, that would be my ideal birthday present."

"And do you realize the responsibilities of married life; what you will have to—"

"Indeed, sir," interrupted the youth, "you need have no fears with regard to Janet's future. I have a good position in my father's bank, and my prospects are excellent—in fact, I am to be made a director of the institution in a very short time."

"Very good. But that was not exactly the matter I intended to refer to. Have you—have you ever looked over Janet's mother carefully?"

The young man was puzzled, and he showed it.

"How do you like my wife?"

"I hold Mrs. Peck in the highest respect."

"Oh, that's all right, then. Well, sir, though you may not believe me, when Mrs. Peck was twenty-two she was just as sweet and pretty and charming as Janet is now; was just like her, in fact."

"Yes, really?"

"And you still want Janet?"

"Life would be a nightmare to me without her."

"I suppose, then, I must yield. But," he added, as the young man rushed away, "my child's name is clear, anyway."

Called the Bluff.

"The only way you can legitimately keep out undesirable persons from a hotel is to raise the price or to assert that your house is full," said a hotel clerk, "but you never know when this may fail."

"A couple once came up to register whom I sized up at once as the kind we were particularly anxious not to take in. 'I am very sorry, I said to the man, 'but the house is absolutely filled and the only thing I could offer you would be a small suite.'"

"What's that?" demanded the traveler, and I explained that it consisted of a small parlor, bathroom and bath."

"What's the price?" he asked.

"Twenty-five dollars a day," I replied.

"I guess that will be all right," said the stranger calmly, and he registered. He had me."

The Ignorance of Casey.

Casey—Plumat kind as a horse is a cob?

Mulligan—It's wan that's been raised lately on corn, ye ignoramus.