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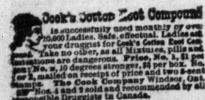
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********** ROLFF =:= -:- HOUSE

:::: BY ::: G. H. BENEDICT

"But you know, Claude, we are so young yet — and — and father may, change his mind when you settle down to steady habits. He thinks you are wild and reckless."

"I see, Rosa," said the young man, with a return of the bitterness of his tone, "that even in your estimation to aspire to any life but that of a plodeing money-getter is to be wild and reck-

hastily, "you know I do not think so. But you would not have me offend father?" "No, no, Claude," she exclaimed

"No, my love and my light!" he exclaimed, with a glow of enthusiasm, "I would have you do nothing unbecoming your character as the purest and best girl in the world. Better that I should suffer the wreck of every hope. But I must not linger. Your father will begin to suspect something. Good-

And, with a tender caress, he turned and, springing over the fence, disappeared as he had come.

CHAPTER III. The tavern in Voorhiskill, (so let us eall the little old Dutch village), was a wooden, clap-boarded building, with three stories, a double-sloped roof, and many windows. It was a somewhat pretentious structure, and did a thriv-ing business, for the village was on the line of an important mail and business route, and the times were favorable to

travel and convivality.

The bar-room of Ronk's Tavern, as the hostlery was called, was the great meeting-place for the men-folk of the vicinity. Here they gathered of an evening, and smoked their pipes, and drank their flip or other decoctions, and told stories, talked politics and retailed the gossip of the vicinity.

It was on the evening after the events detailed in the last chapter. The candles were lighted in the bar-room, and the landlord was behind his bar answering the calls of his customers, who had begun to drop in. He was a tall, grave man, with a complexion and skin like parchment, dark straight hair mingled with gray, and an almost preternaturally solemn countenance. At bottom, however, he was generous and wholesouled, and delighted in nothing more than to see his guests well-provided for, his bar-room thronged, and jest and anecdote going the round of an evening, as pipes were lit and stout potations dealt out.

The usual group was gathered around. It was early evening yet, however, and more were to come before the gossip or neath his heavy, grizzled eye-brows a pair of keen, pleasant blue eyes gazed out. Mis general appearance was that of an intelligent, self-possessed old fellow, with probably a large portion of eccentricity and individuality done up

nad evidently withstood sthe assaults of many years, as also a liking for good spirits, of which it was much the fashion of the time to partake freely. introduce him without further words, this old fellow was Carl Krum, and his special business it was to have in charge a boat ferry that crossed the river at the landing about a mile and a half from the village. This ferry be-longed to the mistress of Rolff House, and the old fellow had from time immemorial almost been in charge of it, and constituted one of the family at Rolff House. He was not a frequent visitor to the bar-room of Ronk's Tavern, and when he came it was generally the case

that something had happened that ex-cited public gossip unusually or had some special interest to himself. The group of talkers sitting about the room grew suddenly silent as the old man entered. A seat was offered him, and he dropped quietly into it, and continued puffing sedately on a

short pipe that was in his mouth. After an interval of silence, a short, pursy little fellow, who was sitting with his chair tipped beside the emberless

fireplace, spoke up: "Here's old Carl," he said. "He can 'ell us all about it. Now, let me state the matter. I maintained that the old tady was eighty-three; you all denied it. Now, how is it, Mr. Krum?"

The old man took his pipe quietly out of his mouth. "She's eighty-three," he said, "and she'll be ninety-three, if the good Lord so will and my prayers are heard. But what matters it, ye idle gossips?"
"Exactly," continued the first speaker,

without noticing the old man's rebuke; "and that confirms what I said. 'Taint often, I tell you, that I make a mistake in a person's age when they die-that is, the old lady ain't dead yet, but everybody knows that old Doctor Pronk has given her up, and when he says anybody has got to die, he generally, makes a sure job of it."

There was some laughter at this poor jest, but it was interrupted by the old

"That's a fair specimen of the devil's wit as well as the devil's manners, or I'm no judge," he said, "It's not given to any human being to fix the limit of a fellow creature's life; and, as for the good old Doctor, the only mis-take he ever made was in not strangling some specimens of this ungodly generation at their birth. Yet I fear that it is only too true that Rolff House is to lose its mistress. I've no romantic fondness for the poor old lady; but it is a scurvy dog that will not fawn on the hand that has fed it for years."

"You'll be provided for, Carl," inter-rupted one of the party. "I have received my full due," replied the old mar, "and expect nothing." "Well she ought to give you some-

BACK-ACHE

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tning," interrupted the landiord; "bu there's no telling-she's a queer old wo-

"Queer old place, too," broke in the little man again, who was evidently one of the kind that like to do most of the talking. "I don't wonder that anybody is queer after living in it so many years. Queer stories I've heard about it. Most folks believe the house haunted; and I've heard that the old fellow who built it was a pirate, and had no end of money he'd made by murder and robbery on the high seas. After he built the house, they say he had rooms piled full of silver and gold. Then I've heard he sold himself to the on condition that the money devil. would always be kept safe in Rolff House; and a good bargain he made of it, seeing that the devil had him safe anyhow. But the devil came and took him one fine day; and the money is all in the house yet, and nobody can touch it, they say, except they sell themselves to the devil, too. That's the story, and some people believe it.'

"Some people," interposed old Carl, "are born fools, and only fit to be gulled by stories of ghosts and hobgoblins. If anybody living is pretty well acquainted with Roiff House and the Roiff family, it is myself, for I have known them these fifty years; and, as I am an honest man and a good Christian, I pronounce all such silly tales but idle superstitions. There's enough that is strange and romantic about Rolf' House without peopling it with ghosts or giving it over to the possession of the Evil One."

"That's all very well," here broke in a new member of the circle; "but I say it's good Scripture to believe in ghosts; and if there is any place that is likely and if there is any place that is likely and if there is any place that is likely to be haunted, it is Rolff House. And, as for the devil having a lease on that old pirate's gold. why should be a sh there entered an old man of rather sin-gular appearance. He was short and It's only claiming his own, and we all sturdy of frame, and dressed in old, rusty brown woolen clothes, with knee-breeches and stockings, while his heavy growth of snowy white beard that de-scended and swept his breast. Under-and everything was dark and gloomy about the house, when all of a sudden a stream of flame shot out of the big chimney on the east side, and a black object sprang out of it and was off in the air as quick as a flash. And I've been by there myself at nights, when the house, and others have heard them, too, and seen strange sights. I don't know as it is respectful to the old lady to tell about these hings now, but if

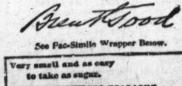
they're so, they're so, and that's all there is about it." The speaker was a short, very peculiar-looking man. A heavy beard covered his meagre face, and long trowsy hair reached down to his shoulders, and hair and beard both seemed to be of a dirty slate-blue color. His yellow skin appeared to have a bluish-green tinge; his large, staring blue eyes were as lustreless as the eyes of a corpse; and to add to his uncanny peculiarities, his voice had a strange, sephulchral tone.

"A fine countenance you have for a ghost story, Leb. Sackett," broke in the old man, with a tone of contempt. "It is such outrageous liars as you and your brother that impose upon simple-minded folk, and lead them to believe ill of their neighbors. I'll aver, that

Cenuine

Carter's Little Liver Pills.

Must Bear Signature of



CARTER'S FOR HEADACHE. FOR BILIOUSHESS. FOR TORPID LIVER. FOR CONSTIPATION. FOR SALLOW SKIN. FOR THE COMPLEXION

CURF SICK HEADACHE. Minard's Liniment in the

there's never yet been man or spirit about Roiff House that would pass for a hobgoblin as readily as you; and if the devil ever had half as safe a hold on old Magnus Roiff as he has on you, then may the Lord have mercy upon

This hit caused a roar of laughter and the discomfiture of Mr. Sackett. But he spoke up again:
"Well, let them deny it who can, there's queer things and queer stories about Rolff House. I don't suppose old

Cari will own up what he knows, though, for the devil no doubt has put him under bonds to keep the peace about the matter. But I'd like him to tell me, if he can, what ever became of

The landlord here spoke up:

"That's a pertinent question," he said. "Perhaps old Carl can answer it, or, at least, give us a short history of Rolft House. For my part, I should like to hear a correct account of its strange history. There is no use of denying that there is a mystery about the house. I remember once myself seeing a strange sight up there. I was coming by the house in the night—a bright moonlight night it was—and when at a point of the road where I could see the eastern side of the house, I plainly saw the figure of a man standing beneath one of the large windows. He was in the direct rays of the moon, and I saw him as plainly as I ever saw man. His ap-pearance was that of a very aged man, tall and stooping, with long white hair, and dressed in an odd costume. As I was looking directly at him, he sudden ly disappeared—seemed to sink into the ground close to the house. I could scarcely believe my eyes, but I am sure I saw what I have told you; and, as you may imagine, I thought at once of the story they tell, that at stated imes the devil allows old Rolff to visit his money chambers. I suppose I must have been deceived in some way in the matter. But it would be interesting to know more about Rolff House, and I move that old Carl gives us its history." "Yes, yes, Carl," "Let's hear it, Carl," and similar exclamations were uttered

by a dozen voices, and chairs were drawn up near where the old man was sitting, for all knew that he enjoyed nothing better than an opportunity to rehearse some favorite matter. To be Continued.

MOHAMMEDANS AT PRAYER They Always Respond When the

Voice of the Muezzin Calls. The Mohammedan begins his prayer standing, with his hands outspread and his thumbs touching the lobes of his ears. In this position he repeats certain passages from the Koran, then brings his hands down to his girdle, folds them and recites several other passages from the same book. Next he bends forward, rests both hands upon his knees and repeats three times with bowed head the formula of prayer to God, the most great. Then he rises and cries, "Allah hu akbar!" (God is great)

sixteen times. He then drops forward until his forehead touches the ground between his extended hands. He strikes his head shoes had broad steel buckles. His face live heard of queer doings up there, was almost covered up by a heavy There's my brother Sol.; he says he was claiming his humility, and often a dozwill be repeated, according to his desire to show humility and repentance. He then returns to his knees and, settling back upon his heels, repeats a ritual. Next, arising to his feet, he holds his hands and concludes the eccentricity and individuantly done of peen by their mystics coming from prayer, repeating over and again the words, "There is no god but God, and

Mohammed is his prophet." This may be repeated once or a dozen or forty times, according to the plety of the worshiper, and he holds a string of beads in his hands to keep tally. His obligations are then accomplished, but he can go through the same ritual again as many times as he likes. The more frequently he does so the better Moslem he is. His piety is measured by the number of times he repeats his prayers, and, like the Pharisees of the Scriptures, he prays in public places. No matter where he happens to be or by whom he is surrounded, whether at labor in the fields or selling goods in his shop or however he may be employed, the Mussulman never forgets to pray when the voice of the muezzin reminds him that the hour for devotion

has arrived. NOT SO VERY GREEN.

The Florida Man Rather Evened Matters Up With the New Yorker. When the young man from Florida came to live in New York, he woke up one morning last winter, and, going to the window, he looked out on what was to him a novel scene. It was a snowstorm, the first he had ever seen,

Jumping into his clothes, he ran into the street. He stooped and gathered handfuls of snow and threw them in the air. He jumped into a drift and sent it flying with his feet. He finally lay down and rolled in it, all the time shouting and laughing at the top of his

One of the crowd which had gathered to watch his antics went up to him and told him how his mother used to cure fits and volunteered to try it on him. "I haven't any fit," the young man

"What's the matter with you, then?" "Why, don't you see the snow?"
"Yes, I see it. What of it? I have

een it before." "Well, I haven't" said the Florida young man.

"What! You never saw snow be fore?" asked the astonished questioner. "Never. Seems strange to you, don't "It beats any sample of verdancy

ever run across.' "Oh. I don't know," mused the Flori-da cracker. "Did you ever see an alligator eating a nigger? No? Well, you are not so many after all. I have seen it many times." And, throwing a handful of snow down his shirt collar, he pursued his joyous gambols.



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