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plied. "It's all deadheads to-day," he added with a sneer, which invited the he'd have kicked like that at being approval of the disappointed whist packed, and he's a corpse!" players.

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miles from Kingston.

"Will he be back soon?" "It all depends, Mister, on how the corpse travels. Corpses ain't gay on the hoof, as you may have heard, and it's all of fifteen miles to Snow Grich. Don't see why they couldn't have left the old man where he was. One place is as good as another to be planted in

"There you're plum off the track sonny," broke in one of the players reprovingly. "There's no call for a man to demean himself if he does live in Sody Crik. Old man Hayes was decent citizen, fix it which way you will; took his glass reg'lar, an' paid for it when he had any dust, and i he owes you a blanked cent, say so, and I'll foot the bill," and the spe ker. who looked anything but opulent, syed a greasy deer-skin sack.

me nothin'. I didn't say as he di ." sided cross between a gailoot and a back. buck nigger. I say as old man Hayes has a right to all the frills he has mind to when it comes to buryin, and I'd like to hear from the gent as thinks contrary."

To patch up the breach; Jim stood frinks. It is the only civility you can thow to your neighbor in some places. and then for want of anything e'se to. to, rather than in the hope of hurrying a funeral procession, Jim borrowed Jake's cayuse, and rode out to meet the burying party.

> CHAPTER XII, A Backwoods Funeral

On a steep bluff, through the heavy brush of which a narrow trail bad been roughly cut, Jim found a party of about a dozen men, half of whom wore black coats. They were almost the only black coats in Caribou, and had been collected with infininte trouble to give tone to the proceedings. one, makes this startling statement abso- | There was also one top hat . That belonged to the doctor, and was worn by him. The bottle, too large for a medicine bottle, which protruded from his coat pocket, belonged to the party.

When Jim first sighted them, the proper spirit of their occupation possessed them. Two and two they paced behind a sorry nag, at whose head in due form, and no protest on Jim's about it nothing of the supernatural. and no one spoke.

remained of old man haves, a white and more quarrelsome, whilst the doc- culty before in getting up that hind handkerchief bound reverently over his face, and his body decently disposed in a blanket. In a corner of this, unfortangely

was caught one of those sharp-enged boughs which B. C. people call a camofke. Gently and without a wor! 'he doctor wrestled with the Impediment and the horse stood still whilst he did

off the face. It was recovered and re- dershtand, you bet." beast by the head and ferked at its bit, mild punishment. caught in the blanket. This time the the only man in the place who was still would the rampike loose its hold. For nearly thirty seconds the two at the ward, the blanket tore, some of the ertain of this great invention. State number | lashings gave, and old man Hayes roll-

> The doctor's mate swore, and his luency made up for his former silence. "This is a positive scandal, boys It's irreverent to the dead," Jim heard the doctor say.

> "It's blanked poor packing, that's what it is," retorted one of them. "Ed don't know enough to tie a granny knot let alone the diamond hitch." "You tie it better yourself, you webfooted blue nose."

> "That's dead easy, and I'll tie your blamed neck in a knot, when through with it," said the other angrily, taking off his coat to work and swear more easily. But he did not find it "dead easy."

> "Cinch the beggar good and tight," suggested one. "Corpses ain't got no feelin's," and putting his foot against the horse he threw his weight into the rope.

"Hold on, Mo; you'll break him all He's stiff enough

There, git up now," and he gave the horse a slap on its quarter. Frightened by its mishap, or more conscious of the dead nature of its burden than its masters thought, the

horse bolted, galloped through range of timber, and on to the hillside, where Jim was standing, and there with two or three vicious bucks sent the body of Mr. Hayes rolling down the slope.

This denouement evoked a volley of imprecations from the mutes, but even that had no apparent effect upon the gravity of the late Mr. Haves.

Never in his life had he proceeded did then in his death. The pitch of the hillside was only just steep enough to induce a bale of goods to roll, so that the swathed body went down it in slow time, with grave pauses, whilst the limbs of it, which had broken loose, swung in solemn mockery as

the body rolled over. In spite of pauses, it would not stop, ease, and giving the patient strength as soon as one moved to catch it. It assisting nature in doing its work swung its arms and started again, reThe proprietors have so much faith in for the life of him he could not find covering its momentum sufficiently to its curative powers that they offer elude its would be cantors elude its would-be captors. It was as if the dead man was play-

ing a grim game with his old cronies. At last it reached the road, which wound round the base of the hill.

"Well, I'm blanked, if that don't bea

pig-headed, but who'd have though

"Guess he thinks he can take care of hisself now same as he allus did. He's crossed this trail many a night when he hadn't any more souse than

But the stillness of the body brough you dare not go alone to take a glass back some of the old feeling of awe. with old Hayes." "Hush!" said one. "What are you giving us? That ain't no way to talk before corpses."

"Corpse or no corpse," said a bolder spirit, "it's a long time between drinks, and this burying is a mighty dry entertainment, Doc! Let's Lave ney. a look at that bottle."

The doctor produced the medicine, which was labelled Scott and Mackay's Special, and in turn each of the mutes drank to their old companion. "Guess he'll travel more sociable now," said Al, wiping his mouth with the bar tender fiercely, and pulled out his coat sleeve. "But we'll have to pack him ourselves. Got to take off "No, Jake, the old man cidn't owe our frills for that business," and with a sigh of relief every man book off "An' you hadn't better, you slab his coat, and tied it in a back on his

At this point Jim Combe joined them, was given a drink and solemnly introduced to the corpse.

In return he lent a hand at bearing lage up." it, and abandoning all ideas of a processional pace, or the decorem of silence, the party in its shirt sleaves, the next man." trotted to within sight of Soda Creek "Appears like it," said Jim, and stole before dark. Here, nowever, the procession paused, reformed, put on its hind him. coats and funeral face, and marched with great pomp to the door of the Ideal.

Here, again, an unexpected difficulty met them. The Ideal was the only place to which ony one went on arriving at Soda Creek, but in spite of the former habits of their charge, it was "Poor old hoss. I guess you ain t ailowed in here now. Where'll we take

where the body would be safe from the It struck him like a bar of cold iron dogs until the clergyman came for it across the forehead and made him next day, and there it was locked up catch his breath with a gasp. But his

tor was rapidly progressing from the prop in time to save a collapse. convivial to the maudin stage of drunkenness.

Finally Protheroe declared his intenthe old man.

"Let him alone where he is," urged Bd. "He won't understand now." "Wonsh undershtand, wonsh he? At the next step a small bough You think he'sh gone away. Noncaught the handkerchief and lifted it sensh; he'sh here all right. He'll un- ticular case seemed to have been sus-

as a hint to it to take more care, and. But he saw in the sot's determina- move perfectly well by the mere exerou can play and you are satisfied—then send at the same moment another rampike tion his own opportunity. Going up to tion of will power. But he was no horse could not stand still, neither sober, he touched him on the shoulder. "Bill, would you do something for a

The big man, who was still drowsing tangle, then the horse plunged for by the stove, started from his apathy. "A woman? There ain't no woman here. It's only whiskey and hell." "But there's women elsewhere, down to the Risky Ranch, for instance. Will

you do something to help one of "Anythin'," he said, rising.

"Then go up into that fellow's pointing to the doctor, "and corral all his outfit, instruments and grip-sack, whatever he takes along with him when he goes visiting. No one will notice you as you live here, and if they do they are too drunk to

"What do you want it for?" "There's a woman dying down to the Risky, and I've got to get that little hog and his fixin's to save her. You heard him say he wouldn't come.' "I did, curse him; but he won't be any good like that. They never are

any good when you want them," and he sank back into his dreams. him to the Risky. Will you do it? "All right; if it's for a woman," and

he slouched off to the part of the house where its boarders slept. Meanwhile Jim Combe went out to secure his own horse and another. The latter part of the business was horsestealing, almost the worst offence in

a friend, and was meditating a worse offence than horse-stealing. When he had tied the two horses upon all fours. at the back of the empty house in

which old man Hayes lay, he returned There he found his ally, Bill.

"Have you got the things?" "Then sneak out and cinch them on

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tight behind the saddle of my horse. a big red roan, tied up behind the house where Hayes' body lies, and wait there for me. Don't make any mistake, and don't speak till I do." Bill took his orders in silence, and whilst he slipped out at the back, Jim Combe went up to the bar, and called for drinks for the crowd.

"Thought you was going to take a drink with the old man," he said to the doctor, who was now half asleep. "So I wash, but I can't get any fellow to go along."

"And you're too scared to go alone? I thought you were a scientific joker, who didn't believe in ghosts or spicits, or any of them things you can't see or

stick a knife into." "Don'sh know what I believe, and I don'sh know what blanked business it is of yours, anyway, but I'm not scared of anything, Mishter Jim

Jim laughed aggravatingly. He knew the man's peculiarities. "Why, you're afraid right now. I'll bet you the next round of drinks that

Combe, if you are a foot taller than

The bet just suited the humor of the crowd, besides the form of settlement touched their personal interest. "It's up to you, doc," they cried, "You're the little man to win his mo-

To do the doctor justice, he was no coward, drunk or sober.

"Hand me the bottle, Ike," he said, rallying in the most extraordinary manner, and speaking quite soberly. "And one of those glasses. See you again, gentlemen," and he walked towards the door.

"I guess it's my money that's up, so if no one has any objection, I'll still hunt the doc and see that he goes right to it. That's the bet, isn't it? "I guess so."

"Nobody else leaves the room until we come back. I don't want the doctor's friends handy to keep his cour-"He don't want any. Don't you

worry. The doc's got as much grit as out, shutting the door noiselessly be-

> CHAPTER XIII. Abduction

Very solemnly and placing each foot with carefully calculated precision. the little doctor made his way from the Ideal to the place where old man evidently now no place for Mr. Hayes. Hayes had been stored out of the way of the dogs.

The awful heat and closeness of the bar room which he had left, made the An empty house was suggested |chill of the night air more noticeable. errand had no terror for him. He was But even then the doctor was not one of those who, having learned a ready for his patient at the Hisky great deal about the mechanism of the Ranch. By unanimous consent it was human body, looked upon it as an inheld fitting that Soda Creek should different piece of machinery capable celebrate old man Hayes' reception of many improvements, and having

paced the doctor and another. All part was of any avail. The men had As a locomotive he considered it behad enough whiskey to make them as neath contempt. Walking was at best had their bats off, and their coats co. stubborn as mules. Jim Combe was but a succession of falls avoided. in despair. Every drink that the reck- That had always been his opinion, but Upon the horse's back was all that less crowd took made it more noisy he had never known so much diffi-

Before starting from the bar room door he had taken a line upon the house which he wished to reach, and tion of going to take one drink with he had contrived not to lose sight of his points, but it was difficult to keep them, moving as he felt compelled to do, as a knight moves at chess.

Earth seemed for once to have no solidity; the laws of gravity in his parpended; his feet would not keep down placed without a word. As soon as The idea was too grizzly. That any and he suffered from an almost irreof music, free, if you ke twrite us thus: "send | this had been done the horse stumbled poor devil should be condemned even sistible temptation to allow his legs to over an unseen log, and its pack after death's release to hang round the collapse altogether, a temptation moved up a foot nearer to its neck. Ideal, struck Jim as the climax of hor | which arose from a growing conviction The doctor's companion caught the rors to which hell itself would be a that they really had nothing whatever to do with him, and that he could

> sufficiently drunk yet to yield to this temptation. He still had some contro over his memory, and he remembered that he had tried that game before and had been found in the street ver; cold indeed the next morning.

> Dr. Protheroe had a considerabl knowledge of the many infirmities, c the flesh, but his knowledge of the dir ferent expressions of alcoholic demen tia was comprehensive. He even ding nosed his own case accurately as he staggered along.

"Drunk," he said, severely: "very drunk. Itsh the cold air has done Alwaysh does it; but I'm not 'fraid. Who said Doctor Protheros was

He stopped, swaying dangerously in the middle of the dark street to think out that problem, but even his mind could only move now as the knight moves. It would not go straight.

"Doctor Protheroe 'fraid?" he peated this two or three times in sort of sing-song, and then, suddenly "Dr. Protheroe." he said. "Doc-to: Prother-oe, Thomash's, - London -England. Not Ontario! None of your bloomin' Canadian 'bout me. Doctor Protheroe, Thomash's, London, England. Gentleman; profeshional man," and then he burst into peal upon peal of derisive laughter, in the midst of which he fell flat upon his

After lying there for a few minutes chuckling still to himself, he rose upon his hands and knees, reached for his hat, put it rakishly upon the back of his head, and continued his journey

"Varicoshe veins," he muttered, as he went. "Shvatica, gout, notin' to do wi' whiskey. All rot. Causeabshurd attempt violate lawsh of nature. Man dam fool; meant to walk on four leggh, tries to walk on two. Poshterior limbs over worked; painful shwelling followsh. Of course," reasoning he was obliged after a time with more deliberate dignity than he pleased to learn that there is at least to conform to custom, and finished his

cous surfaces of the system, thereby enough. He could remember that the destroying the foundation of the dis- door fastened with a latch; he could even repeat to himself the necessary

(To be Continued.)

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