

Danny's Own Story

By DON MARQUIS

Copyright, 1912, by Doubleday, Page & Co.

Doctor Kirby makes him quite a speech. I never heard him make a better one. Dr. Jackson, he listens very calm, with his thumbs in the armbands of his vest and moving his eyebrows up and down like he enjoyed it. But he don't get excited none. Finally Dr. Kirby says he will undertake to show that it will sell—and him will make a trip down into the black country ourselves and show what can be done with it and take Sam along for an object lesson.

Well, they was a lot of rag chewing. Dr. Jackson don't warm up none, and he asks a million questions—like how much it costs a bottle to make it, and what was our idea how much it orter sell for. He says finally if we can sell a certain number of bottles in so long a time he will put some money into it. Only, he says, they will be a stock company, and he will have to have 50 per cent of the stock or he won't put no money into it. He says if things go well he will let Dr. Kirby be manager of that company and let him have some stock in it, too, and he will be president and treasurer of it himself.

Dr. Kirby, he didn't like that and said so. Said he was going to organ-



They Was a Lot of Rag Chewing.

ize that stock company and control it himself. But Dr. Jackson said he never put money into nothing he couldn't run. So it was settled we would give the stuff a tryout and report to him. Before we went away from there it looked to me like Dr. Kirby and me was going to work for this here Dr. Jackson instead of making all them there millions for ourselves. Which I didn't take much to that Anti-Curl man myself; he was so cold blooded like.

I didn't like the scheme itself any too well neither—not any way you could look at it. In the first place, it seemed like a mean trick on the niggers. Then I didn't much believe we could get away with it.

The more I looked him over the more I seen Dr. Kirby had changed considerable. When I first knowed him he liked to hear himself talking and he liked to live free and easy and he liked to be running around the country and all them things, more'n he liked to be making money.

But now he was thinking money and dreaming money and talking of nothing but how to get it. He was willing to take up with most any wild scheme to make it.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Doctor Has a Conscience.

THEY was something about him now that didn't fit in much with the Dr. Kirby I had knowed. It seemed like he had spells when he saw himself how he had changed. He wasn't gay and joking all the time like he had been before neither. I guess the doctor was getting along toward fifty years old. Drinking was making him think a lot, and thinking was making him look old. He was more'n one year older than he had been a year ago.

He kept a quart bottle in his room now. The night after we had took Sam to see Dr. Jackson he was setting in his room, and he was hitting it purty hard.

"Danny," he says to me after awhile, like he was talking out loud to himself, too, "what did you think of Dr. Jackson?"

"I don't like him much," I says.

"Nor I," he says, frowning, and takes a drink. "But he's a blame sight more decent than I am, for all of that."

"Why?" I asks him.

"Because Dr. Jackson," he says, "hasn't the least idea that he isn't decent and getting his money in a decent way, while at one time I was—"

He breaks off and don't say what he

was. I asks him. "I was going to say a gentleman," he says, "but on reflection I doubt if I was ever anything but a cheap imitation."

I seen now the kind of conversations he is always having with himself when he gets jest so drunk and is thinking hard. Only this time it happens to be out loud.

Being a gentleman didn't bother me one way or the other. The only reason I didn't want to see them niggers bunched so very bad was only jest because it was such a low down, onery kind of trick.

"It ain't too late," I says, "to pull out of this nigger scheme yet and get into something more honest."

"I don't know," he says thoughtful. "I think perhaps it is too late." And he sets there looking like a man that is going over a good many years of life in his mind. Purty soon he says:

"As far as honesty goes—it isn't that so much, O Daniel-come-to-judgment! It's about as honest as most medicine games. It's"—He stopped and frowned again.

"What is it?"

"It's their being niggers," he says.

"That made the difference fur me too. I dunno how nor why."

"Do you know what's the matter with 'em?" he asks.

I asks him what.

"I'm too decent to be a crook," he says, "and too crooked to be decent. You've got to be one thing or the other steady to make it pay."

Then he says:

"Did you ever hear of the descent to Avernus, Danny?"

"I might," I tells him, "and then agin I mightn't. But if I ever did I never remember what she is. What is she?"

"It's the chute to the infernal regions," he says. "They say it's greased. But it isn't. It's really no easier sliding down than it is climbing back."

Well, I seen this nigger scheme of our'n meby the only thing that was troubling Dr. Kirby that night. It was thinking of all the schemes like it in the years past he had went into. He was seeing himself how he had been changing, like another person could of seen it. That's the main trouble with drinking to fergit yourself. You fergit the wrong part of yourself.

I left him purty soon and went along to bed. My room was next to his'n, and they was a door between so the two could be rented together if wanted, I suppose. I went to sleep and woke up agin with a start out of a dream that had in it millions and millions and millions of niggers, every way you looked, and their mouths was all open red and their eyes walled white, fit to scare you out of your shoes.

I hear Dr. Kirby moving around in his room. But purty soon he sets down and begins to talk to himself. Everything else was quiet. I was kind of worried about him, he had taken so much, and hoped he wouldn't get a notion to go downtown that time o' night. So I thinks I will see how he is acting and steps over to the door between the rooms.

The key happened to be on my side, and I unlocked it. But she only opens a little ways, fur his wash stand was near to the hinge end of the door.

I looked through. He is setting by the table, looking at a woman's picture that is propped up on it and talking to himself. He has never heard me open the door, he is so interested. But somehow he don't look drunk. He looks like he had fought his way up out of it somehow.

"God help you! If you'd only stay away it wouldn't be so hard to go to hell!" he says to the picture.

There's a lot of counties in Georgia where the blacks are equal in number to the whites and two or three counties where the blacks number over the whites by two to one. It was fur a little town in one of the latter that we pinte ourselves, Dr. Kirby and me and Sam—right into the blackest part of the black belt.

That country is full of big sized plantations where they raise cotton, cotton, cotton and then more cotton.

Some places there shows that things can't be so awful much changed since slavery days, and most of the niggers are sure enough country niggers yet. Some rents their land right out from the owners, and some of 'em crops it on the shares, and very many of 'em jest works as hands. A lot of 'em don't do nigh so well now as they did when their bosses was their masters, they tell me, and then, agin, some has done right well on their own hook.

Them that thinks they is awful easy to handle out of a natcher respect fur white folks has got another guess coming. They ain't so bad to get along with if you keep it most pinteedly shoved into their heads they is niggers. You got to do that especial in the black belt jest because they is so many of 'em. They is children all their lives, meby, till some one minute of craziness may strike one of them, and then he is a devil temporary. Meby when the crazy fit has passed some white woman is worse off than if she was dead, or meby she is dead, or meby a loonatic fur life, and that nigger is a candidate fur a lynching bee and generally elected by an anonymous majority.

Not that all niggers is that-a-way, nor half of 'em, nor very many of 'em even, but you can never tell which nigger it is going to be. So in the black belt the white folks is mighty perticler who comes along fooling with their black folks.

We didn't know them things then, Dr. Kirby and me didn't. But we mightn't of got into any trouble if it hadn't of been fur old Bishop Warren. But that is getting ahead of the story.

We got into that little town—I might jest as well call it Cottonville—jest about supper time. Cottonville is a little place of not more'n 600 people.

I guess 400 of 'em must be niggers. After supper we got acquainted with purty nigh all the prominent citizens in town. They was friendly with us, and we was friendly with them.

Talking about this and that they finally edges around to the one thing everybody is sure to get to talking about sooner or later in the south—niggers. And then they gets to telling us about this here Bishop Warren I has mentioned.

He was a black bishop, Bishop Warren was, and had a good deal of white blood into him, they say—an ashy colored feller, with bumps on his face, fat as a possum and as cunning as a fox. He had plenty of brains into his head, too, but his brains had turned sour in his head the last few years, and the bishop had crazy streaks running through his sense now, like fat and lean mixed in a slab of bacon. He used to be friends with a lot of big white folks, and the whites depended on him at one time to preach orderliness and obedience and agriculture and being in their place to the niggers. Fur years they thought he preached that-a-way. But gradual the suspicion got around that when he was alone with a lot of niggers his nigger blood would get the best of him, and what he preached wasn't white supremacy at all, but hopefulness of being equal.

He had been holding some revival meetings in nigger churches right there in that very county and was at it not fur away from there right then. The idea had got around he was preaching some most unusual foolishness to the blacks. The whites smelt a rat and wished he would go, fur they didn't want to chase him without they had to.

Jest when we was getting along fine one of them prominent citizens asks the doctor was we there figgering on buying some land?

"No," says the doctor; "we wasn't."

They was silence fur quite a little spell. Each prominent citizen had meby had his hopes of unloading some.

Another prominent citizen makes a little speech that was quite beautiful to hear, and says meby we represents some new concern that ain't never been in them parts and is figgering on buying cotton.

"No," the doctor says, "we ain't cotton buyers."

Another prominent citizen has the idea meby we is figgering on one of these here Inter-Reuben trolley lines, so the Rubes in one village can ride over and visit the Rubes in the next. And another one thinks meby we is figgering on a telephone line.

Finally, after every one has a chew of natcher leaf tobacco all around, one prominent citizen makes so bold as to ask us very courteous if he might inquire what it was we was selling.

The doctor says medicine.

Purty soon one of them asks:

"What kind of medicine?"

The doctor he tells about it.

When he finishes you never seen such a change as had come on to the faces of that bunch. I never seen such disgusted prominent citizens in my hull life. They looked at each other, embarrassed, like they had been ketchted at something onery. And they went out, one at a time, saying good night to the botel keeper and in the most pinte way, taking no notice of us at all. It certainly was a chill. We sees something is wrong, and we begins to have a notion of what it is.

The botel keeper, he splits out his chew and goes behind his little counter and takes a five cent cigar out of his little showcase and bites the end off careful. Then he leans his elbows on to his counter and reads our names to himself out of the register book and looks at us and from us to the names and from the names to us, like he is trying to figger out how he come to let us write 'em there. Then he wants to know where we come from before we come to Atlanta, where we had registered from. We tells him we is from the north.

Then he says we orter go back north.

"Why?" asks the doctor.

He chewed his cigar purty nigh up to the middle of it before he answered, and when he spoke it was a soft kind of a drawl—not mad or loud—but like they was sorrowful thoughts working in him.

"Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south to peddle yo' niggab medicine in, sah. I reckon yo' must love 'em a heap to be that concerned over

the color of their skins." And he turned his back on us and went into the back room all by himself.

CHAPTER XV.

Doc Kirby and the Bishop.

WE seen we was in wrong in that town. The doctor says it will be no use trying to interduce our stuff there, and we might as well leave there in the morning and go over to Bairdstown, which was a little place about ten miles off the railroad, and make our start there.

So we got a rig the next morning and drove across the country. No one bid us goodby neither, and Dr. Kirby says it's a wonder they rented us the rig.

But before we started that morning we noticed a funny thing. We hadn't so much as spoke to any nigger, except our own nigger Sam, and he couldn't of told all the niggers in that town about the stuff to turn niggers white, even if he had set up all night to do it. But every last nigger we saw looked like he knowed something about us. Even after we left town our nigger driver hailed two or three niggers in the road that acted that-a-way. It seemed like they was all awful polite to us. And yet they was different in their politeness than they was to them Georgia folks, which is their natcher born losses—acted more familiar, somehow, as if they knowed we must be thinking about the same thing they was thinking about.

About half-way to Bairdstown we stopped at a place to get a drink of water. Seemingly the white folks was away fur the day, and an old nigger come up and talked to our driver while Sam and us was at the well.

I seen them cutting their eyes at us, whilst they was unchecking the horses to let them drink, too, and then I hear the one that belonged there say:

"Is yo' suah dat hit air dem?"

"Suah," says the driver.

"How come yo' so all powerful suah about it?"

The driver pertended the harness needed some fixing, and they went around to the other side of the team and tinkered with one of the traces, a-talking to each other. I heard the old nigger say, kind of wonderized:

"Is dey a-gwine dar now?"

Sam he was pulling a bucket of water up out of the well fur us with a windlass. The doctor says to him:

"Sam, what does all this mean?"

Sam he pertends he don't know what the doctor is talking about. But Dr. Kirby he finally plink him down. Sam hemmed and hawed considerable, making up his mind whether he better lie to us or not. Then, all of a sudden, he busted out into an awful fit of laughing and like to of fell in the well. Seemingly he decided fur to tell us the truth.

From what Sam says then their bishop has been holding revival meetings in Big Bethel, which is a nigger church right on the edge of Bairdstown, and niggers fur miles around has been coming night after night, and some of them whooping her up daytimes too.

What he has been prophesying, Sam says, is the coming of a Messiah fur the nigger race—a new Elishyah, he says, as will lead them from out'n their inequality and bring 'em up to white standards right on the spot.

It seems the whites don't know yet jest what the bishop's been a-preaching. But every nigger fur miles on every side of Big Bethel is a-listening and a-looking fur signs and omens, and has been fur two, three days now. This here half crazy bishop has got 'em worked up to where they is ready to believe anything or do anything.

So the night before when the word got out in Cottonville that we had some scheme to make the niggers white the niggers there took up with the idea that the doctor was meby the feller the bishop had been prophesying about, and for a sign and a omen and a miracle of his grace and powers was going out to Big Bethel to turn 'em white.

News spreads among niggers quicker than among whites. Since 9 o'clock the night before the news had spread fur miles around that Bishop Warren's Messiah was on his way and was going fur to turn the bishop white to show his power and grace, and he had with him one he had turned part white, and that was Sam, and one he had turned clear white, and that was me.

That's what Sam says they are looking fur, dozens and scores and hundreds of them niggers roind about. Sam he had lived in town five or six years, and he looked down on all these here ignoramus country niggers. So he busts out laughing at first, and he pertends like he don't take no stock in any of it. Besides, he knowed well enough he wasn't spotted up by no Messiah, but it was the dope in the bottles done it. But as he told about them goings on Sam got more and more interested and warmed up to it, and his voice went into a kind of a singsong, like he was prophesying himself.

Fur my part, I never heard such a lot of dern foolishness in all my life. But the doctor, he says nothing at all. He listens to Sam ranging and rolling out big words and raving and only frowns. He was meby thinking how much ornerier this Messiah business would make the hull scheme.

We got to Bairdstown early enough, but we didn't go to work there. We wasted all that day. They was something working in the doctor's head he wasn't talking about. I supposed he was getting cold feet on the hull proposition. Anyhow, he jest set around the little tavern in that place and done nothing all afternoon.

The weather was fine, and we set out in front. We hadn't set there more'n an hour till I could tell we was being noticed by the blacks, not out open and

aboveboard. But every now and then one or two or three would pass along down the street and lazy about and take a look at us. They pertended they wasn't noticing, but they was.

Along toward dusk we takes a walk. They was a good sized crick at the edge of that little place and on it an old fashioned worter mill. Above the mill a little piece was a bridge. We crossed it and walked along a road that followed the crick bank fur quite a spell.

They was considerable woods standing along the crick, and around a turn in the road we come onto Sam all of a sudden talking with another nigger. Sam was jest a-laying it off to that nigger, but he kind of hushed as we come nearer. Down the road quite a little piece was a good sized wooden building that never had been painted and looked like it was a big barn. Without knowing it the doctor and me had been pinte ourselves right toward Big Bethel.

The nigger with Sam he yells out, when he sees us:

"Glory be! Hyah dey comes! Hyah dey comes now!"

And he throwed up his arms and started on a lopsy up the road toward the church, singing out every ten or fifteen yards. A little knot of niggers come out in front of the church when they hear him coming.

Sam, he stood his ground and waited fur us to come up to him kind of apologetic and sneaking looking about something or other.

"What kind of lies have you been telling these niggers, Sam?" says the doctor, very sharp and short and mad-like.

"I dunno how come dey get all dem nigger notions in dey fool head," Sam says, "but dey all waitin' dar inside de chur'ch do—some of de mos' fa'ful an' de mos' pra'ful ones o' de Big Bethel congregation been dar fo' de las' houah a-waitin' an' a-watchin', spite o' de fac' dat reg'lar meetin' ain't gwine ter be called twell arter supper. De bishop he dar too."

We seen a little knot of them down the road there in front of the church gathering around the nigger that had been with Sam. They all starts toward us. But one man steps out in front of them all and turns toward them and holds his hands up and waves them back. They all stops in their tracks.

Then he turns his face toward us and comes slow and sollum down the road in our direction, walking with a cane and moving very dignified. He was a couple of hundred yards away.

But as he come closer we gradually seen him plainer and plainer. He was a big man and stout and dressed very neat in the same kind of rig as white bishops wear, with one of these white collars that buttons in the back.

He stops, the bishop does, about ten yards from us and looks us over.

"Ah yo' de gentleman known ter dis hyah sinful generation by de style an' de entitlemint o' Docto' Hahlyeh Kirby?" he asks the doctor, very ceremonious and grand.

The doctor give him a look that wasn't very encouraging, but he nodded to him.

"Will yo' dismiss yo' sebhant in ordeh dat we kin hol' converseh an' communion in de midst er privacy?"

The doctor he nods to Sam, and Sam mooses along toward the church.

"Now, then," says the doctor, sudden and sharp, "take off your hat and tell me what you want."

The bishop's hand goes up to his head with a jerk before he thought. Then it stops there, while him and the doctor looks at each other. The bishop's mouth opens like he was wonderizing, but he slowly pulls his hat off and stands there bareheaded in the road. But he wasn't really humble, that bishop.

"Now," says the doctor, "tell me in as straight talk as you've got what all this a—d foolishness among you niggers means."

A queer kind of look passed over the bishop's face. He hadn't expected to be met jest that way, meby. Whether he himself had really believed in the coming of that there new Messiah he had been predicting I never could settle in my mind.

"De wold has gone fo' th among he fa'ful an' de puah in heah," he says, "dat er man has come accredited w' signs an' w' mahvels an' de poweh o' de sperrit fo' to lay his han' on de sons o' Ham an' ter make 'em des de same in colluh as de yuther sons of ea' th."

"Then that word is a lie," says the doctor. "I did come here to try out

some stuff to change the color of negro skins. That's all. Is that all you want to know?"

The bishop hems and haws and fiddles with his stick, and then he says:

"Suah, will dish yeah prepa'shun sho'ly do de wobk?"

Dr. Kirby tells him it will do the work all right.

And then the bishop, after beating around the bush some more, comes out with his idea. Whether he expected there would be any Messiah come or not, of course he knowed the doctor wasn't him. But he is willing to boost the doctor's game as long as it boosts his game. He wants to be in on the deal. He wants part of the graft. He wants to get together with the doctor on a plan before the doctor sees the niggers. And if the doctor don't want to keep on with the miracle end of it the bishop shows him how he could do him good with no miracle attachment. Fur he has an awful holt on them niggers, and his say-so will sell thousands and thousands of bottles. What he is looking fur jest now is as little take-out.

That was his craftiness and his cunningness working in him. But all of a sudden one of his crazy streaks come bulging to the surface. It come with a wild, eager look in his eyes.

"Suah," he cries out all of a sudden,

"ef yo' kin make me white, fo' Gawd sakes do hit! Do hit! Ef yo' does I gwine ter bless yo' all yo' days!"

"Yo' don't know—no one kin guess or comprehend—what des bein' white would mean ter me? Lawd, lawd!" he says, his voice soft spoken, but more eager than ever as he went on, and pleading something pitiful to hear. "Des think of all de Caucasian blood in me! Gawd knows de nights er my youth I'se laid awake twell de dawn come red in de eas' a-cryin' out ter him only fo' ter be white! Des ter be white! Don' min' dem black, black niggers dar. Don' think er dem. Day ain't wuth nothin' nor fitten fo' no fate but what dey got. But me, what's done kep' me from gwine ter de top but dat one thing—I wasn't white! Hit air too late now—too late fo' dem ambitions I done trifle with an' shove behin' me—hit's too late fo' dat! But ef I was des ter git one il' year o' hit—one il' year o' bein' white—befo' I died!"

Then the doctor says slow and even, but not severe:

"You go back to your people now, bishop, and tell them they've made a mistake about me. And if you can, undo the harm you've done with this Messiah business. As far as this stuff of mine is concerned, there's none of it for you nor for any other negro. You tell them that. There's none of it been sold yet and there never will be."

Then we turned away and left him standing there in the road, still with his hat off and his face working.

(To be continued)

Original Notice.

In the District Court of the State of Iowa, in and for Decatur county. August term, 1913.

Lena Leota Smith, plaintiff, vs. Judson J. Smith, defendant.

To Judson J. Smith, defendant.

You are hereby notified, that the petition of plaintiff in the above entitled cause is on file in the office of the clerk of the District Court of the state of Iowa, in and for Decatur county, praying that the bonds of matrimony heretofore existing between plaintiff and defendant be dissolved and that plaintiff be restored to all of the rights, privileges and immunities of an unmarried person, and, alleging as grounds therefor that the plaintiff and defendant were legally married on the 5th day of September 1899 and lived together as husband and wife until on or about the 29th day of October 1911. That the defendant in violation of his marriage vows has been guilty of such cruel and inhuman treatment of this plaintiff as to endanger plaintiff's life.

And praying for such other and further relief as may be just and equitable in the premises and for costs. For full and complete statement of plaintiff's cause of action see petition.

And that unless you appear there-to and defend before noon of the second day of the August term, A. D. 1913, of said court, which will commence at Leon on the 25th day of August, A. D. 1913, default will be entered against you and judgment rendered thereon.

V. R. MCGINNIS, Attorney for Plaintiff.

48-4t

Notice of Appointment of Administrator.

In the District Court of the State of Iowa, in and for Decatur county, in Probate.

In the matter of the estate of William Orfield, deceased.

To whom it may concern:

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed and has qualified as administrator of the estate of William Orfield, late of Decatur county, Iowa, deceased. All persons in any manner indebted to said deceased or his estate will make payment to the undersigned; and those having claims against said deceased or his estate will present them in manner and form as by law required, for allowance and payment.

Dated this 5th day of July, A. D. 1913.

HARRISON ORFIELD, Administrator of said estate.

HEED THE WARNING.

Many Leon people Have Done So.

When the kidneys are weak they give unmistakable warnings that should not be ignored. By examining the first sign of disorder, many days of suffering may be saved. Weak kidneys usually expel a dark, ill-smelling urine, full of "brickdust" sediment and painful in passage. Sluggish kidneys often cause a dull pain in the small of the back, headaches, dizzy spells, tired, languid feelings and frequent rheumatic twinges.

Doan's Kidney Pills are for the kidneys only. There is no better recommended remedy.

Leon people endorse Doan's Kidney Pills.

William Hinds; Leon, Iowa, says: "I had a lame and weak back and my kidneys did not act regularly. I got a box of Doan's Kidney Pills and they did me a world of good. I can now rest much better at night and my back is much stronger."

For sale by all dealers. Price 50 cents. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, New York, sole agents for the United States.

Remember the name—Doan's—and take no other.

Iowa Steam Laundry Co.

Anything from finest silk fibre to heavy wool curtains.

Dye Works in connection

Send Basket Monday and Wednesday

Caster & Benefiel Agents

Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south."

Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south."

Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south."

Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south."

Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south."

Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south."

Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south."

Yo' all done struck the wo'st pah't of the south."