Oregon

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The Manager Of the B. Q. A.

By VAUGHAN KESTER

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(Continued from Thursday.)

"Very well, Mr. Oakley." The treaser was wondering what would be his perior's action. Would be resign and eve Antioch or would he try and Hek It out?

Dan hurried uptown to the hotel. e found his father in his room, seatd before an open window in his shirt leeves and with his Bible in his lap. He glanced up from the book as his on pushed open the door.

"Well, Dannie?" he said, and his ones were mild, meditative and in-

"I was looking for you, father. They old me you'd come uptown."

So I did. As soon as I heard there as going to be trouble over my workg in the shops I left."

"Did they say anything to you?" "Not a word, Dannie, but I knew what was coming and decided to quit

"You shouldn't have done it, daddy," aid Dan, seating himself on the edge the bed near the old man. "I can't et them say who shall work in the hops and who not. The whole busiss was trumped up out of revenge or the cut. They want to get even with me for that, you see. If I back lown and yield this point there is no elling what they'll ask next-probaly that the wages be restored to the ld figure."

He spoke quite cheerfully, for he saw is father was cruelly hurt.

"It was all a mistake, Danny-my oming to you, I mean," Roger Oakley aid, shutting the book reverently and aying it to one side. "The world's a mall place after all, and we should ave known we couldn't keep our seret. It's right I should bear my own ross, but it's not your sin, and now it presses hardest on you. I'm sorry, Dannie"- And his voice shook with he emotion he was striving manfully

"No, no, father. To have you here as been a great happiness to me." "Has it, Dannie? Has it really?" with a quick smile. "I am glad you an say so, for it's been a great happiess to me-greater than I deserved." and he laid a big hand caressingly on ils son's.

"We must go ahead, daddy, as if othing had happened. If we let this ourt us, we'll end by losing all our

"It's been a knockout blow for me, Dannie," with a wistful sadness, "and ve got to go away. It's best for you should. I've gone in one direction and you've gone another. You can't econcile opposites. I've been thinking if this a good deal. You're young and ot your life ahead of you, and you'll do big things before you're done, and ather and love you. Why, I'm of a lifferent class even, but I can't go on. I'm just as I am, and I can't change

"Why, bless your heart, daddy," cried Dan, "I wouldn't have you changed! You're talking nonsense. I won't let to Miss Emory and resumed his conyou go away.

"But the girl, Dannie; the girl-the doctor's daughter! You see, I hear a lot of gossip in the shop, and even if you haven't told me I know."

"We may as well count that at an end," said Dan quietly.

"Do you think of leaving here?" "No. If I began by running, I'd be running all the rest of my life. I shall remain until I've accomplished everything I've set out to do if it takes ten years."

"And what about Miss Emory, Dan nie? If you are going to stay, why is that at an end?" "I dare say she'll marry Mr. Ryder.

Anyhow, she won't marry me."

"But I thought you cared for her?" "I do, daddy." "Then why do you give up? You're

as good as he is any day." "I'm not her kind; that's all. It has nothing to do with this. It would have been the same anyhow. I'm not her

kind." Roger Oakley turned this over slowly in his mind. It was most astonish-

thg. He couldn't grasp it. "Do you mean that she thinks she is better than you are?" he asked curi-

ously. "Something of that sort, I supposa," dryly. "I want you to come back into

the shops, father." "I can't do it, Dannie. I'm sorry if you wish it, but it's impossible. I

want to keep out of sight. Back east when they pardoned me every one knew, and I didn't seem to mind, but here it's not the same. I can't face it. It may be cowardly, but I can't."

CHAPTER XII. AKLEY had told his father he was going to call at the Emorys'. He wanted to see Constance once more. Then it didn't much matter what happened.

As he passed up the street he was conscious of an impudent curiosity in the covert glances the idlers on the corners shot at him. With hardly an exception they turned to gaze after him as he strode by. He realized that an unsavory distinction had been thrust upon him. He had become a marked man. He set his lips in a grim smile. This was what he would have to meet

until the silly wonder of it wore off or a fresh sensation took its place. And there would be the men at the shops. There intercourse had hitherto been rather pleasant and personal, as he had recognized certain responsibilities in the relation which had made him desire to be more than a mere taskmaster. The thought of his theories caused him to smile again. His humanitarianism had received a jolt from which it would not recover in many a long day.

The hands already hated him as a tyrant and probably argued that his authority was impaired by the events of the morning, though how they arrived at any such conclusion was beyond him, but he had felt something of the kind in Branyon's manner. When the opportunity came it would be a satisfaction to undeceive them, and he was not above wishing this opportunity might come soon, for his mood was bitter and revengeful when he recalled their ignorant and needlessly brutal insolence.

Early as he was he found, as he had anticipated when he started out, that Ryder was ahead of him. The editor was lounging on the Emorys' porch with the family. He had dined with them.

As Dan approached he caught the sound of Constance's voice. There was no other voice in Antioch which sounded the same or possessed the same quality of refinement and culture. His heart beat with quickened pulsations and his pace slackened. He paused for an instant in the shadow of the lllac bushes that shut off the well kept lawn from the street. Then he forced himself to go on. There was no gain in deferring his sentence. Better have it over with. Yet when he reached the gate he would gladly have passed it without entering had it not been that he never abandoned any project simply because it was disagreçable. He had done too many disagreeable things not to have outlived this species of cow-

The instant he saw him the doctor rose from his seat on the steps and came quickly down the walk. There was no mistaking the cordiality he gave his greeting, for he intended there should be none. Mrs. Emory, too, took pains that he should feel the friendliness of her sentiment toward him. Constance, however, appeared embarrassed and ill at ease, and Dan's face grew very white. He felt that he had no real appreciation of the changed conditions since his father's story had become public property. He saw it made a difference in the way his friends viewed him. He had become hardened, and it had been impossible for him to foresee just how it would affect others, but to these people it was plainly a shock. The very kindliness he had experienced at the hands of the doctor and Mrs. Emory only served people will forget. I can't drag you to show how great the shock was. In down just because I happen to be your their gracious, generous fashion they had sought to make it easy for him

Oakley and the editor did not speak. Civility seemed the rankest hypocrisy under the circumstances. A barely perceptible inclination of the head sufficed, and then Ryder turned abruptly

versation with her.

Dan seated himself beside the doctor on the steps. He was completely crushed. He hadn't the wit to leave, and he knew that he was a fool for staying. What was the good in carrying on the uphill fight any longer? Courage is a fine quality, no doubt, but it is also well for a man to have sense enough to know when he is fairly beaten, and he was fairly beaten.

He took stock of the situation. Quite independent of his hatred of the fellow, he resented Ryder's presence there beside Constance. But what was the use of struggling? The sooner he banished all thought of her the better it would be for him. His chances had never been worth considering.

He stole a glance at the pair, who had drawn a little to one side and were talking in low tones and with the intimacy of long acquaintance. He owned they were wonderfully well suited to each other. Ryder was no mean rival, had it come to that. The world had given him its rub. He knew perfectly the life with which Miss Emory was familiar. His people had been the right sort. He was well born and well bred, and he showed it.

It dawned upon the unwilling Oakley slowly and by degrees that to Constance Emory he must be nothing more or less than the son of a murderer. He had never quite looked at it in that light before. He had been occupied with the effect rather than the cause, but he was sure that if Ryder had told her his father's history he had made the most of his opportunity. He wondered how people felt about a thing of this kind. He knew now what his portion would be. Disgrace is alwrys vicarious in its consequences. The innocent generally suffer indiscriminate-

The doctor talked a steady stream at Oakley, but he managed to say little that made any demand on Dan's attention. He was sorry for the young man. He had liked him from the start, and he believed but a small part of what he had heard. It is true he had had the particulars from Ryder, but Ryder said what he had to say with his usual lazy indifference, as if his interest was the slightest and had vouch ed for no part of it.

ly along with the guilty.

He would hardly have dared admit that he himself was the head and front of the offending. Dr. Emory would not have understood how it could have been any business of his. It would have finished him with the latter. As it was, he had been quick to resent his glib, sneering tone.

But Dan's manner convinced the doctor that there were some grounds for the charges made by the hands when they demanded Roger Oakley's dismissal, or else he was terribly hurt by the occurrence. While Dr. Emory was reaching this conclusion Dan was cursing himself for his stupidity. It would have been much wiser for him to have remained away until Antioch quieted down. Perhaps it would have been fairer, too, to his friends, but since he had blundered he would try and see Miss Emory again. She should know the truth. It was characteristic of him that he should wish the matter put straight, even when there was no especial advantage to be gained.

Soon afterward he took his leave. The doctor followed him down to the



"No, I can't deny it outright."

gate. There was a certain constraint in the manner of the two men, now that they were alone together. As they paused by the gate Dr. Emory broke sflence with:

"For God's sake, Oakley, what is this I hear about your father? I'd like your assurance that it is all a pack of

A lump came into Dan's throat, and he answered huskily: "I am sure it is not at all as you

have heard. I am sure the facts are quite different from the account you have .heard"-"But"-

"No, I can't deny it outright, much as I'd like to." "You don't mean- Pardon me, for,

of course, I have no right to ask." Dan turned away his face. "I don't know any one who has a better right to ask," he said.

"Well, I shouldn't have asked if I'd thought there was a word of truth in the story. I had hoped I could deny it for you. That was all."

"I guess I didn't appreciate how you would view it. I have lived in the shadow of it so long"-

The doctor looked aghast at the admission. He had not understood before that Dan was acknowledging the mur-Even yet he could not bring himself to believe it. Dan moved off a step as if to go.

"Do you mean it is true, Oakley?" he asked, detaining him. "Substantially, yes. Good night," he added hopelessly,

"Wait," hastily. "I don't want you to go just yet." He put out his hand frankly. "It's nothing you have done anyhow," he said as an afterthought. "No. but I begin to think it might just as well have been."

Dr. Emory regarded him earnestly. "My boy, I'm awfully sorry for you, and I'm afraid you have got in for more than you can manage. It looks as though your troubles were all coming in a bunch."

Dan smiled, "My antecedents won't affect the situation down at the shops, if that is what you mean. The men may not like me any the better or respect me any the more for knowing of them, but they will discover that that will make no difference where our relations are concerned."

"To be sure. I only meant that publie opinion will be pretty strong against you. It somehow has an influence," ruefully.

"I suppose it has," rather sadly. "Do you have to stay and face it? It might be easier, you know- I don't mean exactly to run away"-

"I am pledged to put the shops and road on a paying basis for General Cornish. He'd about made up his mind to sell to the M. and W. If he does it will mean the closing of the shops, and they will never be opened up again. That will wipe Antioch off the map. Not so very long ago I had a good deal of sympathy for the people who would be ruined, and I can't change simply because they have, can I?" with a look on his face which belonged to his father.

The doctor stroked his beard meditatively and considered the question. (To be continued.)

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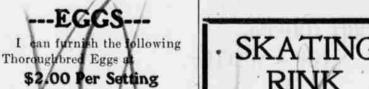
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