The New Clarion

By WILL N. HARBEN

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(Continued.)

Again Fulton deliberated before speaking. Finally in response to Abner's steady stare he said: "I don't know that thar *was* any operation, but some folks that was in a position to know said that the young feller did give Susy some concoction or other that wasn't good fer her an' may have hurried the pore gal to 'er grave. I don't know. I know, though, that I'm goin' to let whisky alone hereafter, Mr. Daniel. It won't do when it plumb upsets a man like I was that night. I didn't have any sense at all. For instance, you know, I couldn't recall exactly when it was that I last seed Craig 'fore he was shot. I made two different statements, one on the heels o' t'other. I said once that I was at the new wire fence at Craig's an' then at my pigpen at home, but now that I'm plumb sober an' got all my senses I remember that it was at my pigpen that I last seed 'im."

"I see, I see," Abner said gently. "An' I reckon it was to straighten out all this that you was inquirin' about me at the blacksmith's shop, Abe?"

"Yes. I thought I'd git it straight ef I run across you an' had a talk."

"An' that's what you was lookin' fer me tonight fer?" Abner led him on gently.

"Yes," Abe nodded. "I wanted you to have a plumb straight tale. I didn't see no use o' lettin' you believe what wasn't so."

Abner made no reply. Glancing a few yards ahead, he saw his wagon under a spreading beech at the roadside, and for some reason which he failed to make known he moved toward it. It was as if he had forgotten the presence of his companion. With a slow look of uneasy wonder Fulton followed.

"Yes, lots an' lots o' things p'int to Howard," Abe went on, almost in a tone of appeal. "I can't blame 'im, though, Mr. Daniel, fer Craig cussed 'im to his face several times, an' Howard always was high strung an' easy to git mad."

They reached the wagon, and Abner put his hand on the detachable spring seat. "Git 'round t'other side, Abe, an' he'p me down with it. I'm goin' to have a feller haul some stove wood from this mountain tomorrow, an' I don't want 'im to take this seat along. It fills up too much, considerin' that he's to be paid by the load."

Abe obeyed. He went around to the other side, and he and Abner lifted the seat over the wagon pole and put it against the trunk of the beech. "Let's set down awhile, Abe, I'm sorter tired," Abner said, with a little yawn, sinking upon the seat and crossing his slim legs. "Set down—set down, Abe."

Like an automaton Fulton complied, staring at the ground. Abner saw his knees trembling under their ragged coverings. The sight of the cowed desperate creature touched his heart, and a tone of real sympathy, that was not without effect on its object, filled his voice when he next spoke.

"This is a sad, sad old world, Abe," he began. "I've been in it a long time, an' I hain't seed much else but trouble on every hand. I wish I could be a good man, but I can't always manage it. I'll feel better tonight, though, ef I make a clean breast to you about some'n' I done. You may think it is a small matter, but it ain't to me. I actually lied to you t'other night. I intimated I thought Howard was guilty. In tryin' to do a little good—in tryin' to find some way to help that pore stricken boy an' his heartbroken mammy, I drapped into my old tricky way o' talkin' that I acquired when I was younger an' traded a lot with keen fellers that had no conscience an' killed what little I had. The truth is, Abe, that I was so anxious to find out ef you could throw any light on the matter t'other night that I led out by accusin' Howard myse'f. I saw you was friendly to 'im, an' I knowed that 'u'd set you to talkin', an' it did—you know it did."

Fulton laid his splaying hands on his knees to steady them, but he kept his eyes averted. "I didn't know you was foolin' me then, Mr. Daniel; but I did after I thought it over," he said, huskily. "Then I seed yore hand, an' got ready fer you. Ef you want the truth you may have it hot from my box, Mr. Daniel. I seed what you thought, but you hain't got a smidgen o' proof—not a smidgen agin me. An' ef I am tryin' to defend myse'f now it is because I've got to. I know what you think, an' that's enough fer me. I know you are one o' the keenest men in the country, but I ain't goin' to let you bully me. Ef—ef you had any proof you would throw the whole blame on me an' clear yore man, but you hain't got no proof—the proof all lies some'r's else."

"You are right, I hain't got no proof, Abe," Daniel returned sadly.

Daniel paused a moment.

"Well, Abe," he continued, "I'm here to say that I am convinced that folks can't keep on doin' wrong, even ef they try. The very laws o' the universe are agin it. Every day you pick up a paper an' read how some feller has toted crime on his soul fer years an' years an' finally come forward of his own free will an' dumped it off in open confession. Abe, yore ma is dead—passed on—hain't she?"

"Yes," slowly drawled Fulton. "She died when I was a boy."

"She was a good woman, I'll be bound, Abe. Wasn't she?"

"Yes."

"Do you know whar I think she is, Abe? She's some'r's whar God's light is brighter 'n' it is here. Who knows, she may be able to come nigh you an' throw her holy influence about you? Bein' more like God than she was here on earth, she may have gloried in the pity you had fer that pore cousin o' yore'n that was so weak an' ill treated. She may have thought that yore great wrath agin Craig was beautiful and even divine. She may have felt that in doin' what you done you was an agent fer good—fer we know that God hisse'f condemns sech creatures an' scourges 'em with the lash of conscience; but, Abe, Abe, listen to me. The sperit o' yore ma may be uneasy now, fer she sees you waverin' on the brink of a lastin' wrong. She sees you under the greatest temptation o' yore whole life, an' no doubt she's afeard you won't be strong enough to resist. She knows that you know an innocent young fellow is sufferin' fer some'n' he never done, an' fer all we know she may be standin' here at this minute pleadin' with you the best she kin not to take a false step. It may be her that's makin' me say this to you. Abe, it is fer you to decide. You kin walk straight ahead into God's light, or you kin stumble on into the devil's darkness."

CHAPTER XXV.

A True Comforter.

FULTON suddenly shrank from Abner's touch. A shudder ran through him. He turned his distorted face to Abner. It was the face of a fiend goaded by despair.

"Huh!" he snarled. He rose and stood swaying to and fro like a reed in a windstorm. "You are jest up to yore old sly tricks. All you have jest said is to lead me into a trap. You need Howard Tinsley in yore business. Look here, Abner Daniel! You know you hain't got a feather's weight o' proof agin me. You are tryin' to bluff me."

Abner endeavored to step nearer the man, but Fulton slunk farther away.

"You let me alone, Abner Daniel," he muttered sullenly. "You stop doggin' me an' dingdongin' this thing at me. I ain't goin' ter put up with it from you nor nobody else. Thar is a p'int you hain't thought about yit, an'

"You let me alone, Abner Daniel," he muttered sullenly.

it's a big un. Do you want to know what it is? One man is already down on the docket to testify that he seed Howard at Craig's gate jest a little while 'fore the—the shot was fired. What ef another feller livin' in the neighborhood was to say—was to swear that he seed even more'n that—heard more'n that! How does that strike you?"

"It don't strike me at all, Abe," Abner answered, with a bluntness he could not restrain. "A man as guilty as you are couldn't stand up before a court full o' honest men an' tell a tale o' that sort an' make it go down."

Abe swayed back and forth.

"I give you fair warnin'," he muttered. "You keep me out o' this thing. I see what you are tryin' to do, but it won't work. It won't! It won't!"

He turned and stalked away.

Abner saw the figure of a man emerge from the shadow of the stable and approach. It was Pole Baker.

"Don't fly off the handle, Uncle Ab," Pole said, half apologetically. "I give you my word I ain't interferin' with you in this thing at all."

"Well, what do you mean by turnin' up so dang often?" Abner inquired. "Seems to me that I never see this feller without runnin' on you like a p'inter dog squattin' behind a stump some'r's."

"It's this way, Uncle Ab," Pole laughed softly. "I know you are runnin' this thing, an' I don't intend to bother you in the least, but I'm feelin' so bad over the little progress that's made that I thought ef I watched Abe like a hawk I mought by some accident drap on to a little some'n' that mought he'p you out."

"Well, have you—that's what I'd like to know?" Abner leaned on the fence a picture of utter dejection.

"I've seed enough to know that Abe is as restless as the devil hisse'f goin' about seekin' some'n' to devour. I've seed 'im a dozen times when he thought nobody was lookin'. For one thing, I noticed that he goes regular every day down in the big swamp below his cabin. He's wore a little path o' his own in the weeds an' grass. An' t'other day, when I knowed he was off in town, I slipped down thar. But I didn't find nothin', Uncle Ab, except that his tracks come to a' end at a particular spot in the thickest part o' the swamp. I couldn't make nothin' of it except that he jest loved to go to some one quiet spot."

"I see, an' so that come to nothin'," Abner sighed.

"I actually don't know," Pole returned, "but it give me an idea. I knowed I could kiver my tracks, an' so day before yesterday I went down thar before he did an' hid myse'f as nigh the spot as I could with safety. I lay down flat in the bulrushes an' waited fer him to come. It was a long wait an' not pleasant, fer the gnats an' mosquitoes fairly chawed the meat off my bones, but after awhile I heard 'im a-comin'. The spot was mighty shady, an' I couldn't see his face good, but I heard 'im mumblin' some'n' to hisse'f. Then he set in to swingin' his arms about 'im, an' I heard 'im groanin' like he was in torment."

"Then—then what did he do?" Abner leaned forward, a look of tense eagerness on him as he spoke.

"Why, he started to go back," Pole replied. "He plunged into the canebrake an' willows, an' I heard 'im thrashin' his way through the bushes at a great rate. I was about to crawl out an' slip after 'im when I seed 'im come back. He stood twistin' his hands over his head an' behin' his back, an' then all at once he fell flat on his all fours an' stuck his face right in the mire. Then, Uncle Ab, I heard 'im prayin'. I couldn't catch what he was sayin', fer it was mostly groans an' grunts, but I heard 'im callin' on God. I heard 'im sayin': 'God help me! God have mercy!'"

"You heard that, did you?" Abner exclaimed. "Are you sure you heard that?"

"Yes, but that was all, Uncle Ab, an' I've been mad at myse'f ever since fer not runnin' on some'n' worth while. I mace like rips to be beat in this thing."

Abner was silent for a moment, then he looked at Pole with a grateful smile. "I'm glad you watched 'im. When you come just now I had plumb lost hope myself, but I feel better now. Pole, the whole truth, proof an' all, is locked up in Abe Fulton's heart an' soul. I've been hopin' that I could stir up pity in 'im an' git 'im to do the right thing before God an' man, an' I've been workin' to that end, but he said some'n' jest now that made me lose faith in that plan. In fact, I was beginnin' to fear that his conscience was dead, but it ain't—it ain't quite. Pole, a man killer that prays to God while his hands are wet with his victim's blood ain't hopeless. You didn't know it, but you've brought me the only news that could keep my hopes alive. Good night, Pole. I must go in."

"Good night, Uncle Ab. I'm due at home too. I ain't a prayin' man, but I feel like it sometimes—I feel like it when I hear a feller like you talk as you are a-doin' now. You are the best all round link betwixt this world and the next that I ever run across, an' ef I ever git to heaven it will be by hangin' on to yore coattail."

The next morning after he had left Mary at the office Abner walked around to the jail, taking a quiet side street to avoid passing through the business section of the town.

Abner ascended the narrow stairs slowly. The first flight was rather dark, and he had to place his feet carefully. However, there was more light in the neighborhood of Howard's cell, and as Abner drew near the bars he saw Howard rise from his cot at his approach and stand peering through the squares at him.

"Hello, Howard! How are you, my boy?" Abner asked, mastering his emotion with difficulty and trying to speak in a cheerful, offhand tone.

"Oh, I'm all right, Uncle Ab. How are you?" Abner was dismayed at the change in Howard's appearance since he had last seen him. He was paler and thinner, and worry had cut deep lines in his face. His eyes glowed with the fire of despair. His hair stood stiffly awry, and his hands quivered as they clutched the bars. "I say I'm all right, but I don't know that I am anything to boast of. I am only flesh and blood, after all, and this is a pretty tough situation. I try to hope. I keep saying to myself that it will come out right, but sometimes I doubt it. I know what I've got to face in my trial, and there is hardly one chance in a hundred of escaping the gallows. The more I think about it the worse the situation seems."

"Oh, you are blue," Abner returned, unsteadily. "Confinement has upset yore liver. It will do it fer the stoutest constitutions. You must keep up hope. The editorials you are writing are the finest things you ever done. Then thar's Mary—think of her, Howard."

Abner saw a look of inexpressible tenderness suffuse the wan, steel framed face and heard the prisoner sigh.

"Lord, Lord, Uncle Ab," he said. "I seldom think of any one else here of late. If I am condemned to death I'll carry to the end the sweet thought of what she has been and is to me. That is worrying me, too, and I don't know what to do about it."

"How is it worrying you?" Abner asked.

(To Be Continued.)

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New York Village Is Birthplace of Baseball

About sixty miles west of Albany, and a little more than half the distance southeast of Utica, is Lake Otsego, one of the most picturesque in New York. On its shores nestles the village of Cooperstown. It was named after Judge William Cooper, the father of J. Fenimore Cooper, the novelist, who long resided there. Cooperstown is now a village of less than 3,000 population, but its picturesque situation, more than its glue factory, makes it a popular summer resort.

What of it? Well, nohing much, except that after a laborious sifting of the evidence and a full consideration of the claims of other towns, one is forced to the conclusion that Cooperstown deserves recognition as the birthplace of baseball.

This conclusion carries with it the bestowal upon Abner Doubleday of the proud title of "Father of Baseball." He invented the game which developed into America's international pastime.

Wednesday of this week will be the twenty-third anniversary of the death of the originator of baseball. He passed away at Mendham, N. J., which had long been his home, on Jan. 26, 1893, having lived to see the game he fostered attain first place in the affections of his countrymen, and spread to other lands.

Doubleday was born in Ballston Spa, N. Y., in 1819, and his centenary three years hence should be made the occasion of a great celebration. He graduated from West Point, in 1842, fought valiantly in the Mexican and Seminole wars, and was second in command at Fort Sumter at the outbreak of the civil war, and aimed and fired the first gun discharged on the the Union side in that historic conflict. In the bloody years that followed he played the man's part, and attained the rank of major general. As a soldier he was brave and able, modest and amiable.

It was as a schoolboy at Cooperstown, before he embarked on his brilliant military career, that Abner Doubleday originated a ball game which soon became very popular among his fellows, and quickly spread to other towns and cities. In its first and simplest form the game consisted of hitting a ball and running to a stone, which served as a base, about fifty feet distant. The players of the opposing side, eleven in number, were scattered about the field to catch the bal land throw it at the runner. If the latter was hit by the pellet before he reached the base, he was out. After a time, to add to the interest of the game, three bases were used. The diamond form was not originated by Doubleday, however, but by another lad, Alexander Cartright, who afterward formed the first regular baseball club in New York, called the Knickerbockers, and took part in drafting the first set of rules to govern the game.

There is a tradition that Doubleday and his companions christened their game "baseball," but this is not well authenticated. "Old Cat" and "Town Ball" were the popular names of the pastime prior to 1845, when the Knickerbocker club was organized.

All baseball fans know that Hoboken was the scene of the first match game of baseball, between the Knickerbockers and the New Yorks, in 1846. Without depriving Hoboken of any of its glory, however, it must give way to Cooperstown as the real birthplace of the great game.

In the early days the pitcher was the "thrower," the fielders were "scouts," and runs were called "acres." The germs of baseball were there, in spite of these strange names, and Doubleday deserves to be held in grateful remembrance by all fans.

Igorrots Keen to Adopt Telephones in Luzon

Manila, P. I., Jan. 24—Telephones have at last invaded the mountains of Northern Luzon. Several Igorrot townships have set aside municipal funds to provide for this modern means of communication. Recently the Itugaos have developed a craze for talking over the official lines to an extent that government business is prejudiced.

One member of a hill tribe has become a regular operator and several others are studying. Most of the line work and making of installations is being done by these people under American and Filipino supervision.

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The City of Bridgeport, Connecticut, invites bids for services on not less than five hundred (500) gas, gasolene or 60 watt tungsten lamps, at contract prices for terms of one, two and five years, no charge to be made for installation or fixtures.

Bids will be opened Saturday, January 29, 1916, in the Mayor's office and the Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

J. H. STAGG, Chairman,
Lamp Committee

A21 b*

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DISTRICT OF BRIDGEPORT, ss PROBATE COURT.

January 10, 1916.

Estate of William May, late of the town of Bridgeport in said district deceased.

The Court of Probate for the District of Bridgeport, hath limited and allowed six months from the date hereof for Creditors of said Estate to exhibit their claims for settlement. Those who neglect to present their accounts, properly attested, within said time, will be debarred a recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate are requested to make immediate payment to

MRS. WILLIAM MAY, Executrix,
100 Orchard Street.

A 21 s*

BOARD OF RELIEF

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Relief of the City of Bridgeport will meet at the Assessors' Office, City Hall, for the purpose of hearing appeals made from the findings of the Board of Assessors. Hearings will be held on the following dates in February: Tuesday, Feb. 1; Wednesday, Feb. 2; Thursday, Feb. 3; Friday, Feb. 4; Monday, Feb. 7; Tuesday, Feb. 8; Wednesday, Feb. 9, from 9 A. M. to 4 P. M., and on the evenings of Wednesday, Feb. 2; Friday, Feb. 4; Wednesday, Feb. 9, from 7 to 9 P. M.

Dated at Bridgeport this 20th day of January, 1916.

WILLIAM A. LEWIS,
THOMAS B. WHITE,
ISAAC MOOREY,
JOHN E. RILEY.

A20 g*

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