

Abner Daniel

By... Will N. Harben.

Author of "Westerfelt"

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I. The story opens with Alfred Bishop, a Georgia planter, closing a trade of \$5,000 in mill stocks for 350 acres of mountain land. Mrs. Bishop and their son Alan object to the trade. Mrs. Bishop's brother, Abner Daniel, tells a story. II.—The sale over. Bishop boasts that his land is on a prospective railroad. Tom King, the former owner, has just unleased a tract of 2,000 acres adjoining Bishop's. III.—Bishop goes to Atlanta to see Lawyer Perkins, who told him about the railroad. He has been deceived. The old man is so cast down that he returns home without seeing his brother William or his daughter Adele, who is at her uncle's in Atlanta. IV.—Bishop has bought 20,000 acres of mountain land in and near the plantation. Abner tells Alan to consult Rayburn Miller, a land speculator. V.—Miller tells Alan about a dance at Darley. Alan's sweetheart, Dolly Barclay, will be there. Frank Hillhouse is attentive to Dolly. Craig, the banker. VI.—Dolly tells Alan that her father objects to his love quest. Barlow has also been caught on mountain land. VII and VIII.—Miller gives Alan counsel on love. Dolly's mother talks to her of her own love experiences. Dolly unhappy. IX.—Abner and Rev. Mr. Dole discuss religion. Pole Baker, ex-moonshiner, whom Alan has reformed. X.—Abner goes to Barclay's, and Dolly talks to him of Alan. He tells Alan of his own sweetheart who died and he still loves her. Alan will hope and wait. XI and XII.—Alan goes to Miller with a project for a railroad to the land. He redeems Pole Baker from the prison gang. XIII.—Miller sends news by Dolly to Alan about his railroad project. She disputes Miller's cynical views of love. XIV.—Miller interests Tillman Wilson, president of the Southern Land and Timber company, in the mountain road. Loan of \$25,000 arranged on Bishop's tract. XV and XVI.—The deal finished with a verbal option for the company to take the land at \$100,000. XVII and XVIII.—Miller meets Alan's sister Adele in Atlanta and is smitten. Craig's bank fails. Bishop loses his money. Dolly sends word to Alan that she loves him more than ever. XIX and XX.—Miller takes the news of the failure to the Bishops. Pole Baker and Abner suspect that Craig is hiding his money. XXI and XXII.—Pole Baker excites Craig's cupid by a story about having found gold in the mountain. He takes the banker to his old moonshiner cave and compels him to write an order on his wife for \$25,000. XXIII and XXIV.—Baker turns over the money to Bishop, who presents him with a farm. XXV and XXVI.—Adele Bishop home from Atlanta. Miller openly attentive. Baker brings news that Wilson is buying land for the company adjoining Bishop's. XXVII and XXVIII.—Miller takes up Bishop's loan and gives the company two weeks' time on the \$100,000 deal. XXIX.—The title vote right of way to the road, Bishop is rich and the lovers are happy.

CHAPTER XXIII.

RAYBURN MILLER and Alan spent that day on the river trying to catch fish, but with no luck at all, returning empty handed to the farmhouse for a late dinner. They passed the afternoon at target shooting on the lawn with rifles and revolvers, ending the day by a reckless ride on their horses across the fields, over fences and ditches, after the manner of fox hunting, a sport not often indulged in in that part of the country.

In the evening, as they sat in the big sitting room smoking after supper cigars, accompanied by Abner Daniel, with his long, cane stemmed pipe, Mrs. Bishop came into the room in her quiet way, smoothing her apron with her delicate hands.

"Pole Baker's rid up an' hitched at the front gate," she said. "Did you send 'im to town for anything, Alan?"

"No, mother," replied her son. "I reckon he's come to get more meat. Is father out there?"

"I think he's some'er's about the stable," said Mrs. Bishop.

Miller laughed. "I guess Pole isn't the best pay in the world, is he?"

"Father never weighs or keeps account of anything he gets," said Alan.



"That's yore money! It's all thar."

"They both make a guess at it wber cotton is sold. Father calls it 'lumpin' the thing, and usually Pole gets the lump. But he's all right, and I wish we could do more for him. Father was really thinking about helping him in some substantial way when the crash came."

"Thar!" broke in Daniel, with a gurgling laugh. "I've won my bet. I bet to mysel' jest now that ten minutes wouldn't pass 'fore Craig an' his bus' up would be mentioned."

"We have been at it, off and on, all day," said Miller, with a low laugh. "The truth is it makes me madder than anything I ever encountered."

"Do you know why?" asked Abner seriously, just as Pole Baker came through the dining room and leaned against the door jamb facing them. "It's been so"—nodding a greeting to Pole along with the others—"it's because you know in reason that he's got that money."

"Oh, I wouldn't say that!" protested Miller, in the tone of a man of broad experience in worldly affairs. "I wouldn't say that."

"Well, I would, an' do," said Abner, in the full tone of decision. "I know he's got it!"

"Well, yo're wrong thar, Uncle Ab," said Pole, striding forward and sinking into a chair. "You've got as good judgment as any man I ever run across. I thought like you do once. I'd 'a' tuck my oath that he had it about two hours by sun this evenin', but I kin swear he hain't a cent of it now."

"Do you mean that, Pole?" Abner stared across the wide hearth at him fixedly.

"He hain't got it, Uncle Ab," Pole was beginning to smile mysteriously. "He did have it, but he hain't got it now. I got it from 'im, blast his ugly pictur'!"

"You got it?" gasped Daniel. "You?"

"Yes, I made up my mind he had it, an' it deviled me so much that I determined to have it by hook or crook if it killed me or put me in lock the rest o' my life." Pole rose and took a packet wrapped in brown paper from under his rough coat and laid it on the table near Alan. "God bless you, old boy," he said, "thar's yore money! It's all thar. I counted it. It's in fifties an' hundreds."

Breathlessly and with expanded eyes Alan broke the string about the packet and opened it.

"Great God!" he muttered. Miller sprang up and looked at the stack of bills, but said nothing. Abner, leaning forward, uttered a little, low laugh.

"You—you didn't kill 'im, did you, Pole, old boy—you didn't, did you?" he asked.

"Didn't harm a hair of his head," said Pole. "All I wanted was Alan's money, an' thar it is!"

"Well," grunted Daniel, "I'm glad you spared his life. And I thank God you got the money."

Miller was now hurriedly running over the bills.

"You say you counted it, Baker?" he said, pale with pleased excitement.

"Three times—fast when it was turned over to me an' twice on the way out heer from town."

Mrs. Bishop had not spoken until now, standing in the shadows of the others, as if bewildered by what seemed a mocking impossibility.

"Is it our money—is it our'n?" she finally found voice to say. "Oh, is it, Pole?"

"Yes'm," replied Pole. "It's yo'rn." He produced a crumpled piece of paper and handed it to Miller. "Heer's Craig's order on his wife fer it, an' in it he acknowledges it's the cash deposited by Mr. Bishop. He won't give me no trouble. I've got 'im fixed. He'll leave Darley in the mornin'. He's afeard this 'll git out an' he'll be lynched."

Alan was profoundly moved. He transferred his gaze from the money to Pole's face and leaned toward him.

"You did it out of friendship for me," he said, his voice shaking.

"That's what I did it fer, Alan, an' I wish I could do it over ag'in. When I laid hold o' that wad an' knowed it was the thing you wanted more'n anything else, I felt like flyin'."

"Tell us all about it, Baker," said Miller, wrapping up the stack of bills. "All right," said Pole, but Mrs. Bishop interrupted him.

"Wait for Alfred," she said, her voice rising and crackling in delight. "Wait; I'll run find 'im."

She went out through the dining room, toward the stables, calling her husband at every step. "Alfred! Oh, Alfred!"

"Heer!" she heard him call out from one of the stables. She leaned over the fence opposite

the closed door, behind which she had heard his voice.

"Oh, Alfred!" she called. "Come out, quick! I've got news for you—big, big news!"

She heard him grumbling as he emptied some ears of corn into the trough of the stall containing Alan's favorite horse, and then with a growl he emerged into the starlight.

"That fool olger only give Alan's hoss six ears o' corn," he fumed. "I know, becuse I counted the cobs. The hoss had licked the trough clean an' gnawed the ends o' the cobs. The idea o' starvin' my stock right before my—"

"Oh, Alfred, what do you think has happened?" his wife broke in. "We've got the bank money back! Pole Baker managed somehow to get it. He's goin' to tell about it now. Come on in!"

Bishop closed the door behind him. He fumbled with the chain and padlock for an instant, then he moved toward her, his lips hanging, his eyes protruding.

"I'll believe my part o' that when"—"But," she cried, opening the gate for him to pass through, "the money's thar in the house on the table; it's been counted. I say it's thar! Don't you believe it?"

The old man moved through the gate mechanically. He paused to fasten it with the iron ring over the two posts. But after that he seemed to lose the power of locomotion. He stood facing her, his features working.

"I'll believe my part o' that cat-an'-ball story when I see"—

"Well, come in the house, then," she cried. "You kin lay yore hands on it an' count it. It's an awful big pile, an' nothin' less than fifty dollar bills."

Grasping his arm, she half dragged, half led him into the house, then, she entered the sitting room, he strode to the table and, without a word, picked up the package and opened it. He made an effort to count the money, but his fingers seemed to have lost their cunning and he gave it up.

"It's all there," Miller assured him, "and it's yore money. You needn't bother about that."

Bishop sat down in his place in the chimney corner, the packet on his knees, while Pole Baker modestly and not without touches of humor recounted his experiences.

"The toughest job I had was managin' the woman," Pole laughed. "You kin always count on a woman to be contrary. I believe of you was tryin' to git some women out of a burnin' house they'd want to have the'y way about it. She read the order an' got white about the gills an' screamed, low, so nobody wouldn't heer 'er, an' then wanted to ax questions. That's the female of it. She knowed in reason that Craig was dead fixed an' couldn't git out untl' she complied with the instructions, but she wanted to know all about it. Then I told 'er she'd be arrested fer holdin' the money, an' that got her in a trot. She fetched it out purty quick, a-cryin' an' abusin' me by turns. As soon as the money left 'er hands, though, she begun to beg me to ride fast. I wanted to come heer fast, but I felt sorter sorry for Craig, an' went an' let 'im out. He was the gladdest man to see me you ever looked at. He thought I was goin' to leave 'im thar. He looked like he wanted to hug me. He says Winship wasn't much to blame. They both got in deep water speculatin', an' Craig was tempted to cabbage on the \$25,000."

When Pole had concluded, the group sat in silence for a long time. It looked as if Bishop wanted to openly thank Pole for what he had done, but he had never done such a thing in the presence of others, and he could not pull himself to it. He sat crouched up in his tilted chair as if burning up with the joy of his release.

The silence was broken by Abner Daniel as he filled his pipe anew and stood over the fireplace.

"They say money's a cuss an' the root of all evil," he said dryly, "but in this case it's give Pole Baker thar a chance to show what's in 'im. I'd 'a' give the last cent I have to 'a' done what he did today. I grant you he used deception, but it was the fust water sort that that Bible king resorted to when he made out he was goin' to divide that baby by cuttin' it in halves. He fetched out the good an' squelched the bad." Abner glanced at Pole and gave one of his impulsive inward laughs. "My boy, when I reach 'other shore I expect to see whole strings o' sech lawbreakers as you a-playin' leapfrog on the golden sands. You don't sing an' pray a whole lot, n'r keep yore religion in sight, but when thar's work to be done you shuck off yore shirt an' do it like a wildcat a-scratchin'."

No one spoke after this outburst for several minutes, though the glances cast in his direction showed the embarrassed ex-moonshiner that one and all had sanctioned Abner Daniel's opinion.

Bishop leaned forward and looked at the clock, and, seeing that it was 9, he put the money in a bureau drawer and turned the key. Then he took down the big family Bible from its shelf and sat down near the lamp. They all knew what the action portended.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ABOUT a week after the events recorded in the preceding chapter old man Bishop, just at dusk one evening, rode up

to Pole Baker's humble domicile. Pole was in the front yard making a fire of sticks, twigs and chips.

"What's that fer?" the old man questioned as he dismounted and hitched his horse to the worn fence.

"To drive off mosquitoes," said Pole, wiping his eyes, which were red from the effects of the smoke. "I'll never pass another night like the last un of I kin he'p it. I loved my hide was thick, but they bored fer oil all over me from dark till sun-up. I never 've tried smoke, but Hank Watts says it's ahead o' penny'yal."

"Shucks!" grunted the planter. "You ain't workin' it right. A few rags burnin' in a pan nigh yore bed may drive 'em out, but a smoke out heer in the yard 'll jest drive 'em in."

"What?" said Pole in high disgust. "Do you expect me to sleep sech hot weather as this is with a fire nigh my bed? The dern things may eat me raw, but I'll be blamed if I barbecue mysel' to please 'em."

Mrs. Baker appeared in the cabin door holding two of the youngest children by their hands. "He won't take my advice, Mr. Bishop," she said. "I jest rub a little lamp oil on my face an' thar's, an' they don't tetch me."

To be Continued.

Farms to rent. Inquire of E. B. Tongue, Hillsboro.

Representative B. F. Purdy, of Gaston, was in town yesterday.

Preaching services at Christian Church Sunday next by Elder Green.

Rev. J. Putnam, formerly at Dilley, but now in charge of the Cottage Grove circuit, was in town Wednesday.

Two 60 lb. sacks of ducks were received Saturday from Geo. Schumacher and C. Blaser, who are hunting near Arlington.

Justice H. T. Bagley is considering a suit tried Tuesday in which W. D. Bradford sued B. S. Hays for a \$300 due bill, amounting with interest to \$50.

Graydon of the West Side & Suburban Co. was in town Saturday with Mr. Schott, an engineer who is investigating the proposed electric line for some prospective investors.

Congregational church services will be held as usual next Sunday, the pulpit being filled by the pastor Rev. Edward Curran. All are most cordially invited.

Assessor Geo. H. Wilcox has furnished three Baldwins, in answer to the challenge collection of A. E. Rice's in the Independent's window. They are sound and weigh a pound apiece.

Frank Hellebruck, of Detroit, Mich a brother of the "Belgian boys" of Farmington, is visiting his mother whose dangerous illness at the age of 76 leaves little hope of recovery.

The members of the First Congregational Church will give a reception to their pastor, Rev. Edw. Curran, at the church, Wednesday evening, Nov. 18, at 7:30 o'clock. All who attend the church and those interested are cordially invited to be present.

Ex Senator Geo. W. Patterson, now a special agent of the General Land office and recently with headquarters at Duluth, Minn., was in town yesterday. He is enjoying a 60 days' leave of absence and glad to be back again on the coast.

Zina Wood and Miss Anna Austin were married Wednesday afternoon at 3:30, at the residence of the groom's brother, Dr. W. D. Wood, by Rev. Mr. Day. Only immediate relatives were present and after the ceremony light refreshments were served.

Gales Spur is happy over receiving 4 cars out of 15 needed for shipment of freight on hand there, and believes the car famine is over. The little town is quite busy as the unloading point for the material for the Haines-Lee Falls electric power plant, eight miles distant.

Tuesday night's storm blew 35 miles an hour, with disastrous results to loose shingles in town, blowing over an old hay barn at Cornelia, and a section of fence on the S. P. track between Forest Grove and Cornelia. The morning passenger Wednesday was delayed a few moments while the train crew cleared the track.

BEN-HUR

The Greatest Dramatic Spectacle of the Century to be Staged in Portland

After four years of patient waiting the public of the State of Oregon are at last to have a "Ben-Hur" season. The announcement is made that Klaw & Erlanger's original, massive and magnificent production of Gen. Lew Wallace's famous religious romance "Ben-Hur" will be staged at the Marquam Grand Theatre, Portland, for five nights, commencing Tuesday evening, Dec. 1st. Special Matinees are also to be given on Wednesday and Saturday, Dec. 2nd and 5th, respectively. This spectacle has scored the biggest kind of a triumph in this country and Europe. It has completely eclipsed the record of all other stage offerings and is acknowledged to be the grandest, most impressive, instructive and stupendous in-door entertainment ever offered the public.

Portland is the only city in the State that "Ben-Hur" will be presented in. The Company, which numbers over 350 persons, comes direct from San Francisco, where an engagement of a month is now being filled. Ten 60 ft. baggage cars are required to transport the scenic effects of Ben-Hur and two stock cars are pressed into service to care for the horses and camels used in the production, while ten Pullman sleeping cars, two day coaches and two dining cars make up a special train for the comfort of the Company. In the great chariot race scene eight horses, harnessed to two chariots, are shown in their struggle for supremacy.

The entire stage of the Marquam Grand is to be reconstructed for the handling of this colossal attraction. A force of carpenters are now busy putting in a new stage with a sub stage for the mechanical effects of the chariot race scene and the moving panorama showing the excited spectators in the Roman Hippodrome.

During the run of Ben-Hur in Portland, the Southern Pacific and Northern Pacific Railroads, The Oregon Navigation Company and the various steamboat lines entering the city, will make special rates for those who desire to witness it, while the Management of the Marquam Grand will pay special attention to all out of town mail orders.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE POLITICIANS.

One after another the secret efforts to defeat President Roosevelt's re-nomination are exposed, his answer to each trap only enhancing his popularity, for the man who will not barter his self respect for position is the sort of president the American people want. The words following were not given out as an interview nor intended for publication but constitute an unmistakable message sent by the President to Maryland politicians who sought to induce him to be more politic:

"If I could be absolutely assured of my election as President by turning my back on the principles of human liberty as enunciated by Abraham Lincoln, I would be incapable of doing it, and unfit to be President if I could be capable of it. I do not expect to be elected President by the trust promoters who are now fighting for special privileges, nor by the radical labor union men who would shut out all other men from an opportunity to work, nor by those who would close the door of hope against the negro as a citizen. They are all demanding special privileges which cannot be recognized by the President, whose oath of office binds him to execute the laws for all alike and recognize none as above the law. If I am elected to this high office it must be on my record as the executor of the law without favor or discrimination."

Willis Galloway, son of Mr. and Mrs. S. Galloway, died at The Dalles Wednesday from an accidental gunshot wound, received from the discharge of a gun carried by a boy who was riding with him to town. The remains will be brought to Hillsboro for burial.

Auction bills printed by The Independent.