

Hannah Payne's Mulberry Tree

A Feud Between Two Friends

By CLARISSA MACKIE

It was a small tree, but it had a wide spread of branches, and when the large leaves were out they formed a dense shade that quite hid the view from Hannah Payne's windows as well as it deprived her left hand neighbor, Abigail Hodson, of any glimpse of the village street.

Once several years before this story opens Abigail had crawled through the gap in the fence that divided the two houses and knocked at her friend's back door.

"Hannah," she said, with a note of complaint in her voice, "what do you think?"

"Well?" queried Hannah sharply, for she resented Abigail's complaining tone.

"When I got up this morning I noticed the mulberry tree had leaved out so I couldn't see a mite of the road. It makes it dreadful lonesome not to see anything at all."

"Well?" repeated Hannah.

"What are you going to do about it?" demanded Abigail, with asperity.

"Nothing," Hannah had said.

"I thought maybe you'd break off a long branch of it so's I could have a view."

"It cuts off my view, too," returned Hannah.

"I should think you'd want to see the street. You always set store by seeing the street," persisted the tactless Abigail.

"I've got enough work to do without pecking at the street," said Hannah loftily.

That was the beginning of the bitterness between Hannah Payne and her friend Abigail Hodson. From a cold nod the breach widened until they did not speak at all, and then early one morning Abigail arose and replaced the three pickets that had been removed from the dividing fence. Hannah heard the sound of the hammer and came to the window, but she said nothing, only the stubborn look remained on her face.

Three years had passed, and the mulberry tree thrived mightily. It sent out broad green leaves that cast a denser shade over Hannah's house and kept the sunshine from the rooms. She had to keep a keener watch over her books and clothing, for the little house seemed damp, and mold gathered quickly on different articles.

The fruit ripened on the tree, and the birds came and carried it off. During the season when the mulberries were ripe the birds came in flocks to feed upon them, but Abigail Hodson would have scorned to touch one of the ripe berries, although in the past she had been very fond of them.

On this particular summer morning it was very dull in Green lane, where the two women lived. Abigail had finished her housework at 9 o'clock and taken her sewing out to the front porch. She could see Hannah Payne rocking to and fro on the next porch, but neither woman could see beyond the low hanging branches of the mulberry tree.

All at once there was the sound of drum and fife and a distant murmur of voices from the street. Abigail recollected that a small circus was to parade that morning, and in the evening there was to be a performance in a tent on the village green. Abigail was a Baptist and did not dream of going to the circus, but Hannah Payne would go. Hannah was a Baptist, as were her forefathers, but they all went to the circus.

It was rather lonely there on Abigail's porch. The honeysuckle vines screened it well, and there was no sign of life except the frenzied darting of a ruby throated hummingbird among the flower trumpets, the buzzing of bees and now the sound of approaching music.

If Abigail Hodson had not been so proud she would have tossed aside her sewing and hastened to the front gate, from which point she might have looked down the lane and watched the circus parade go along the main street. But she did not stir. If she had Hannah Payne would know that Abigail was suffering inconvenience from the obscuring mulberry tree, and that would give Hannah Payne a chance to laugh at her one time friend, and that privilege and advantage Abigail Hodson would not permit.

Abigail Hodson snapped a needle and tossed the broken pieces into the grass. "I wish I could cut that old tree down," she muttered, not knowing that the same unspoken wish was in Hannah's heart, not realizing that her anger against the tree was stimulated by the feud it had caused much more than by the lost view of the village street.

"I wish I could cut the old tree down," repeated Abigail again and again, and with each repetition of the desire there grew upon her the conviction that the tree must be cut down or things would never be right for her in the world.

She sat out on the porch until sunset and then went in and prepared supper, but she did not eat any. After supper she went out and sat in the gathering gloom of the porch. She saw Hannah Payne go away dressed in a white gown, and she knew that Hannah was

going to the circus. Abigail's bitterness increased. She yearned to go to the circus herself.

At last, when darkness settled over Green lane and the cricket orchestra was in full swing, Abigail arose with a determined air and walked around her house to the woodshed. There were no other houses in Green lane, and she had the quiet little place to herself. Deliberately she chose a hatchet from the several that were ranged along the wall and in the darkness tried its edge with her thumb. Satisfied, she went out into the lane and gained Hannah Payne's front yard.

Under the mulberry tree it was very dark, and Abigail knelt down and ran her fingers around the trunk until she found a place where she knew the bark was rough and scarred. A horse had nibbled the trunk when the tree had been a mere sapling.

Then, to the music of the circus band playing down on the green, Abigail Hodson smote the mulberry tree blow after blow on the rough scarred place. The hatchet was sharp, and her thin, wiry arms were strong, and the blade bit deep into the tree. A brisk north-west wind was blowing, and Abigail had barely reached the heart of the tree when a hard gust came. There was a splitting, crackling sound, and she had scarcely reached a place of safety before the mulberry tree crashed down, shaking the fence in its fall.

As if suddenly impressed by the gravity of the deed she had committed, Abigail Hodson stood for several moments as if stunned. Then with a frightened glance around her she picked up her skirts and scudded home again. No guilty murderer could have cleaned the telltale instrument more carefully than did Abigail her hatchet after the fall of the tree.

Then she hastily changed her dress, locked her house and ran down Green lane. Five minutes afterward she entered the circus tent. Yes, for the first time in her life Abigail Hodson went to a circus.

Hannah Payne saw her and nearly tumbled off her narrow seat. She crushed the bag of peanuts she had been consuming into her pocket and craned her neck to see where her erstwhile friend would sit. Abigail took a seat directly opposite Hannah Payne. All the people stared very hard when Abigail came into the tent, because they knew that her father and her grandfather had disapproved of circuses, and when the Hodsons disapproved of anything their stubbornness was quite as remarkable as that of the Paynes.

Abigail Hodson broke all precedents by entering the tent, and there was little doubt that her fellow church members would require an explanation. In the meantime she must enjoy it if she could, for never again would she have the inspiration, provocation, desperation—call it what you will—sufficient to sustain her during such a trying ordeal.

Such was her excitement concerning the mulberry tree that she did not enjoy the circus at all. The clowns appeared silly, the horses old and decrepit compared to the graceful animals depicted on the billboards; the lonely elephant looked muddy and ancient beyond all belief; the performing dogs were foolishly self conceited. This was Abigail's estimate of her first circus.

When it was over she crowded forward to make her escape from friends and acquaintances who might have seen her there and asked embarrassing questions. She was almost the first one to leave the tent, and she sped away down the street with feet that barely touched the ground. She made up her mind that Hannah would guess who had committed the deed, and she, Abigail, would not deny it. She would stoutly maintain that the tree was a nuisance—a public nuisance—and if Hannah Payne wanted to begin a suit against her she could have the papers served at any instant.

By this time Abigail had reached Green lane and was toiling up its steep incline. Ahead of her in the darkness she could see the darker bulk of the fallen tree, and as she reached it she hesitated. Behind her there came hurried footsteps—those of Hannah—but Abigail was rooted to the spot. She could not move an inch, no matter what happened.

Hannah Payne's voice came in advance of her spare figure. "That you, Abigail Hodson?" she queried sharply.

"Yes," she said dully.

"What's the matter? I know something awful has happened; if there hadn't you wouldn't have been at the circus! What's the matter?" panted Hannah, approaching.

"You can get the sheriff!" moaned Abigail.

"What's the matter? What's that?" almost screamed Hannah Payne, pointing to the fallen tree.

"I cut down your mulberry tree. You better go get the sheriff," persisted Abigail faintly.

"Good Lord, Abby, I never was so thankful for anything in all my born days!" ejaculated Hannah Payne. "I would have done it myself only the Payne streak in me wouldn't give in! Good riddance, I say, even if the fence is broke. I was thinking I'd take it down, anyway, and the one between our houses. It would make one nice big yard and seem more friendly." Hannah was talking fast to hide her embarrassment and delight.

"I shall like that," half sobbed Abigail, and then she gently fainted away on Hannah Payne's strong shoulder.

As Hannah Payne half led, half carried the unconscious form of her friend into the house she felt a return of the old masterful feeling that had marked all their association in the past. "I don't know what would become of you, Abigail Hodson, if I wasn't here to look out for you," she muttered happily, and then her lips brushed the cheek of her restored friend.

HARRISBURG LETTER

To Ask Aid for Tuberculosis Work.

What is believed to be one of the most important pieces of tuberculosis legislation that has been brought forward in recent years, is a bill which is about to be introduced to the present session of the Pennsylvania Legislature on behalf of the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis.

This bill provides for the establishment by counties or groups of counties, of tuberculosis hospitals. The act is not compulsory. It reads that on petition of five per cent. of the voters in any county or group of counties, the question of the establishment of a tuberculosis hospital be submitted to a vote at the next general election in the county or counties affected. The vote for the hospital carries with it a vote for a bond issue to be used for securing a site and dwelling.

The management of the hospital is placed in the hands of a board of five directors, one of whom shall be a woman and two of whom shall be reputable physicians. The Board is appointed by the Governor, who may receive nominations from persons in the county affected. The bill has been introduced in order to prevent the spread of tuberculosis by dying and bedridden consumptives.

The great problem in the prevention of tuberculosis," said Karl de Schweinitz, Executive Secretary of the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis yesterday, "is the dying and bedridden consumptive. He is weaker than a typhoid fever patient. He is scattering literally millions of germs and he is too sick to prevent them from infecting his family. He needs constant nursing—the kind of nursing that the wife who must work for money to take the place of her husband's earnings cannot give.

"Such a consumptive may be bedridden for a period of from three months to a year, and all this time he is filling his home with the germs of his disease. Remove this source of contagion from our midst and tuberculosis will be reduced to a minimum.

But patients in these advanced stages of consumption will not leave their homes to go to sanatoria at a distance. As a matter of fact they are too weak to travel far. The only feasible way of treating them is in hospitals where they can be near their families.

The legislatures of New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Wisconsin and Missouri have enacted laws enabling their counties to establish such hospitals.

"In Pennsylvania the only local care afforded to the bedridden consumptive who has neither money nor strength to travel one or two hundred miles is in the almshouse—and no self-respecting man or woman wants to be classed as a pauper and lodged in a poorhouse simply because he or she is sick. That local hospitals are needed is shown by the fact that wherever there are such institutions, they have always been filled.

"Such hospitals make the last days of the dying consumptive comfortable, relieve the wives and the families of the proper patients from the impossible burden of caring for their sick, and protect relatives, friends, neighbors and others from a prolific source of contagion.

"It is in recognition of these facts that the tuberculosis hospital act has been drawn. This bill gives the counties of Pennsylvania the right to establish tuberculosis hospitals if they so desire. It is not compulsory, it simply grants the people a privilege of which they are in great need."

Harrisburg, Jan. 27.—Members of the present Legislature who are interested in the proposition to put the road building campaign in Pennsylvania on a substantial basis, say that the suggestion offered at a conference of Grangers here last week, that an additional mill of taxation be levied on corporations does not offer the best solution of the problem, for several reasons.

Admitting that such a tax would produce \$8,000,000 a year revenue, which is as much as the State Highway Department could intelligently expend in its building campaign, experienced legislators say it would be impossible to hold that money for road making, because the assurance of such an increase of revenue would flood the Senate and House with demands for more money for local charities and other purposes. Legislatures in the past have invariably appropriated more money than was available out of the revenues, leaving the Governor to pare down the expenditures to meet the income.

Another argument against the tax method is that the corporations would undoubtedly make a hard fight against such a levy, on the ground that they are already contributing the bulk of the State revenue, as admitted by Secretary Jerome T. Allan of the State Grange this week. The thing could be put through only after a long and hard fight, and the possibility of defeat at the end of the session would put the whole good roads program in jeopardy. It is pointed out that anyway a tax on a corporation is only an indirect way of taxing the people, as the corporations meet such things by making the consumer pay more for their products.

The Pennsylvania Motor Federation and other advocates of good roads take the position that the best feature of the proposition to finance the building of main state roads by a \$50,000,000 bond issue is that it removes the whole road building enterprise beyond the range of the State revenues which are so readily snatched away for other purposes, and provides an adequate supply of money that cannot be expended for anything except the construction of highways between the cities and towns of the State.

Furthermore, the element of time enters into the question. The resolution for an amendment to the Constitution to permit of a \$50,000,000 loan for road building has already passed one legislature unopposed, and if put through the present session at an early date can be

submitted to the people in time to have the necessary enabling act passed before the adjournment of the session now under way. Thus the money would become available this year. No scheme of increased taxes would produce any appreciable returns to the State Treasury for a year or more, so that highway construction could not be started before the summer of 1914.

The impression here is that the Legislature will not listen to any substitute proposition, but will put through without delay the Constitutional amendment for a bond issue.

FEED THE BIRDS THIS WINTER.

Harrisburg, Jan. 25.
Dear Editor:
I write you to-day relative to the feeding of our wild birds and hope you may see your way to a publication of this appeal.

Winter, with all that it means, has come. Bob White has run the gauntlet between long lines of enemies, and is now called upon to face the worst of all—starvation. He may be in good shape today, but soon the snows will have shortened his good supply, reducing his vitality, so that when the cold rains begin he will not be disposed to venture out for the first twenty-four hours, even though his stomach be nearly empty, but will sit huddled with his friends in some point of shelter until the first day is past, and then on the second day, driven by hunger, he faces the storm, securing no more food perhaps than before the rain began; and then with every feather dripping, chilled to the bone, with an empty stomach, and still more greatly reduced vitality, he huddles with his little family, for the last time, to die, to freeze, or to be smothered by the drifting snows. His entire pathway along life's journey is marked only by good deeds to men. Wont you, who may read this, try to help him in this his hour of distress and need? You are perhaps wasting every hour more than enough to keep Bob and his entire family in food the year around. I beg of you to hunt him up and scatter feed where he can get it. One bushel of grain placed where he can find it means more to him now than does all the kind words that may be uttered in a century. Put yourself in Bob's place and think of what winter means to him.

What applies to the quail, may also be said of the wild turkey, and all our winter birds. I beg of you, no matter what your position in life may be, to help feed the birds. If you can not do the work yourself, get some one to do it for you.

Respectfully yours,
JOSEPH KALBFUS,
Secretary, Game Commission.

DRESSING BY THE THERMOMETER.

Unchangeable clothes, not the changeable weather, are responsible for much of the grippe and many of the colds that are prevalent just now. If people would use judgment in the way they dress, they would not be obliged to worry about every rise or fall of the temperature.

Suit your clothing to the weather. If you perspire in an overcoat on a warm day it is likely that you will be chilly the next day in the same overcoat if the thermometer drops towards zero. If it is moderate, do not put on your overcoat. Then when it gets colder you will be able to enjoy the effect of extra clothing. When you go into a heated train, take your overcoat off. If you are obliged to stay in a warm office even for a short time, do not keep your overcoat on. The temperature indoors remains about the same all the year round. Therefore, the extra warmth is not needed. Don't wear heavy underclothes. It is more important to pay attention to the kind of overcoat you put on than to use the heaviest underwear in the market.

Do not wear zero clothing in a 70-degree temperature, for the heavier clothes will do you little good when the temperature falls. Common sense in dress will save many doctors' bills.—Karl de Schweinitz, Executive Secretary, Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis.

EASTERN MIDLAND R. R. CO.

That Port Jervis may become an important railroad center, the connecting point in a line to run from Philadelphia up the Delaware Valley from the Water Gap to that city and thence to follow the Ontario & Western and affiliated lines into Montreal, Canada, is the latest railroad dream or scheme. The thing has considerable backing in fact also.

A Harrisburg, Pa., item says a state charter was issued on Jan. 10 for the Eastern Midland Railroad Company to operate between Matamoras and the Delaware Water Gap, with a capital of \$400,000. This is the first published intimation of the project which residents of Pike county have been puzzling themselves over for some time. The puzzling has been started by surveyors who have been working in the county. What they were working for or who they were working for has been a mystery which this item seems to solve.—Union.

FASHION RUMORS.

New Things For the Spring.



DRAPED GOWN OF PRUNE SATIN.

The new spring blouses are a marked change from winter models. We have passed through various stages; we have worn white with a veiling, then net in colors matching the shirt, and last winter we arrived at colored slips with net transparencies in which the color was again repeated, though the foundation produced the kind of effect which we called fuchsia color and wore with blue or mauve, the blouse being of cerise with an overveiling.

This indicated a change, for fashion moves along certain lines which experience teaches one to calculate, and it was easy to believe that the frankly contrasting blouse, making no attempt to harmonize itself, would be next in succession. And so it has turned out.

A little while ago we thought this style of dressing hopelessly de mode and vulgar, but there was a time when we were attached to it and delighted in the changes it allowed us to ring on a modest wardrobe. With one good black satin skirt and half a dozen blouses any woman could be well and economically dressed, and the idea was good enough until we ran it to death and got thoroughly sick of it.

Whether smart women will take kindly to it again remains to be seen. The gown of prune satin illustrated is one of the draped spring models which are both simple and elegant.

THE NEW BAGS.

Moire Affair the Latest in These Useful Accessories.

The very newest idea in bags is the moire bag. There are all sorts and shapes of moire bags, ranging from the small oblong purses to the large bags elaborately fitted out with mirror and all the vanity fixings. A handsome bag in black moire opens very wide, revealing at a glance the contents of the entire bag. On one side there is a mirror resting against the soft white silk lining and in the side pockets the cardcase, change purse and other necessities. Such a bag can be purchased for \$18.

A large round bag in black moire is edged with an inch plating of the moire. Another very much smaller bag has a deep pleating of the moire. The monogram should be stamped in one corner and outlined in rhinestones.

To slip into the muffs there are long oblong purses in moire with the flexible gold or platinum frames. These are really a development of the cigar and cigarette cases which pleased the men so hugely two or three years ago. The moire purses have the advantage over the fur purses of the same shape in that they can be carried with the spring suit. The old fashioned reticule with the openings at either end is now fashioned in moire and lined with white silk. These moire ones are newer than those in brocades and other eastern stuffs which made their appearance in the fall.

Vogue For Net.

One of the latest novelties among the lovely laces and the dainty robes of broderie Anglaise for the slender pocketbook is the coarse net. The wardrobe can have nothing prettier than one of the pretty slips of string colored fisherman's net and lace. The coarse net may be mounted over a color, but it is really smartest when its foundation is of the same tone, and this serves as a relief for last summer's washed out gown. The trimming must be a heavy Venetian or guipure of fillet lace, and there may be a girdle of black or colored ribbon.

The Newest Fad.

My lady's new boots are half black and half white, the white portion being on the outer side of the foot and the black sides coming together over the ankles. There is no division between vamp and buttoned upper part, the boot being, so to speak, a "two gore" model, with seams down the center front and back, and one gore is of black calf and the other of white buckskin. The heels are white and also the buttons, which run up the outer side of the boot in a straight line.

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