

A Political Vendetta

By
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CHAPTER II.

A vision of seeming fairy-land; a terrace overlooking a verdant valley, a stately marble edifice, palace-like in rich facade and minareted roof—this set in the midst of a garden full of sweetest, taste and grandeur.

On a lower level were as many as fifty neat new frame dwellings in various stages of construction, but none occupied—death or desolation held dumb this portion of the singular landscape.

Again, at the lowermost grade of the grassy slope black, grim stacks arose from a wilderness of frame and stone factory buildings—but there were no bustling, red-lighted windows; all was cold, dark and lifeless. Here, too, was silence, deep and mournful—a dead or sleeping city of industry.

There was light only at the palace on the hill. Toward it, up the cindered road, smooth as a race course and bordered with a neatly cut stretch of sward, a man plodded his way in the gossamer moonlight—Gideon Hope.

He was five years older than upon that eventful night when the star of his destiny had set in clouds of storm, disaster and sorrow, but the stalwart form was yet straight as a sapling—that face, which always reminded of the faces one sometimes sees on old Roman medals, preserved its original stately dignity and contour—only the eyes were deeper set, the lips closer drawn.

He had pushed up his hat from his brow, as though he were fevered and the falling dew a grateful boon. Once he paused, to sweep with a glance, first sardonic and then almost sad, the deserted factories, the silent homes, the towering residence on the hill-top. Immediately this passing interest departed—his mind seemed to react upon itself, his head drooped, and he resumed his way with the firm, studied stride of a man with a definite purpose, a goal in view.

Like a thunderbolt from pure heaven had fallen the announcement of the chief of police that dreadful night in the long ago—its memory was with this man now, as if it had been night and day, unceasingly through the long, dragging years.

He recalled, even now, words he had spoken, questions he had asked, mechanically, like a man under a leaden spell: "Who shut my brother in that trap of death?"

"It will never be known!"

"Who was last seen about the works?"

"The manager."

"His name?"

"One of his names is Percival Keene."

"Where is he?"

"Vanished—like the others."

"You can give me his picture?"

"Yes—but he has twenty aliases, a royal fortune to dissipate in obscurity."

"I shall find him!"

That had been his object, his one motive for life. Since then Gideon Hope had hunted half the globe.

To his quick mind the truth was plain. His unsuspecting brother had visited the works, had made some vital discovery of the company's rottenness—fatal information, which would mean prison and ruin for the schemers. He had died with his secret!

Who had shut him in? It might never be discovered. But there was one responsible head of rascality—"Percival Keene!"

This sweet, soft summer evening Gideon Hope knew at last that he had succeeded—he had found his man.

Up the hill and on he plodded. Now the elegant mansion was squarely before him; what a spectacle!

From a sumptuous lounging room a colored lamp threw opalescent glinting rays across a sheltered, screened porch.

A man, august and noble of visage, occupied a large chair.

Before him flattered a feminine form arrayed in fleecy white, with a face so radiantly rare and beautiful that Gideon Hope, pausing, had eyes only for her for the moment.

She put a newspaper, some cigars, a cup of some invigorating mixture at the elbow of the occupant of the chair upon a delicate little stand.

He nodded, forced a dismal, wan smile. She crossed him tenderly, and vanished through the open French window.

Gideon had come up the winding gravel walk slowly. Now, in shadow, he stood and watched the man as he sat alone.

The latter arose with a fierce, restless sigh. He walked to the edge of the porch, pressed his face to a north screen, and his vision could thus take in at one sweep all the salient points of the glorious landscape.

But its beauties evidently had no charms for him—even at a distance his face and manner showed that what he saw depressed and excited him alike.

He threw out a hand with an expressive gesture—like one in mute, choking despair; tottered back to his seat. His head sank in his hands, his frame shook with deep internal emotion.

Gideon came up the steps.

He noiselessly opened the outer screen door, silently approached the table, and sank into a chair opposite the other—unheard, unseen.

His eye dwelt momentarily on the window space where that fairy vision of grace and loveliness had flattered a moment before.

His glance wandered past the exquisite draperies, across a rug worth its weight in gold made in far away Persian looms, and then up the decorated wall to a fall-length oil painting.

This seemed to speak—it was in color and expression the faithful presentment of the beautiful girl who had just passed before it.

CHAPTER III.

Gideon Hope's eye softened—a rapid longing sadness drove from his face some of its natural grim fierceness.

In those sweet eyes was a latent something that reminded of the fair bright spirit gone down to horrible death in the

prophet seemed breathed into their mysterious significance.

Tremaine regarded Gideon Hope fixedly. He could not treat this man otherwise than seriously, though a stranger, an utter stranger, to him—and tampering with his very heartstrings!

"To regain, to punish," he murmured. "There is one vital element, one central point, that must be primarily acceded to, or the thing is impossible," spoke Gideon Hope, oracularly.

"And that is?"

"Your daughter."

The aristocratic chest reared—the gentleman, the father, spoke in the chilling austerity manifested by the iron master.

"Sir!" he cried.

"No—listen. She is the pivot on which all success must turn—she the mainspring that guides, controls. To my plan, blindly, unquestioningly, she must lead her beauty, her grace, her very life. A tender, gentle lady—oh, truly! but from the strong ordeal she will come unspotted, and—victorious!"

"No!"

Tremaine clenched his hands.

"Sir," he said, with dignity, "this is a wild temptation, an unheard-of proposition!"

"Then it is useless," said Gideon, simply, taking up his hat, shrugging his broad shoulders, and turning to go.

"Wait."

Melancholy and pure as golden beads dropped into a crystal dish, a sweet, pathetic tone pierced the brief silence intervening.

At the open window stood beautiful Claire Tremaine.

"Wait, father," she said, simply.

And then she walked straight up to Gideon Hope.

Her penetrating, questioning eyes rested full upon his own, so magnetic, so clear, and yet so troubled.

"Sir," she said, in a voice that thrilled him, "I have heard your proposition. I will answer for myself. Injustice, cruelty, has been done us. Father, I trust this man."

She put out her fair, dainty hands, and rested them confidently, pleadingly, in the strong, earnest grasp of Gideon Hope.

(To be continued.)

WILD DUCKS IN THE SOUTH.

It is called a Hunter's Heaven Along the Texas Gulf Coast.

The coast of Texas in the vicinity of Portland is the winter feeding ground for millions of ducks. The hunters go there by the score during the open season and make their headquarters at Portland, Gregory, Tarpon, Rockport and other places close to the waters of the bay, says the Kansas City Star.

In previous years when there was no game law in Texas to protect the wild fowl, professional market hunters operated along the gulf coast and slaughtered the ducks by the carload each season. This woeful destruction of wild game in Texas is now a thing of the past. Those who were engaged in the marketing of wild ducks made an effort before the last Legislature to have these fowl exempt from the provision of the law, but they were not successful.

The owners of ponds and lakes which afforded unusually fine feeding ground for the ducks made big fortunes out of killing and marketing the fowls before the game law was enacted. It is related that one Galveston citizen who owns an inland pond of fresh water situated near the coast enjoyed an income of from \$40,000 to \$90,000 each year from the sale of wild ducks which were killed by professional hunters and sportsmen at his lake. The water is shallow and wild rice grows abundantly along its shores and in its bed. As soon as the weather begins to get cool the ducks literally swarm upon the waters of this lake. The owner, in addition to having a number of professional hunters constantly employed, also granted permission to sportsmen to visit the lake, with the provision that they were to leave on the ground for market purposes all ducks, over a limited number, that they might kill. W. J. Bryan has been on two hunts at this lake. On each occasion he was the guest of the late Gov. Hogg. The sportsmen and professional hunters do their shooting from blinds. The lake is still a favorite resort for duck hunters, but the enormous annual revenue which it formerly brought to its owner is now cut off.

The law now provides that no hunter shall kill to exceed twenty-five ducks in one day. Marketing the fowls is absolutely prohibited. Before legal restrictions were placed upon this sport it was no uncommon thing to see piles of dead ducks laying upon the blinding grounds and around the lodging places of sportsmen. The fowls were slaughtered, it is said, for the mere desire to kill.

It is said by sportsmen that one or two hours of good shooting a day ought to satisfy the most ardent hunter. It is an easy matter to kill the limit of twenty-five ducks in one day. When this is accomplished the hunter usually goes after quail, or, if the conditions are favorable, he takes a look around for deer.

In the artesian well region between Portland and Brownsville the ducks were more abundant this season than ever before. This probably is due to the fact that the water from the wells has formed many small ponds and lakes upon the ranches and the feeding ground is fine for the fowls.

F. W. Fitzpatrick, consulting architect of the International Society of Building Commissioners, says the fire loss in the United States every year is \$100,000,000 greater than the amount spent in new construction. In this estimate is included the money paid annually for insurance and the cost of fighting fire.

The number of Chinese scattered throughout the world outside of the Chinese empire is given officially at 6,708,129



Hired Man and The Horse.

Every man who works on a farm ought to know how to care for horses. By "care" it is not meant that he should know just enough to feed a horse, but he must know how to take care of a mare in foal, how to break a colt and how to feed it to the best advantage. He should know all about horses' feet and something about shoeing, too. Many a man has dropped into a fine and permanent job because he knew these things. Horses are the most valuable animals on the farm, of course, and the man who can take the best care of them is the most valuable help.

Changes in Farming.

Farming is not what it was twenty years ago from a revenue standpoint. Corn and cotton were the main products from which the farmer drew his income, and that, too, only once a year. Now the process has changed up. Instead of the one crop, cotton, farmers have invoked a multiplicity of crops, and not only grow corn and cotton for revenue, but have supplemented potatoes, both Irish and sweet; peaches and pears, onions, melons, berries, peanuts and ribbon cane, all of which bring money at all seasons of the year, and there is a continued market for what he has to sell.—Sulphur Springs (Tex.) Gazette.

Growing Dates in Texas.

An experienced date grower of California who visited the lower Rio Grande region of Texas two years ago discovered large numbers of date palms, some of them very old but all of which were barren. He proposed to pollinate the trees artificially and share in the proceeds, a proposition which was eagerly accepted by the owners. Hundreds of these trees are now bearing delicious fruit. The poor, crippled and sick Mexicans of that section regard the man as a sorcerer and when he visits them they fall upon their knees and beg him to cure them of their infirmities.

Machine Hoe Helps.

The machine wheel hoe is a great thing in the garden. It makes garden work a real pleasure if you have one of the modern combined drill and wheel hoe arrangements. They are not costly and not hard to operate. Any one that has a garden as big as a town lot can afford to have one, as it will save its cost the first season and will last for twenty years. You can do as much work with one of them as ten men with hand hoes and do it better.

Fruit Tree Borers.

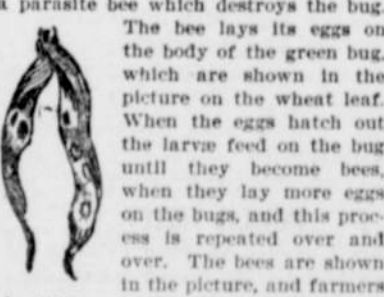
August is the time to look for borers. Dig the soil away around the stems of fruit trees to the depth of 3 inches, scrape the bark with a knife, and if any sawdust or exuding gum is found it is time to get to work. Dig out the borer and wash the uncovered parts with a mixture of soft cow dung, lime-wood ashes and a little crude carbolic acid. Then return the soil. The quince, dwarf pear and peach trees are particularly affected by this pest.

Fox of the Green Bug.

Last season farmers of the Southwest were greatly alarmed over the appearance of the wheat plant louse, commonly known as the green bug. They



caused a tremendous amount of damage, but this year its ravages were much less, owing to the appearance of a parasite bee which destroys the bug.



The bee lays its eggs on the body of the green bug, which are shown in the picture on the wheat leaf. When the eggs hatch out the larvae feed on the bug until they become bees, when they lay more eggs on the bugs, and this process is repeated over and over. The bees are shown in the picture, and farmers should become familiar with them, so they may recognize them as one of their best friends.—Exchange.

Growing Mangels.

Mangels grown continuously on the same land for four years, yielded over nine tons of roots, containing one ton of dry matter, while on land under rotation they yielded thirty-four tons of roots and four tons of dry matter per acre, at the New York Cornell Experiment Station. From 25,000 to 30,000 plants of mangels, rutabagas and hybrid turnips, and from 40,000 to 60,000 plants of carrots, per acre, are suggested as proper stands.

Spraying to Kill Weeds.

It has been proved that such weeds as false-flax, wormseed, mustard, tumbler mustard, common wild mustard, shepherd's purse, pepper-grass, bell-mustard, corn cockle, chickweed, dandelion, Canada thistle, bindweed, plantain, rough pigweed, king-head, red river weed, ragweed and cocklebur may be destroyed by spraying the field with a 2 or 3 per cent solution of copper sulphate, using about eighty gallons of water per acre.

RECORD-BREAKING CLIMB

Woman Scales Highest Mountain to a Height of 25,000 Feet.

Annie S. Peck is the most persistent mountain climber of her sex and no one who knows the history of her struggles against ill-fortune and realizes her indomitable pluck will fail to feel a sense of personal satisfaction at the success of her latest venture.



ANNIE S. PECK.

It is reported from Lima, Peru, that Miss Peck has ascended Huascarán to the height of 25,000 feet, the highest point ever attained by man or woman.

Miss Peck had previously gone to South America twice to climb this mountain. On an earlier trial she was compelled to give up the attempt after reaching a height of 17,500 feet, owing to the cowardice of her guides. By reaching an altitude of 25,000 feet Miss Peck has ascended higher than any other person, man or woman, in the world. The previous record was held by W. W. Graham, who reached a height of 23,800 feet in the Himalayas.

Miss Peck began her mountain-climbing in 1895, when she scaled the Matterhorn. She ascended Mount Sorata, in Bolivia, reaching a height of 20,500 feet. Huascarán, or Huascaran, towers above a notable group of volcanic summits in the south of Peru to the westward of the great plateau in which Lake Titicaca lies.

Miss Peck has surmounted almost impossible obstacles, chief among them the lack of means. Miss Peck was at one time professor in a Western college, but for many years she has been occupied as a lecturer and has climbed many mountains for the purpose of obtaining material for her lectures. It has been her ambition to climb Huascarán, reputed the highest mountain in the world, which all the climbers of the world had failed to ascend. She has had the greatest difficulty in raising funds for her trips, but she has persisted in the face of constant discouragement and has started on her mission each time with barely enough money to take her through her schedule, with no allowance for accident and with but scanty equipment. Scientifically her equipment has always been of the best and no doubt she will bring back some valuable observations. Her past two trips have been made with native guides who proved almost worse than useless. This time she had with her two Swiss guides and it is doubtless to their experience and hardiness that she owes her success.—Utica Globe.

MAY FIRES.

Ancient Scotch Custom Which Involved Human Sacrifice.

Sir John Sinclair's "Statistical Account of Scotland" contains notices of many old customs, which still continued to be observed in the Highlands, though they were even then fast dying out. From the eleventh volume of that great work, which was published in 1791 and the succeeding years, we learn on the authority of the minister of Callender, Perthshire, that the boys of the township assembled in a body upon the moors on May day and proceeded to dig a circular trench, leaving the soil in the center undisturbed, so as to form a low table of green turf sufficient in size to accommodate the whole party.

They lighted a fire and prepared a custard of milk and eggs and a large oatmeal cake, which they baked upon a stone placed in the embers. When they had eaten the custard, they divided the cake into as many equal portions as there were persons in the assembly and daubed one of those pieces with charcoal until it was perfectly black. They then placed all the pieces of the cake together in a bonnet, and each in turn drew one blindfolded, the holder of the bonnet being entitled to the last piece. The boy who drew the blackened portion was destined to be sacrificed and was compelled to leap three times through the flames.

Although the ceremony had degenerated into a mere pastime for boys, it is evident that it must once upon a time have involved the actual sacrifice of a human being in order to render the coming summer fruitful.—Gentleman's Magazine.

She Hated Garrick.

Mrs. Clive was eminent as an actress on the London stage before Garrick appeared, and as his blaze of excellence threw all others into comparative insignificance she never forgave him and took every opportunity of venting her spleen. She was coarse, rude and violent in her temper and spared nobody.

One night as Garrick was performing "King Lear" she stood behind the scenes to observe him and, in spite of the roughness of her nature, was so deeply affected that she sobbed one minute and abused him the next, and at length, overcome by his pathetic touches, she hurried from the place with the following extraordinary tribute to the universality of his powers: "Hang him! I believe he could act a gridiron."—T. P.'s Weekly.

Same Thing.

"Miss Bloomer seems to keep her youth still," remarked Miss Goode. "Well," replied Miss Collins, "she keeps her age quiet."—Philadelphia Press.

Introduce wisdom into a love affair, and you will break it up.