

# A Political Vendetta

By  
WELDON J. COBB

## CHAPTER IV.

The last year of a century, the last day of the year, the last hour of the day—in the solemn hush of an eerie scene, Gideon Hope stood alone, awaiting the final token of power that was to make him master of a vital situation!

It was six months after the sealing of that strange compact which, through a fair young girl's sterling confidence, had bound to him the Tremaines, father and daughter, with links of steel, for weal or woe.

This had happened: All that tragic story of a beloved brother's cruel assassination Hope had told—all the dark suspicions and blacker certainties of the secret culpability of Percival Keene he had laid bare.

That this man, waxed rich and powerful by some caprice of Luck—or, through sinister finesse, made master of millions and potent king of a vast industrial combination, was now known as "Percy V. Kane," there could not be the slightest doubt.

Inch by inch, hour by hour, from the crisis of his political detestment, Gideon Hope had traced this ex-magnum of the rotten Consolidated Silver Company. In and out of a labyrinth of deception, evasion, disappearance—reappearance in a new guise and a fresh role—he had followed the arch-villain until he had put his finger upon him as the central figure of that maddening ring of capitalists, who controlled the metal industries of a State, and who had "roped in" and ruined the unsuspecting Albert Tremaine.

And now!—Gideon Hope had divulged his plan: To degrade, to humble, to drag down to bitter defeat, the person who must answer to him for the slaying of the one being on earth upon whom all his love and hopes had been centered!

Thus it was that the "sleeping city" became a moldering ruin, and the magnificent mansion on the hill a closed, abandoned home. It was given out that the Tremaines had gone abroad, to exhaust in pinched retirement the remnant of a once great fortune.

But all the while the hidden hand of the master genius behind the scenes worked deftly, cautiously, slowly, the wires that were soon to focus on this man Kane, a purpose bitter as death and cruel as the grave.

In the eastern story, the heavy slab that was to fall on the bed of state in the flush of conquest was slowly wrought out of the quarry, the tunnel for the rope to hold it to its place was slowly carried through the leagues of rock, the slab was slowly raised and fitted to the roof, the rope was rove to it, and slowly taken through the miles of hollow to the great iron ring.

All being made ready, with much labor, and the hour came, the sultan was aroused in the dead of the night, and the sharp-eyed ax that was to sever the rope from the great iron ring was put into his hand, and he struck with it, and the rope parted, and rushed away and the ceiling fell.

So, in the case of Gideon Hope—the man with a purpose—all the work, near and far, that tended to the end was being accomplished, and in an instant the blow was to be struck, and the roof of Percy Kane's stronghold was to drop in upon him!

Midnight!

Gideon Hope stood where a ledge of rock, fir-fringed to the extent of a semi-circle, looked out upon a free, broad expanse—down, towards a stretch that would have awed and puzzled the unfamiliar beholder.

The moonlight shone like day. It irradiated a vast valley, flecked far as the eye could see with dots, splashes, vivid bursts of light—here, a mammoth blast furnace, opening its hot, molten throat to shoot out and upwards darts of spectral fire; there—and everywhere—the myriad coke ovens, uncovered to show a dazzling nest of red, seething cinders.

The world seemed spread at his feet—for good or bad, it lay before him! When he reflected, with some of the old-time managerial vim, how he, a master hand at inception and direction, might turn the sixty thousand souls in that valley as puppets to his designs—he, a being of will and resource—a gilded flash of opulence tempted for a moment.

Then came the infusion of the one great purpose of his life—the wan, sad face of his brother seemed to float before him, and the sudden, stern whiteness of his own told that no temptation of wealth or honor could turn him from his plan.

The soft, tender influences of the holy hour mingled with the memory of a fairer face. A vision of a home blessed with love, a life crowned with the gladness of children's voices, of old woes forgotten in the soothing bliss of a new experience, stole over this man's soul.

He shut it out—all out! His face was lifted towards heaven in sudden sternness, his hand described an involuntary, almost wild, spasm of passion—no! no! no! The die was cast! He lived, prayed, for but one consummation; to verify what he knew, to prove what he suspected, straight as an arrow to the target's heart, fate must impel him towards the moment when Percy Kane should stand before him unmasked, at his mercy!

There was a rustle of the near shrubbery. Hope turned. A half-eager sentiment swept his face, then he was simply imperturbable, expectant.

A man stood before him, masked to the lips. For a moment he was tragic, statuesque, in his pose. Then he reached out a hand—calm, rigid, as one of iron.

"You are the man?" he said, simply.

"By this token." Hope drew from his breast a disc of steel, or silver.

The glinting moonlight showed graven symbols upon it. It passed into the possession of the other. His voice fell low. He began to speak in the tone of one reciting a set story:

"You are admitted to the secret council, I know not how. You have been given the right to command the service of every camp, lodge and circle of the great Amalgamated Association. I know not why. It is mine, as the representative of the head of an order comprising eight hundred thousand loyal acolytes, to deliver to you a power that can call to your command an army in a twinkling, that can destroy every mill and machine in operation in sixty minutes' time. Your hand is thus placed on an engine of destruction or progress, as you elect. Take heed how you use this power!"

"Eventually, for the aggrandizement of the order, I swear it!" said Gideon Hope, solemnly.

"Take." With this simple word the speaker placed in Hope's palm what resembled a broken coin, a medal fragment—what not, only that as it lay there momentarily, curiously and keenly regarded by its new possessor, there showed the half-surface of some official seal.

"You have promised certain results"—began the giver.

"To push forward the cause ten years in six months' time!" interrupted Hope.

"You have given me the power; now show me how to use it."

"You have announced two objects," pursued the other. "To reach the man controlling the patents on the Kane-Latimer metal process—"

"One!"

"To have placed in your keeping during the next election the political machinery of the Amalgamated."

"Two!"

Gideon Hope's eyes blazed out—he was a war horse scenting the battle flavor!

"You will go from here," resumed the mystic messenger, "to shop L. of the Kanawha group."

"But it is closed?"

"That is true—for repairs. But you will find in charge Michael Delehanty. He will take your orders, to be transmitted down the line—swiftly, perfectly. Exercise no reticence, give perfect confidence to this man. As are we the head, he is the body. What you dictate, he will fulfill."

"Good!" said Hope, with faith and satisfaction.

"You will show him, you will show others, that," continued the speaker, indicating the broken seal. "It will be enough. Only one word: Should you ever be tempted to sacrifice the order for pure personal designs, beware!"

"That day," announced Gideon Hope, gravely, "that hour, I shall deliver myself up to the doom—"

"To the doom you could not escape, were you hidden in the heart of the dark continent itself!" as solemnly supplemented the messenger.

He disappeared as secretly and suddenly as he had originally come into view. Gideon Hope slowly, musingly, walked down into the valley.

What he had striven for—that for which he had exhausted the influence of a lifetime—was his! His eyes often sparkled, then grew set, severe, decisive.

## CHAPTER V.

Mill L. of the Kanawha group, was the center of a nest of workshops, grim and silent just now. Hope approached its entrance, catching the glint of vagrant light beyond the broad, imperfect plank door.

It opened at his knock—firm, imperative. A lantern's bright rays were focused full upon him, and a hard-faced man in working attire, backed by two companions, beetle-browed and suspicious, confronted.

"Who are you?" was challenged.

"Are you Michael Delehanty?"

"Yes," came crisply.

"Admit me."

"Against orders—in charge of a shut-down."

"Look!"

Hope unclosed his palm. Delehanty's eyes opened wide, lowered with subservientcy. The two peering others drew back with a respectful droop of head and shoulders.

"This way," said Delehanty.

He led his guest—his master—into a small, sealed room, littered with shelves of casting cores, and a trench or trough filled—Hope supposed, from a cursory glance—with water for washing the faces and hands of workmen, for coarse crash towels filled a roller nearby.

Delehanty sat astride a box. Hope stood erect before him.

There was a low-toned exchange of words, explanation initiatory to the main object of his visit.

Then, plainly, bluntly, in a rare, clear, business-like way, this past grand master of politics made patent his design.

It was to overturn, to sidetrack, a vast, conclusive majority in the approaching election, so deftly, so secretly that not a soul of the enemy would know what had happened until the votes were counted.

He drew out a closely written sheet—names, numbers, figured upon it. Here, comprehensive, though in wondrous detail, were all the thousand and one facts concerning the personnel of party leaders, the predilections, the standing of subordinates, the history of the last ten elections in a nutshell: averages, conclusions, possibilities.

And as Hope talked, in a rapid, convincing tone, as he combined, cut apart, rejoined, grouped; at the dizzying array of arguments, projects, plots to upset, schemes to absorb this, that majority, Michael Delehanty, skilled political undergraduate though he was, marveled, gasped.

In theory, Gideon Hope, in twenty minutes' talk proved how, by finesse, by bribery, by force, his will might come to pass. He passed at no scheme or subterfuge to gain his ends; he showed "the winning side" of the practical politician.

It was to be a complete, a terrorizing swoop upon unsuspecting opponents—calm, supremely confident in the triumph

of party tradition—Percy Kane at their head.

"Eight congressional districts—the four pivotal votes on the senatorial appointment, the power to divert or forward legislation, as I choose," said Hope. "Do you understand?"

"Completely," bowed the other, but thunderstruck at this man's audacity and ability.

"It can be done!"

"It shall be done, if you say it."

"The Amalgamated says so. I am its instrument. You will resign here. Secretly you will lay the wires as I direct," said Hope. "If it is a man needed to upset a ballot box at a certain moment, he must be on hand; if it is a necessity of repeaters, they must act promptly, effectively, leave no trace."

"That is easy."

"We will meet again for further details," proceeded Hope, "for this is a campaign needing shrewd, careful engineering. But I shall not meet you as now."

"You mean—"

"You must find me a safe, a full, a permanent disguise. I might be recognized."

He said this bitterly. He was thinking of Kane. This man might have made it his business to know him, during those sinister, hopeless days of search for his lost, murdered brother, Everett Hope. He had so far kept out of Kane's path purposely. There must be no risk, no mistakes, now.

"That, too, is easy," began Michael Delehanty and interrupted himself.

For there was a sharp sudden rattling of the door. One of the men in the outside room opened it slightly. An impatient, imperious hand swung it clear back.

"Where's Delehanty?" spoke a dictatorial voice.

"The Boss!" muttered Delehanty, with a start.

"Kane!" whispered Hope, hotly, to himself.

"I want to leave you word about the starting up, Delehanty," began the elegantly dressed intruder in a true master's tone, as the workman advanced. "Ah, who have you got in there?"

"Only a pal—one of the care-men," lied Delehanty, quickly.

"I sent three here," spoke Kane, severely, "not four! Who is he? Let's have a look at him. You act like plotters, my men!" he challenged, stinging.

"Who's your comrade; a walking delegate, eh?"

He was coming straight for the core-room. There was no escape for Gideon Hope!

Were his fond chances to be blasted? Would this man, after the lapse of years, know him, if he had, indeed, ever known him?

The stress for evasion was positive—Splash!

Gideon Hope, resourceful, flew to the first suggestion offered.

He tore off his coat, as Kane snatched the lantern from a keg and advanced into the core-room.

As quickly donning a grimy working blouse lying on a bench, he next sprang over the washing trough, as he supposed it to be.

He would pose as the natural workman, naturally "taking his wash," and seek to evade facing the inquisitive and suspicious-minded "Boss" direct.

But though he dipped hands and head to the neck into the trough, Kane came steadily up to him, and he was forced to half-confront him.

"Not wanted here; find some other loafing place!" offered the tyro, with a casual glance, and no token of recognition in his eyes.

Gideon was relieved. He smeared the towel over his face, heard Kane retire, and then Delehanty returned to the room.

His entrance was dramatic. About to refer to an immediate departure, he recoiled, stared, gasped.

"Heavens, man!" he aspirated, breathlessly.

"What is it?" demanded Hope.

"You—you wanted a disguise? Oh, you've got one! Murdoch—McNally—look!"

"Why, what are you staring at?" insisted Hope.

"Cast a glance for yourself!"

With a manner akin to real consternation Delehanty took down from a beam a looking glass.

One glance, and Gideon Hope gave a keen shudder of dismay.

He was "disguised" indeed, and at once he traced the truth.

He had mistaken for a washing trough a receptacle for a powerful liquid employed in solidifying the baked cores.

Hands, face and neck, Gideon Hope, was imperishably brown as any Malay!

(To be continued.)

## His Coat of Arms.

A man applied to the college of heraldry for a coat of arms, says a writer in the Cornhill Magazine, and was asked if any of his ancestors had been renowned for any singular achievements. The man paused and considered, but could recollect nothing.

"Your father," said the herald, aiding his memory, "your grandfather, your great-grandfather?"

"No," returned the applicant. "I never knew that I had a great-grandfather or a grandfather."

"Of yourself?" asked this creator of dignity.

"I know nothing remarkable of myself," returned the man, "only that, being once locked up in Ludgate prison for debt, I found means to escape from an upper window, and that, you know, is no honor in a man's escutcheon."

"And how did you get down?" said the herald.

"Odd enough," retorted the man. "I procured a cord, fixed it round the neck of the statue of King Lud on the outside of the building and thus let myself down."

"I have it!" said the herald. "No honor! Lineally descended from King Lud! And his coat of arms will do for you."

## The Poor Men.

Nell—A girl shouldn't marry a man till she knows all about him.

Belle—Good gracious! If she knew all about him she wouldn't want to marry him.—Philadelphia Record.

Parliamentary Bluebooks were first issued in 1881, but not sold until the year 1896.

# PERCY AND GARDEN

## Dairy Idols.

Cows becomes favorites with their owners not altogether by reason of the milk they produce. We have known cows that their owners thought a great deal of because of the kindly disposition of the animals. One cow that the writer remembers gave but a few quarts of milk a day, but she was a pet of the family. She would prefer the company of members of the family rather than that of other cows. If the cows were being taken to pasture she would insist on walking by the side of the one in charge of the herd. It is hard to order a cow of this kind sent to the butcher, and many people will not do it. Instead, the animals are kept for a dozen years, and not only allowed to eat up the provender without returning a compensation for it, but are allowed to add to the herd more cows after their own ability not to produce milk. These may fairly be called dairy idols. Their owners claim great things for them without being able to substantiate the truth of what they say.

But the family pet is not the only brand of dairy idol. There are the general purpose cows that quite generally have the entire confidence of their owners as to their great value. They are idols that the single-purpose cow men have demolished again and again, to their own satisfaction, but they are still to be found all over the land.

The dairy idol is a thing that can be dispensed with to the advantage of the owners of the cows. The warfare against them will be kept up, and little by little the factors we are warring against will disappear. If may, however, take about as long to eliminate them as it took Christianity to drive the idols out of the pagan world.—Farmers' Review.

## Risk in Drenched Cattle.

Doctor David Roberts, State Veterinarian of Wisconsin, gives this advice: Perhaps the best way of demonstrating the danger of drenching cattle is to advise the reader to throw back his head as far as possible and attempt to swallow. This you will find to be a difficult task, and you will find it more difficult and almost impossible to swallow with the mouth open. It is for this reason that drenching cattle is a dangerous practice. However, if a cow's head be raised as high as possible and her mouth kept open by the drenching bottle or horn, a portion of the liquid is very apt to pass down the windpipe into the lungs, sometimes causing instant death by smothering, at other times causing death to follow in a few days from congestion or inflammation of the lungs. Give all cattle their medicine hypodermically or in feed. If they refuse feed give it dry on the tongue. The proper method of giving a cow medicine is to stand on the right side of the cow, placing the left arm around the nose and at the same time opening her mouth, and with a spoon in the right hand place the medicine, which should be in a powdered form, back on the tongue; she can then swallow with safety.

## Handy for Sorting Potatoes.

In sorting potatoes a time-saver can be made of boards and common wire. The best wire should be smooth and about the thickness of ordinary clothes line. The side-boards should be about 18 inches wide to keep the potatoes from rolling off the sides. The wires are fastened to a pulley at the top to tighten them so they will not sag and let the large potatoes through. Shovel the potatoes in at the top and the small potatoes will drop through the screen into the box.

## To Tell the Ages of Swine.

It may be interesting to those who do not already know it, to learn of some way to arrive at the age of pigs, so we give the following:

Pigs having their corner permanent incisors cut will be considered as exceeding six months. Pigs having their permanent tusks more than half up will be considered as exceeding nine months. Pigs having their central permanent incisors up and any of the first three permanent molars cut will be considered as exceeding twelve months. Pigs having their lateral temporary incisors shed and the permanent appearing will be considered as exceeding fifteen months. Pigs having their lateral permanent incisors fully up will be considered as exceeding eighteen months.

## Shoeing Mules.

The hoof of the mule, being smaller and tougher than that of the average horse, does not need shoeing unless worked on hard roads a great deal. It is better not to have them shod if confined to work on the farm, unless used to haul heavy loads on frozen ground.

## Nutrient in Milk.

Bulletin No. 51 from the Storrs Agricultural Experiment Station, Connecticut, is a most excellent one on the origin or sources of those small organisms called bacteria, which are found so abundantly in milk. The bulletin also contains some rather startling statements and some wholesome suggestions.

Among the statements which ought to make the average man sit up and think are the following:

"A quart of milk at 8c is equivalent in food value to a pound of beef at 18c. This means that 4c worth of milk gives as much food energy in the body as 9c worth of beef.

"The average individual consumes three or four times as much meat in a day as the body actually needs for repair, and for its highest physical condition.

"If the American people would eat one-half less meat and consume one-half more milk, they would save about \$150,000,000, in money and in health, enough to make the doctors' bills look small."

## To Fatten Fowls.

Shut the fowls up in a darkened place with just enough light for them to see to eat, and feed on cornmeal, ground oats, cracked wheat and shorts, which may be mixed in equal proportions and scalded. Feed as often during the day as they will eat up the food clean. That is to say, stuff them. Take a light and feed again just before your bedtime, and as early in the morning as possible. Supply them with grit and water and keep the premises clean. Half a dozen fowls together will fatten more quickly than a large number, as they will not pine for company. Cooked potatoes, rice, corn-bread, cracked corn and whole wheat may also be fed. Give no green stuffs, as it is too filling and will do no good. Fowls crowded this way should be in fine condition in two weeks. Shut up longer, they are likely to begin to mope and will go rural rather than increase in weight.—Rural World.

## Improved Hog Pen.

A large hog pen with space for both sleeping and feeding can be arranged with a floor on one-half to ensure a



PEN WITH SECTIONAL FLOOR.

dry bed. The size of the whole pen is 8 feet by 16 feet, so that the floored section of the pen is 8 feet square. It is made of strong materials, usually 2 in. by 4 in. stuff, and rests on cleats in the bottom of the pen.

## The Milk Machine.

There is mighty little sentiment about a cow. She's nothing but a delicately organized milk-making machine. Her nervous organization is well developed, though, and is easily disturbed, but if she is well supplied with milk-making material and is let alone she will turn out a good product and plenty of it, provided, of course, she is built on the right lines. A poor machine of any kind is a curse to the owner.

## Money in Irrigation.

Two hundred feet of the levee on the San Joaquin River in California gave way and flooded 4,000 acres of growing crops, causing a loss of \$5,000,000. Crops worth \$1,250 an acre are not rare in an irrigated district, though the figures above given would look like a misprint to an Easterner. About 300 acres of the inundated area were in celery, and the value would run far above the average stated.—El Paso Herald.

## Beats the Steam Shovel.

A Kansas paper says that if all the hogs raised in that State last year could be rolled into one hog, it could dig the Panama Canal in two roots and a half, and wants to know how long it would take a Missouri hen to scratch out the canal. We don't know about that, but we do know that the Missouri hen can pay for the big ditch in one and a half years.—Humansville (Mo.) Star.

## Not the Farmers This Time.

Prof. Trueman of the University of Illinois, after making a searching investigation, declared that milk dealers of Chicago systematically adulterate and water milk delivered to families in the poorer sections of the city. In many instances the stuff is entirely unfit for food. In the better residence districts, however, the milk was nearly always up to standard.

## Milk Vessels.

Use no wooden milk vessels, and after washing milk vessels set them out to dry scalding hot. Never rinse out with cold water after the final scalding. Leave them hot, so they will dry quickly and not get musty.

## Notes on Orchard Work.

Select only standard varieties. Spray frequently and thoroughly. Clover crops prevent soil washing. Buy only of responsible nurserymen. Go slow about planting dwarf varieties. Sell direct to the consumer whenever possible. Form strong symmetrical heads on all trees. Prepare the ground the fall previous to planting. Supply an abundance of plant food at all times.

## General Debility

Day in and day out there is that feeling of weakness that makes a burden of itself. Food does not strengthen. Sleep does not refresh.

It is hard to do, hard to bear, what should be easy,—vitality is on the ebb, and the whole system suffers.

For this condition take

## Hood's Sarsaparilla

It vitalizes the blood and gives vigor and tone to all the organs and functions. In usual liquid form or in chocolate tablets known as Sarsatabs. 100 doses \$1.

## A Climatic Discouragement.

"Do you think there is any reliable way of forestalling the weather?"

"Yes," answered Farmer Cornstaeus. "Just think of the kind you don't want and then prophesy it."—Washington Star.

## Lobelia.

"Lobelia," sternly demanded Mr. McSwat. "I want to know what you've been doing to my safety razor?"

"Nothing," was Mrs. McSwat's indignant answer, as she moved around with a slight limp. "Besides, Billiger, I don't believe it's a safety razor, anyway!"—Chicago Tribune.

## Tender Hearted.

Customer—Can you tell me whether the stuff they put on this sticky fly paper is sweet?

Druggist—No, ma'am; I don't know whether it is or not.

Customer (with a sigh)—Well, I'll take 5 cents' worth, but my conscience would be ever so much clearer if I could be sure that the poor flies when they get stuck on it die happy.—Chicago Tribune.

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