

A Political Vendetta

By
WELDON J. COBB

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

He had sustained a shock, it was evident. He tried to brace his nerves, but his tones shook as he turned his colorless face to meet the wretched, cruel one of his companion.

"Speak!" he said, almost hissing—"if you know what this means!"

"What it means!" hysterically retorted Worthington—"ruin!"

"Nonsense!"

Kane shrugged his shoulders. He had got the mastery over momentary weakness now.

"You see?" pursued the other—"a drop."

"Of thirty points!"

"Which means—"

"Only two millions."

"Only two millions! yes—but if this goes on—"

"It can't," confidently insisted Kane. "Rouse up, man—some rascally stock-juggling jugglers of competitors! A carnal has frightened the holders of our stock, there has been a stampede. Tomorrow our turn will come."

"But the cause—the cause?" persisted Worthington—"for there was a cause! We are too solid to be the football of the market; then whence the break—and why?"

"Come in!" spoke Kane gruffly, as a tap sounded on the polished mahogany door, and a messenger boy entered, handed him a telegram, departed. Kane tore it open. A queer click sounded in his throat. For a second he breathed laboriously. He handed the message to Worthington, the latter in turn perused it.

"Great heavens!" he gasped. "Kane! what is the meaning of this accumulating disaster?"

The message was from a trusted agent on the New York Stock Exchange and it ran:

"Our stock is going to pieces. It has dropped thirty points in two hours. Blennerhassett of the opposition syndicate has announced that the company is four million in deficit on listed assets, and our bonds inflated and duplicated at two different local banking concerns. How did he find out?"

How—for it was true! Old, tarred swindler that he was, Percy V. Kane shuddered as he realized what such a revelation meant: First, in money loss, next, in the eyes of the law.

"Something's wrong!" reiterated Worthington, getting up and pacing the floor like a prodded animal. "There has been a leak. But—how?"

"You and I only knew of the bolstering necessary to tide over the last dividend," said Kane thoughtfully.

"Unless—except—"

Worthington hesitated. He directed a keen, though hesitating, glance at his companion. The latter met the look sternly.

"Well?" he demanded.

"Except your private secretary."

"She!" burst forth Kane, a rapturous, instead of an incensed man. "Yes, Worthington," he said softly—and if there was one redeeming trait of gentleness in his base nature it came to the front now—

"she, indeed, knows with us the shifts, the secret subterfuges requisite for the accomplishment of a gigantic coup. But, and his voice grew even more tender, 'she is one of us.'"

"One of us?"

"Yes—she is soon—very soon—to become my wife."

"As far gone as that?" muttered Worthington, genuinely astonished.

"So," pursued Kane, "whence and how the leak, look elsewhere. And ferret it out, man! for this is a serious, a critical situation."

"You must act—"

"I shall act!"

The eyes of this versed Napoleon of speculation flashed with determination and confidence.

"Listen," he said, focusing his glance upon his weak and frightened confere, his soul upon the theme in play: "leave me to myself for a time. I will think out a way to checkmate Blennerhassett and his crew. Meantime, you seek to learn who is playing us false in this office. I shall telegraph the Chemical National to sell all our securities on the quiet, and have the funds applied towards buying up everything offered of our stock to-morrow."

"Will it check the tide?" waveringly inquired the president.

"It will bluff our rivals."

"But the local banks—the gross deflection in assets—"

"Leave that to me: there is work to do—important, prompt. Why, man! we dare not be broken now. To-morrow's election places in our net seventy-three Representatives and a Senator. Before this election day is over we have the key to the State treasury, a foothold in Congress, our hands tight-clasped on the throat of justice! It is not a State, this country, that we own, then—the world is our free stamping ground!"

"Kane, you are a bold genius—but I trust you to get us out of this dilemma."

"You do not trust us vainly!" declared Kane.

Left to himself, he slowly, meditatively paced the apartment. He reflected rapidly—but deeply, and to the point.

"Something" was indeed "wrong!"—a hidden hand was groping for the vitals of the great trust. Whose?

Something was wrong! They stood to lose two millions unless public confidence could be restored, and the shadow of perjury, dishonor, haunted their way unless past crooked dealing in the manipulation of inflated and duplicated stocks could be covered up.

Percy Kane "thought out a way!"—then his lips broke to a smile, and his eyes grew tender.

He was thinking now of the lovely girl who had come into his life like a new revelation of joy and delight, and for the moment he forgot his business troubles and his political aspirations.

Again he was interrupted, again a rap at the door irritated him.

"Come in!" he said impatiently.

A meanly dressed creature crossed the threshold. At a first careless glance Kane took him to be one of the workmen from the mills.

"I want to show you something—" began the visitor.

"Oh! go to the superintendent," angrily ordered Kane, believing the visitor had come with some complaint, or, as he extended one ragged arm, intended to disclose some injury received at work for which he hoped to secure compensation.

He waved the stranger away. "The latter sprang, strangely, quick and menacing before him.

"Mr. Percy Kane," he said, squarely confronting the other, and kicking close about the open door behind him, "I want to show you—this!"

Out from his sleeve he snatched a short, thick bar of steel.

"Stand where you are—listen to me!" he grated hoarsely, "or with this, and here, and now, I'll batter out your wicked brains! Look well at me!"

And in a tone of thunder, the dreadful weapon uplifted, his eyes two angry sparks of flame, the stranger sternly demanded:

"Percy Kane, do you know me?"

CHAPTER VIII.

A singular shadow crossed the face of the great arch-schemer, mingled dread, defiance and desperation.

But Kane instantly grew calm as ice. His glance unflinching, he steadily, rather sneeringly, regarded the intruder. Then he said coldly:

"Yes, I know you."

"I thought you would!" blazed the other, dangerously brandishing the steel bar, his teeth grating, his glance murderous.

"The father—"

"Of your wife!"

"Of the wife that was—true, my man; what of it?"

His defiance and unconcern maddened the intruder. His eyes grew lurid. It seemed he would fling himself upon Kane. He choked, ground his teeth in a violent paroxysm of rage.

"Not yet—not yet!" he hoarsely muttered. "I'll give you a chance, first—a last chance!"

"What to do, may I ask?" coolly propounded Kane.

"I'll tell you!" blazed the intruder. "Go back six years—in Ohio—you, flashing your dazzling ways and your dangerous cruel smile. You won my girl, my only child, Elita. But you married her—well for you! And then, tired of her, you deserted her heartlessly. You know what happened—her gentle nature drooped, her heart broke. You sent her to an insane asylum as the easiest way to get rid of her. The blow crushed me. I took to drink. I got in bad company, I stole—they sent me up for five years."

"Well," said Kane mockingly, "what is that to me?"

"You shall see. For two years Elita has been sane—as sane as you or I."

"The asylum physicians say not."

"Yes," retorted the other, "for you bribed them to say so. You were afraid to have her free, and well you might be! Man! devil! do you know that your perfidy, her cruel, unjust imprisonment, have changed all her gentle nature. Beware—oh, beware!"

"My friend," suggested Kane placidly, "we will have it out, here and now, but don't you ever venture to intrude on me again. Your daughter is nothing to me. I secured a divorce from her two years ago. I am willing to provide reasonably for her, but she must not trouble me. Don't you!" added Kane significantly. "I will neither be intimidated, nor black-mailed."

"Listen!"

Gabriel Marsden's voice rang out ominously.

"I am all attention!" mocked Kane.

"I have only a few words to say to you—heed them! Your wife, my daughter, is free!"

"How—you are saying this to annoy me!" declared Kane, with a palpable start.

"No, and to save you—or rather, her—I came to you. If my appeal does not avail, then better the gallows for me than that she should imbue her hands in your blood!"

"You are tragic!" sneered Kane.

"My last word, then!" sternly intoned the man, "remarry my daughter, quiet her perverted mind by so doing, and I depart, she can be placated. Refuse, and—"

"What then?"

"She will kill you! You fear! Man! You do not know what she is now, a cold, relentless, determined woman, set upon having her rights—or your life!"

"The law will look to that. I fancy I have the means and the power to squelch you both."

"Useless!" shouted the man ferociously—"useless to temporize with you! Then—you shall have it: a trampled father's vengeance!"

The climax impended, the culminating moment had come—he saw the folly of trying to reach, to move, this man.

All the time Kane had been secretly watching every move his visitor made. The latter now sprang at him, the murderous bar uplifted.

CHAPTER IX.

Kane was no coward—besides that he was an athlete. Quick as lightning his arm shot out. His sinewy fist landed under the stranger's left jaw. He went crashing into a corner. Before he could gather himself up Kane had flashed to a table, touched a button, and, as, raving like a madman and foaming at the mouth, his adversary started up to renew the assault, two men in answer to the summons quietly but swiftly entered the room.

They had the man in their strong grasp

before he could reach for and regain the bar.

Kane glided to the side of one of his captors—trusted detectives in the employ of the company, men who knew how to fulfill a mission given to the letter.

He whispered a command—they dragged the prisoner away to sure obscurity and silence.

"You've downed me!" raved the man—"but when you come to deal with her—with Elita—have a care of yourself, Percy Kane; you are doomed!"

Kane sank into a chair, left to himself. The double excitement of the hour had slightly unnerved him.

It was not in his nature to be daunted, however. Inside of five minutes he had summed up the situation completely, had counted the possible results of the present complication, believed he could handle it, and coolly dismissed it from his mind.

His thoughts composed, fortified, he set at work to face the serious situation of the company's concerns. Plan after plan he turned over in his mind. He was a past grand master at juggling finance—he fancied he saw his way clear before him to offset the stock market stampede of the day.

He planned his campaign of procedure. About to arise and set the same in motion, he was disturbed by the entrance of an usher. He presented a card; Kane glanced at it. He read: "Dunstreet's."

"So soon!" he muttered—so soon the swarming of the harpies about the prey! The great clearing house of commercial information was on his track, already!

Kane was his blandest—suave, polite, ingenious, as he met this representative of the great agency.

Perhaps a thought thrilled his mind, a memory of that other visit of a "Dunstreet" man, when the rotten silver company went to pieces!

The agency reporter had his say; the great trust was "open for rating"; that is, information had been received at variance with the last subscribed statement of the company, and until the same was explained, the high commercial rating of the corporation would stand at "blank."

"To-morrow morning," said Kane to the agency representative, "this company will furnish you with a statement showing three dollars in tangible assets for every dollar of indebtedness. I shall expect you here at ten o'clock, and will verify the statement with you at the local banks."

The reporter withdrew. Kane's pose was now that of the startled hare with the hunters keen on the trail.

He hurried from room to room until he found the president. He cornered him in private.

"There is just one thing to do," he declared—"the most shift the duplicate securities and make up a solid three millions within the next twelve hours, or go under."

"You talk impossibilities!" exclaimed the president.

"No—whisper."

What words stole sinister and awesome into the president's ear must have been weighted with ominous import, for he drew back with a sharp shiver.

"Oh, never!" he gasped. "Kane, you can not mean it!"

"Yes, I do mean it," calmly, decisively, retorted the other.

"To apply the trust funds left in our charge secretly—man! should they be engulfed, then for you, for myself, it is the convict garb, and prison bars!"

"It must be done—there is no other way. We must turn back the storm of distrust beating at our threshold, at all cost or risks!"

They laid their plans for the morrow. They spoke of the impending election—to-morrow—the day that would see them masters of the industrial world—or paupers!

About two hours later Percy Kane entered his private office. He paused gently ere he approached the trim, little figure at a desk—his private secretary.

He was the lover—rapt, reverent—as he spoke softly to beautiful Claire Tremaine of their approaching marriage. In his ardor and joy at the near possession of this rare treasure, he did not note how chilling was her set, stony face, that she shuddered every time her eyes met his own.

He was buoyed up by love when he left her. The future seemed golden. He felt he could overcome all obstacles, for with the morrow his grasp on fortune and power would tighten—must tighten!

And she—this peerless being—had consented to be his wife—life bore a new motive, a new and mighty happiness!

Alone, Claire Tremaine stood like one stricken, but borne irresistibly forward by stern, somber fate.

She drew from a pocket a small photograph—it was a secretly treasured portrait of Gideon Hope.

She tore it across, once, twice, tears falling upon the fragments. She dropped them like sacred relics into the fireplace.

It was too late to draw back now, and she had pledged her word to Percy Kane that in two days she would become his wife!

(To be continued.)

Spirit Land Messages.

Perhaps all the so-called messages from the dead come from living minds. I mean the minds of those about us.

Dr. Reed, a friend of mine, once arranged to go with a patient to have a test sitting with a very celebrated psychic who claimed to be able to read sealed letters. Just before the appointed day Reed's patient died suddenly of heart disease, leaving a sealed letter on his desk.

The doctor, fully alive to the singular opportunity, put the letter in his pocket and hastened to the medium. The magician took it in his hand and pondered. At last he said: "This was written by a man now in the spirit world. I cannot read it. There isn't a medium in the world who can read it, but if you will send it to any person anywhere on the planet and have it read and reread I will tell you what is in it. I cannot get the words unless some mind in the earth plane has absorbed them."

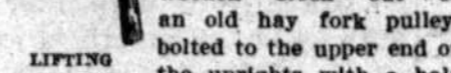
That would seem to prove a sort of universal mind reservoir, wouldn't it? Isn't that a staggering hypothesis?—Hamilton Garland in Everybody's Magazine



FARMERS' CORNER.

A Lifting Jack.

When one is alone on a farm with perhaps no help around it is almost impossible to lift hay racks or grain tanks off the wagons. With a device like the cut, one man can take off any kind of a hay rack with ease. This lifting jack is seven feet high. The two uprights are 2x4 at the base and 2x2 at the upper end. They can be ripped out of 2x6. Have the wooden block out of an old hay fork pulley, bolted to the upper end of the uprights with a half inch bolt for the rope to work on. Thirty inches from the base is an offset to which is attached a spindle for the rope to wind on. The need of the offset will easily be seen in operation; the crank will always be in the clear. The crank is 14 inches long. The spindle is one inch in diameter. A piece of good one inch gas pipe makes a good one. The uprights are spread 20 or 22 inches at the base. It also needs a few light wooden braces to strengthen and stiffen it. It should be made quite strong and light, so that one man can carry it handily. On the end of the three-quarter inch rope is a five-eighths inch iron hook.



LIFTING JACK.

AMERICAN REAPERS IN ASIA.



American farm machinery is rapidly finding its way into foreign countries, but our American farmers would not know how to use the machines that are sent over there. They are built to meet the demands of Asiatic farmers, who are slow to grasp up-to-date methods.

Individuality of Cows.

While there are slight individual differences in digestive efficiency among cows, extensive experiments have shown that these are insufficient to account for the widely variable returns made by similar cows from like quantities of the same kind of food. The results obtained in tests of this kind are emphatic. It has been shown that, of two cows of apparently the same merit, from superficial examination one may return three times as much as the other from a given amount of similar foods. They digested their food equally well. It is a well known fact that there are individual likes and dislikes among cows, which necessitates an intimate knowledge of each cow if best results are to follow. Occasionally a cow will make her best performance upon a ration not suited to the other members of the herd. These matters are of continual interest to the dairymen, who should safeguard himself at all times by keeping at least approximate records of food consumed and product yielded by each individual.—Kansas Farmer.

Front From Dairy Products.

The Maryland Experiment Station has been making tests as to profits in selling dairy products, as milk, cream and butter. This test shows that cream is one of the most profitable forms of sale, when 20 per cent cream can be sold at 50 cents a gallon, and even at this low price returns 23 1/2 cents per pound for the butter in the milk, besides leaving the skim milk for use on the farm. Of course, cream can be usually sold for more than 50 cents per gallon. It appears that milk shipping is ordinarily more profitable than butter. Thus 12 cents per gallon for 3 1/2 per cent milk is equal to 23 1/2 cents per

White Spots on Horses.

A white spot on the forehead of a horse is called a "star." A white face from eye to eye is a "bald face." A strip between the nostrils is a "snipe." A white eye is a "glass eye." A horse has pasterns, not ankles. White around the top of the hoof is a "white coronet." White above the pasterns is a "white leg."

Kansas Corn Crop.

In 1905 Kansas raised about an average crop of corn, but the yield was more than that of all South America, which, of course, includes the much-advertised Argentina; was over 80,000,000 bushels greater than the combined crops of Canada and Mexico, and exceeded the same year's crops of Egypt, Italy, France, Bulgaria and Russia proper together.—F. D. Coburn.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



- 1435—Treaty of Arras concluded between the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy.
- 1580—Henry IV. defeated the Leaguers at Arques.
- 1600—Hudson, the explorer, reached the present site of the city of Albany.
- 1655—Fort Casimir, the Swedish settlement on the Delaware, surrendered to the Dutch forces under Gov. Stuyvesant.
- 1675—Ducheneau appointed Intendant of New France.
- 1692—Two men and seven women executed at Salem for witchcraft.
- 1705—Jacques Francois de Brouillon, governor of Acadia, died at sea.
- 1750—The French surrendered Quebec to the English.
- 1772—First dismemberment of Poland.
- 1776—British made an unsuccessful attack on the Americans on Harlem Heights.
- 1777—American force under Gen. Wayne defeated the British under Gen. Grey... Washington and his army crossed the Schuylkill, determined to give battle to Gen. Howe's troops.
- 1788—The Oneida Indians ceded all their lands to the State of New York.
- 1792—France declared a republic... The President issued a proclamation ordering all persons to submit to the excise law.
- 1800—The Concordat between Bonaparte and the Pope ratified.
- 1804—The rice crop of South Carolina completely destroyed by a great hurricane... Mr. Dearborn, son of the Secretary of War, left for Algiers with presents for the ruler of that country.
- 1814—The British ship Fort destroyed the American brig Regent... United States troops defeated the English in battle at Fort Bowyer.
- 1822—Moses Rogers, captain of the first steam vessel to cross the Atlantic, died at Cheraw, S. C. Born in New London, Conn., in 1780.
- 1820—Slavery abolished in Mexico.
- 1833—The boundary line between New York and New Jersey settled.
- 1845—Americans defeated the Mexicans at battle of Monterey.
- 1862—United States troops defeated the Indians at battle of Wood Lake.
- 1863—President Lincoln suspended the habeas corpus act.
- 1864—John C. Fremont withdrew as candidate for President of the United States... The Federal forces were victorious in the battle at Opequan, Va... A McClellan meeting in the Lindell hotel, St. Louis, broken up by a party of Union soldiers.
- 1868—Outbreak of the Spanish revolution... Lieut. Beecher and Dr. Moore killed in battle with Indians near the Republican river.
- 1871—Lincoln's body was removed to its final resting place at Springfield, Ill.
- 1881—Body of President Garfield lay in state in the capitol at Washington.
- 1882—Arabi Pasha, the leader of the military insurrection in Egypt, surrendered after his defeat at Tel-El-Kebir.
- 1884—A party of several hundred Canadian boatmen left Quebec to take part in the Nile expedition for the relief of Gen. Gordon... Earthquake shocks were felt in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana.
- 1887—The centenary of the constitution of the United States was celebrated in Philadelphia.
- 1893—The Earl of Aberdeen assumed office as governor general of Canada.
- 1897—Five men accused of burglary lynched at Versailles, Ind.
- 1898—Statue of Samuel de Champlain unveiled at Quebec by Lord Aberdeen.
- 1900—Much destruction caused by heavy rains in Texas.
- 1901—The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York welcomed in Montreal... The funeral of President McKinley was held at Canton, Ohio.
- 1902—Marie Henriette, Queen of the Belgians, died, aged 66 years.
- 1906—Fatal race riots in Atlanta, Ga... Rock Island train plunged into the Cimarron river in Oklahoma and a number of lives were lost... Secretary of War Taft and Acting Secretary of State Bacon left Washington for Cuba.
- 1907—Explosion on a Japanese battleship killed thirty-four officers and men... The new treaty between France and Canada was signed at Paris.

An Explanation.

"How long has this restaurant been open?" asked the would-be diner.

"Two years," said the proprietor.

"I am sorry I did not know it," said the guest. "I should be better off if I had come here then."

"Yes!" smiled the proprietor, very much pleased. "How is that?"

"I should probably have been served by this time if I had," said the guest, and the entente cordiale between Harper's Weekly.