

GENTLE ART OF MURDER AND POLITICS AMUSES DAN

Green Reporter's Fatal Error Starts a Lively Bit of Comment on the Great American Game and Hints of a Promise

By DAN CAREY.

ONCE we killed a man. He was a perfectly upright, honest, reputable citizen by the name of John Hill, who had no enemies that we knew of and friends by the hundreds, but we snuffed out his life and he was no more.

It all happened when we held the honorable position of cub reporter in another city and had arisen to the importance of being editor of the Department of Deaths and Funerals. We forget exactly how it happened that we came into possession of the fact that John Hill was dead. It may have been a sorry joke that some one played on us or it may have been merely our own inexperience. We forget that detail, but anyway he was a prominent man in our community, so we spread considerably and gave him a nice notice, with a picture of the deceased and the story of his life at the end.

The next morning our business manager, Uncle Bob, as he was affectionately known, burst into tears on his front porch when he read the announcement of the death of his lifelong friend. He hastily cut a few flowers from his garden, roses and peonies and gardenias, and went to lay this loving tribute upon the bier of his friend.

John Hill lived just around the corner and there was a high stone retaining wall at the corner. With his eyes still wet with tears Uncle Bob attempted to round the corner, but in doing so he bumped into an irate citizen coming rapidly from the opposite direction. It was John Hill on his way to Uncle Bob's home to protest against being announced as dead. He wanted to make a personal matter out of it.

That morning we received notice that we would have to square matters with John Hill or retire permanently from the newspaper game. We might have seen our victim and talked it over with him, but evidently there was nothing to be gained by an interview. We thought of announcing him in the birth column, but he had already been there some fifty years or more before. Late that afternoon we turned in a story headed "The Resurrection of John Hill," which squared the thing with everybody concerned. If it hadn't, we would probably be a sewing machine agent or earning our living in some other honest manner.

SPeaking of killing reminds us of the description of capital punishment in New York State once given us by a chance acquaintance in the smoking room of a Pullman train. Possibly we had just had a riot or two or some lynchings which caused this man from the North to inquire of us as to the method of capital punishment in the State we then called home. He asked this question, we remember very distinctly, in a tone which clearly implied that legal executions in our State were of such rare occurrence as to make his ignorance excusable.

We did not argue that point with him but contented ourselves with replying that hanging was the method of death prescribed by law in our State.

"That method," he replied, "is now considered barbarous. A great many of the States are getting away from it and I should adopt the more humane method."

Our personal opinion is that no method of

executing a man may be considered entirely humane, but still we did not argue, from which you will doubtless gather that we are not of an argumentative disposition anyway.

"How do they execute criminals in New York?" we asked.

That was what he had been waiting for. He smiled the smile of the mentally superior and replied:

"We bathe and dress the criminal in a good suit of clothes, give him a splendid meal, place him in a chair from which he cannot get up and then 'elocute' him to death."

We had been given the same treatment at

banquets we attended, but we did not know before what it was called.

WE used to attend banquets and dinners during the term we served in politics. That was before the days of our reformation and while we still clung

to the belief that the people needed us to assist in correctly governing the community in which we resided. Later we were cured of this mental disease and the delusion left us in the only possible manner that a politician is ever permanently cured.

You know there is a germ flying around in the atmosphere of America all the time. This little microbe is probably called some-

thing like *Coccus politicus*. The manner in which he works his way into the brain of an American is something like this: Some-

one near the political throne will decide that he will make a first rate Alderman or some-

thing like that. Then the conspiracy starts and about five men will be told what to do.

Our American will rise some morning, thinking only of his own business and of his

family, and after breakfast he will kiss his wife and start for his office.

"John," says one of the neighbors, who meets him on the street, "you would make a good Alderman from this district."

"Oh, pshaw!" he replies, and has a hearty laugh over it.

"John," says the next man, "I would like to have the privilege of voting for you for Alderman this year."

"Well, I don't know," replies John. "That involves a great many difficulties."

He proceeds on his way to his office.

"John," says the third man, "the boys have been discussing you. We want you to run for Alderman."

"Yes," he replies, "I have been thinking over that matter a little. I thank you very much, Bill."

Then the fourth man has his say, and by the time the fifth man has suggested that he run for Alderman what has been said by just exactly five men of the ten thousand or more who vote in that district is magnified into what he believes to be an uprising of the people to demand that he give a portion of his time to the community. A little *Coccus politicus* has worked its way into a brain cell. He is a changed man from then on and begins writing his platform. Then he neglects his family, his home, his business and his friends until he takes the cure.

There are several ways of quitting politics, but only one method is permanent.

Some men get so thoroughly disgusted with politics that they tender their resignations and return to their private affairs. Their cure is only temporary. They will return to politics later on after they have set their house in order.

Some men get defeated for reelection. Their cure is only temporary. Until they pass on to the next world they will seek every opportunity for a nomination or an appointment.

Some men get thoroughly disgusted with politics and in addition get defeated for reelection. They are cured permanently. It is necessary to inoculate them with the microbe.

That is what happened to us. However, don't send the five men. We are just a human being after all.

IN the town where we learned politics every one is a Democrat and the primaries are operated by what is known as a city executive committee. Consequently places on this committee are in demand. Selections for city executive committees were formerly made at ward mass meetings. In the fifth ward two friends, John and George, both well known in the town, started for the ward meeting.

"John," said George, linking his arm into that of his friend, "you ought to be on the committee from our ward. I shall nominate you to-night and secure your election. While I am working quietly for you I want you to be working for Bill Brown because he will do what you and I say. With his support and you on the committee we can control this ward."

It sounded all right to John, so he agreed and immediately after reaching the hall he started working enthusiastically for Bill Brown. True to his promise, George nominated John in a well chosen speech.

When the votes were counted (it was a secret ballot) Bill Brown led the ticket and John received just one vote.

"John," I am much obliged to you for voting for Bill Brown. We put him across in great shape, but somehow or other the boys evidently thought this was not your year. I voted for you but I was the only one."

"George," replied John, "you are a colossal liar, because I voted for myself."

Great game, politics.

WE had a friend, a druggist, who ran for Alderman. His opponents, both very well liked, were named Wolf and Campbell, the former a suit manufacturer and the latter a saloonkeeper. The druggist adopted a unique method of campaigning, which was to make speeches on street cars. During one of these speeches he was said to have been so unwise as to say that in the race there was a Jew, a bartender and a gentleman, and that the voters could take their choice. In those days the community of which we speak would not stand for a slur of that kind in politics, although it has since we regret to say, seemed to rather like such things.

Both the other candidates, therefore, at once proceeded to capitalize the remark. One of them said in a speech that the race was really between a wolf, a Campbell and a Jackass. That was more than the druggist could stand, so he sought a man he thought was his friend and asked him to prepare a

"It was John Hill on his way to Uncle Bob's home to protest against being announced as dead."



"One near the political throne will decide he will make a first rate Alderman. Then the conspiracy starts."

Chief Kabongo's Coup May End Crisis in Congo

WHO will be King of the Congo? Who will gain the beaded crown and dusky harem of the illustrious Mwata Yamvo, King of the Congo peoples, the fourteenth of his dynasty? Little else has been talked of in the cannibal villages of the Congo bush since that eventful day when the news of the great king's death came booming mournfully through the jungle, beaten out in code signals on the native drum telegraph from hill top to hill top and from tribe to tribe just as the news of Livingston's approach was heralded nearly half a century ago by these same folk and as other jungle happenings have been announced since time immemorial.

Kabongo, paramount chief of the Luba cannibals to the eastward, is said to be gathering his black hordes about him for a sweep over the domain of the dead monarch to make himself king over the whole Congo. The black warriors of the bush where the white man is still but little known are worried now that the fourteenth Prince of Death, which is the meaning of Mwata Yamvo, has been gathered to the abode of happy kings presided over by the great god Ngassi, whose voice is the thunder of the rainy season.

Many a Subchief Cherishes Secret Ambition to Rule

The present state of uncertainty as to the royal succession in the Congo was not unforeseen by the wily black nobles of the bush. Many a cunning subchief has secretly cherished the ambition to be lord over all of the black men from Lake Tanganyika to the boundaries of Loanda, and has pictured himself attired in the copious robes and beaded crown of the paramount chief.

The capital, which is the seat of native Congo Government is called Musumba on the map, but in Central Africa it goes under the impressive name of Musumba-wa-Mwata-Yamvo—City-of-the-Prince-of-Death. There Mwata Yamvo XIV, lived and reigned for more than eighteen years. It is a large native town with quite a metropolitan atmosphere, all things considered, described by David Livingstone in his famous memoirs as being the most progressive in all Africa.

Mwata Yamvo came of a long line of mighty chiefs. In former days the Alunda peoples were the conquering race of Central Africa. They swept over the Congo in the twelfth century, historians say, and their kings became suzerains over all the tribes of the great inland basin of the Luabala or Upper Congo River, where also live the Luba peoples, now governed by Kabongo.

The Mwata Yamvo dynasty was founded by one of the warrior chiefs of the Alunda peoples during this era of conquest. He led his warriors far and wide, extending his territory and levying tribute from all the peoples as far as the sea coast in what is

Death of Mwata Yamvo, Fourteenth of His Line, Stirs Dusky Tribes to Vast Unrest

now the Congo Francois. Then he established his domain along organized lines. He made one of his own sons—he had many by his numerous wives—prince over each of the provinces. They were his Governors, and he administered the central government with Spartan severity. Under him the Alunda, or Lunda, people became great and prosperous. They owned herds of cattle, goats and chickens, and sold many slaves to the Arabs of the far north. Later the white slaving vessels appeared on the coast, and the Lunda people grew even richer with the white man's trade.

Succeeding Mwata Yamvos established their sons as Governors as had Mwata Yamvo I and many dynastic troubles arose. There were too many descendants of Mwata Yamvo. Of a score of sons in each generation only one could succeed to the throne, and the number of disgruntled cousins who had to take posts as obscure subchiefs multiplied. An African War of the Roses has been in progress for more than a century. It became quite the custom for a pretender to assassinate the reigning monarch, usurp the power and force his authority on the court and country with a few hundred fearless warriors armed with assegais and poisoned arrows.

In the opinion of the people it was all right for a descendant of Mwata Yamvo I to murder the one in power. The only disgrace that could befall the nation was for some outside prince to get the power. None ever did.

An Outsider Looms at Last In Person of the Crafty Kabongo

But now it seems that Kabongo will be the dreaded outsider stepping in. The last Mwata Yamvo was not warlike. He was lazy. He liked the white man's whiskey and he preferred to sell the services of his thousands of subjects to the white men as carriers of rubber. The spirit of Mwata Yamvo I, who required the sacrifice of many human lives merely for his own grandeur, was no longer present with the people as in the brave days of old. Then the great chief himself, his six foot body clad entirely in feathers, marched at the head of his warriors into strange lands to conquer them. When Mwata Yamvo I wished to rise from his royal seat when on the march a warrior prostrated himself on either side of him and the King would thrust a spear through the body of each and pull himself up nimbly by the shafts as the warriors writhed in their death agonies.

Mwata Yamvo XIV, became sick a month too soon or there might be no dynastic disturbances in his domain to-day. The Methodists were sending a white doctor and equip-

ment for an entire hospital to the mission station near Musumba. It is not known whether or not it was the "D. T." which carried off the Prince of Death or not, but the white man's medicine would probably have saved the old King for another few years of periodic jags, at least so thinks Dr. Piper, who is building his hospital there now.

Kabongo, as paramount chief of the Luba cannibals, rules over a region once subject to the Mwata Yamvos. A crafty sub-chief, he managed to organize a hysteria for freedom from the tyrannies of the Alunda Kings and engineered a secession movement with himself as dictator. By playing one powerful chief against another, he has kept the balance of power and ruled, like a feudal monarch of medieval Europe, on the crust of a figurative volcano, which, however, has never erupted. Now, with the possibilities of conquest recalling the days of the first migrations of Bantu peoples a thousand years ago, the Luba chiefs may well support Kabongo in the effort to extend their own sway westward.

Royal Bath the Only One In All the Luba Territory

Kabongo has a harem as large as that of Mwata Yamvo and a palace of beautifully woven basket work, a bath and a garden of zeds, all enclosed in a compound with an elaborately woven reed wall about it. The royal bath is a hole in the ground, but it is the only one used for the purpose in all the Luba territory. (And the rivers are infested with crocodiles!) His Majesty gets down in the hole, and servants throw buckets of water at him from every direction at once. Then he climbs out with mud sticking to him and pronounces the ceremony a complete success, which it is not, according to the white man's standards.

A clay crocodile and some white pigeons are Kabongo's principal deities, and these he worships fitfully, mostly for political reasons.

Kabongo's cunning has made him the logical usurper of the throne of Mwata Yamvo in the minds of many sub-chiefs of the Congo. He always manages to turn up on top when seemingly about to lose out.

Once a Belgian official, travelling through his realm, lost eighteen carriers from his caravan in a single night, and cannibalistic feasts were held in the neighboring villages next night. The Belgian held Kabongo responsible, and it seemed as though the Luba chieftain, who had very dramatically reformed himself and tribe from active cannibalism a few years before, was about to suffer the consequences of the crime.

Jungle Convention Promises Full Measure of Excitement

At Musumba-wa-Mwata Yamvo there will be a great palaver of chiefs and sub-chiefs. Every black potentate of the Congo will come with the secret hope of being chosen to succeed his great ancestor, Mwata Yamvo I. Much eloquence will be wasted on the air, and politics not much removed in method or motive from those of 1920 at Chicago and San Francisco will be in evidence. The heir apparent, favorite son of Mwata Yamvo XIV, will be present, bedecked in royal robes from his father's variegated wardrobe and a short, native sword at his side.

A "smelling out" ceremony will be held in which the witch doctors will try to determine who caused the death of the King by witchcraft. If they finally accuse any one the accused, who is usually the enemy of some one in power, must prove his innocence by drinking a cup of the poisonous sassafras.

A genealogical court of inquiry will be held, and the various twigs and branches of the royal family tree will be discussed to the confusion of everybody. But somebody will be chosen as the fifteenth Prince of Death. Then the new King will have to spend a year's income to provide native liquor for the convention and the whole aggregation of townspeople for a memorable drinking bout to last nearly a month.

But if old Kabongo of the Lubas appears at the strategic time with a band of picked warriors the election will have a few more thrills than otherwise. Wily sub-chiefs have told him he is the man, and excessive modesty is not one of Kabongo's shortcomings. At any rate, the new Mwata Yamvo will wear the crown upon the traditionally uneasy head.

According to returning missionaries, no Hapsburg ever faced a more delicately balanced political situation than will the new Mwata Yamvo of the Congo, whether he be Mutombo Makulu of Kapanka, Kimi of Luabala, Kabongo of the Lubas or any of a hundred other lesser aspirants. Whoever he is, he will be the most powerful savage potentate of his day.

family, and after breakfast he will kiss his wife and start for his office.

"John," says one of the neighbors, who meets him on the street, "you would make a good Alderman from this district."

"Oh, pshaw!" he replies, and has a hearty laugh over it.

"John," says the next man, "I would like to have the privilege of voting for you for Alderman this year."

"Well, I don't know," replies John. "That involves a great many difficulties."

He proceeds on his way to his office.

"John," says the third man, "the boys have been discussing you. We want you to run for Alderman."

"Yes," he replies, "I have been thinking over that matter a little. I thank you very much, Bill."

Then the fourth man has his say, and by the time the fifth man has suggested that he run for Alderman what has been said by just exactly five men of the ten thousand or more who vote in that district is magnified into what he believes to be an uprising of the people to demand that he give a portion of his time to the community. A little *Coccus politicus* has worked its way into a brain cell. He is a changed man from then on and begins writing his platform. Then he neglects his family, his home, his business and his friends until he takes the cure.

There are several ways of quitting politics, but only one method is permanent.

Some men get so thoroughly disgusted with politics that they tender their resignations and return to their private affairs. Their cure is only temporary. They will return to politics later on after they have set their house in order.

Some men get defeated for reelection. Their cure is only temporary. Until they pass on to the next world they will seek every opportunity for a nomination or an appointment.

Some men get thoroughly disgusted with politics and in addition get defeated for reelection. They are cured permanently. It is necessary to inoculate them with the microbe.

That is what happened to us. However, don't send the five men. We are just a human being after all.

IN the town where we learned politics every one is a Democrat and the primaries are operated by what is known as a city executive committee. Consequently places on this committee are in demand. Selections for city executive committees were formerly made at ward mass meetings. In the fifth ward two friends, John and George, both well known in the town, started for the ward meeting.

"John," said George, linking his arm into that of his friend, "you ought to be on the committee from our ward. I shall nominate you to-night and secure your election. While I am working quietly for you I want you to be working for Bill Brown because he will do what you and I say. With his support and you on the committee we can control this ward."

It sounded all right to John, so he agreed and immediately after reaching the hall he started working enthusiastically for Bill Brown. True to his promise, George nominated John in a well chosen speech.

When the votes were counted (it was a secret ballot) Bill Brown led the ticket and John received just one vote.

"John," I am much obliged to you for voting for Bill Brown. We put him across in great shape, but somehow or other the boys evidently thought this was not your year. I voted for you but I was the only one."

"George," replied John, "you are a colossal liar, because I voted for myself."

Great game, politics.

WE had a friend, a druggist, who ran for Alderman. His opponents, both very well liked, were named Wolf and Campbell, the former a suit manufacturer and the latter a saloonkeeper. The druggist adopted a unique method of campaigning, which was to make speeches on street cars. During one of these speeches he was said to have been so unwise as to say that in the race there was a Jew, a bartender and a gentleman, and that the voters could take their choice. In those days the community of which we speak would not stand for a slur of that kind in politics, although it has since we regret to say, seemed to rather like such things.

Both the other candidates, therefore, at once proceeded to capitalize the remark. One of them said in a speech that the race was really between a wolf, a Campbell and a Jackass. That was more than the druggist could stand, so he sought a man he thought was his friend and asked him to prepare a

statement for publication. The supposed friend did it and ruined him. Here is what appeared across seven columns of the leading afternoon daily in large type:

"MALICIOUS PERSONS HAVE CIRCULATED THE REPORT THAT I SAID THE RACE IN THE FIRST WARD WAS BETWEEN A JEW, A BARTENDER AND A GENTLEMAN, AND THAT I WAS THE GENTLEMAN. THIS I DENY."
Great game, politics.

BUT the greatest art in politics is that of spellbinding before the people during the campaign, and the most remarkable thing about political speeches (that is, where we come from) is that the people love a ready wit more than they do accuracy and prefer a quick answer to a statement of facts.

We have in mind a speaker who on one occasion made friends with a hostile audience by remarking quietly, "Some geese has hissed," when one of his auditors began to express disapproval of what he was saying.

But what we started to tell about was a big old liar of our town who was a wonder on the stump despite the fact that he had a habit of saying just any old thing that popped into his head while he was addressing an audience.

Facts did not enter into his calculations at all. History, geography, natural history, astronomy he marshalled to his aid in presenting his arguments, and a little inaccuracy like having Alexander fighting a personal duel with Napoleon, making Pekin the capital of Siam or placing the dog star in a cage at the zoo, amounted to nothing if it illustrated the point he had in mind.

On one occasion we heard him speaking to a crowd of the wool hat boys and in order to make himself impressive he turned a few of the pages of history.

"Gentlemen," he shouted, "shall we not learn our lesson in this instance from the treatment that was accorded the British fleet during the Crimean war? When the British steamed up the bay and dropped anchor in front of Moscow, we are told that—"

"Wait a minute," interrupted his opponent, "Moscow is an inland city."

The speaker turned deliberately and frowningly at his interrupter, and after glancing at him for a half minute asked in tones full of insulting contempt, "Have you ever been in Moscow?"

"No, I have not."

"Well then," he said as if brushing him aside and again turning to his audience, "as I was saying, when the British anchored in front of Moscow."

And he went right ahead and told his story, making a most telling point to the utter delight of the audience and the plain discomfort of the other speaker, who received a very poor reception and lost the district.

Dan's Own Book Review

TIMON OF ATHENS. By William Shakespeare. Stratford, William Sims & Co., Ltd., London and Glasgow.

LORD TIMON was the prize essay mark of his time. Also he was known as something of a practical joker in his day. Like many another since he lived to regret the ease with which his friends took his money away from him and also like many another he learned to despise the victims of his jokes.

It really isn't much of a story, and Mr. Shakespeare can easily leave it out of the next set of books he offers for sale at a dollar down and a dollar a week. For one thing it is impossible to put the play on the stage the way he has written it, because the board of censors would not consider it for a minute, and it is doubtful if the theatergoers would stand for it even if they did.

Any one could get Timon's money away from him who told him he was a good chap, who dedicated a poem to him or who asked his opinion about a picture. It was soon found out that if any one made a present to Timon the say dog would at once make the donor a gift of much greater value. The consequence was that some one was always giving him presents.

One of his servants tried to tell him what was happening to his financial affairs, but Timon just laughed and proceeded to tell his servant some funny stories.

When the crash came Timon decided to borrow some money from his friends, but they all happened to be broke at the time, which made it impossible for them to come to his rescue. Then Timon decided to play the practical joke on them which made him famous in Athens and which caused many a hearty jest at the expense of his victims.

He invited them all to a banquet. When the steaming dishes were uncovered they were found to contain hot water, a custom which continues to this day in the Greek restaurants when one orders and pays for soup. Those who have suffered from this practice will be interested to learn that we have discovered in Shakespeare's works that it was Timon who inaugurated it, thus setting an example for all Greek restaurants.

Well, anyway, while the guests were looking questioningly at each other, Timon began throwing the dishes at them, and they, not wishing to be scalded, beat a hasty retreat. They tried to keep the incident quiet, but the story leaked out and there was many a chuckle at their expense.

Timon then left for the woods and became a hermit in order to hide from his creditors. This is the part of the story which we insist could not be acted. You see Timon took off all his clothes and lived in a cave. We doubt very much the propriety of exposing the male figure on the stage. The nude female has met with only indifferent success, and we have even heard some open criticism. From this we judge that the appearance of Timon as Mr. Shakespeare describes him would be considered objectionable by some of our leading citizens.

One day Timon finds a lot of money buried in the woods, but, since he cannot spend it in the ground, he gives it away to a General who is passing, with instructions to pay the back wages of his army. The General marches on Athens and puts up such a stiff fight that the Senators decide to send for Timon to take charge of the defence of the city, but when he finds out that he will have to put on clothes again he invites them to have their dinner on a tree near his cave. They decline the invitation, but the merry jest of Timon at their expense furnished a lot of wit in the public drinking places of the city for many years.

Some years later a soldier while passing near the cave of Timon discovered that he had committed suicide and had then buried himself, after which he chiselled an epitaph on a rock near where he had buried himself. From this epitaph the Athenians learned that Lord Timon had intended his jokes and jests to be taken seriously and that he really disliked them very much.