

An Incriminating Pin

'Aubrey, it's getting late; put away your book, dear, and talk.'

My wife came across the room to where I sat, and laid her hand lovingly on my shoulder. Then she glanced at the ponderous volume before me and said, with a laugh:

'Oh those awful Latin names! Whatever does "curare" mean, Aubrey?'

'It isn't Latin, darling; it's an adaptation of the native name of a deadly poison used by the South American Indians to smear on their arrows. Curare, though, is an antidote as well as a poison, and in minute quantities is used medically. I've got some in the surgery at this moment. But now, I added closing the book, "what is it you want to talk about dear? Something more cheerful than poisons, I dare say?'

'Yes,' she said, as she sat down by my side. 'What do you think? Lena is going to be married to Mr. Wilmont Ravensdale.'

'H'm; that tall, rather sallow-looking man we met at the boarding house at Bar-mouth last year?'

'Yes I remember thinking he was smitten with Lena at the time, and now it seems they've been corresponding ever since, though this is the first I've heard of it. My sister never was particularly communicative.'

'What is Mr. Ravensdale by profession?'

'I am not quite sure. I believe he owns some land in the North. Anyhow, just before Arthur left Liverpool on his present voyage, Mr. Ravensdale saw him and asked his permission to become engaged to Lena; and Arthur must have thought everything satisfactory, for he assented willingly.'

'Ah! Well, of course, Arthur—your brother—is head of your family now, and his approval is final.'

'You—you—don't approve, Aubrey?'

'I have no voice in the matter, my dear, and I had, I know nothing against Mr. Ravensdale. Still, a girl with £5,000 ought to be careful whom she selects for a husband, so I hope Lena has chosen well.'

I was silent a short while; I felt certain ill defined misgivings. Ravensdale's manner and conversation had not impressed me favorably when in Wales. However, it was scarcely fair, perhaps, to judge a man on a brief holiday acquaintance.

During the next few days my wife spent a good deal of time with Lena, who lived with their only brother, Arthur, in a small house not far from our own; Arthur Vernon, who was an engineer on a steamship engaged in the Canadian cattle trade, being at present away from home.

Ella felt herself largely responsible for the arrangements of the coming wedding. She threw herself into the matter with an enthusiasm which she endeavored, not altogether without success, to impart to me. I resolved to receive Ravensdale when he arrived in London. I liked him, however, no better than before, though I left my doubts unexpressed.

Then came a surprise: Ravensdale suddenly informed Lena that he had a sister of whose existence he had not hitherto spoken, and suggested that it would be a good plan for her to take up her abode with his fiancée until the wedding. Lena could refuse him nothing, and to my wife's evident annoyance, Mildred Ravensdale arrived next day. A week passed without anything particular happening, then, as we sat at dinner one evening, Ella startled me by saying, hotly:

'I hate Mildred Ravensdale, and I could almost kill her. I won't go near either of them till Arthur comes home. They don't want me and their wishes shall be respected.'

'Have you been offended so deeply as all that, dear? I asked, after a brief pause.

'Yes,' she replied; 'my advice is ignored by Lena and scorned by Miss Ravensdale.'

'When is your brother Arthur expected?'

'Not till a day or two before the wedding.'

'Oh! Have you heard anything more precise about Ravensdale's property yet?'

'Not a word.'

'Nor where he proposes to live?'

'He talks about leaving that question till after they return from their honeymoon, which it seems to be a long one.'

I said no more then. I felt instinctively that Ella had not told me all that she knew or suspected though she had revealed enough to render me profoundly dissatisfied with the position of affairs. But Lena was no longer a child; she was 27, and her proud and headstrong temperament would I was aware, lead her to resent any intervention on my part.

The wedding day was fixed to take place on Thursday, and on the morning of the previous Tuesday, Ella asked me to inspect the present which despite their disagreement she had purchased for her sister. This consisted of a very handsome Russian leather lady's toilet case, containing a hand mirror, a pair of brushes, two combs and requisites, all in ivory. Then she mentioned that her brother's ship was not expected to arrive till the next day, but that she would depart from her resolve not to visit Lena before his return, so far as personally to take her the present in the course of the afternoon.

My wife looked pale and tired when early in the evening, I again saw her, so that I was hardly surprised when she told me that her interview with her sister had been far from the pleasant. 'I—I never gave her the present, after all, she explained; I put it down on the hallstand, and forgot about it. We both got angry, and I—I said things about Mr. Ravensdale that his sister Lena declared she'd never forgive. Perhaps I was wrong, but I have every cause to distrust them, and so has Lena, but she won't see it. Oh, she is mad, I'

'Are all arrangements made for the wedding?'

'I think so. They don't want us there, though. It's fixed for 8 o'clock in the morning, and they're going to drive straight to the railway station from the church.'

'Well, dearest, we mustn't intrude upon them. It's certainly strange, however; that your sister should slight you in this way.'

Ella's hands twitched nervously. Then she burst into tears. 'I—I don't mind for myself,' she sobbed, 'but it's dreadful that Lena should have let that horrid woman get such an influence over.'

'Why do you dislike Miss Ravensdale so intensely, dearest? I asked soothingly.'

'Why? Oh, for one thing, because I believe in her heart she hates Lena, and, for another, because of something she's done to me.'

'I suppose you won't mind telling me what that is?'

'I cannot, I have promised to be silent.'

I said nothing. She seemed greatly agitated. Then she cried suddenly:

'And, yet, I am not sure. I think I'm justified in breaking my word; yes, I'll tell you, Aubrey; you ought to know.'

The day after that woman came, before I grew to distrust her, she asked me if I could get her some poison.'

'What? I exclaimed.

'Some poison,' she continued, 'that would kill a dog. She had a favorite terrier, she said, that had grown old and blind, and was suffering greatly, and she wanted it poisoned, but couldn't bear that it should meet its death at the hands of any one but herself.'

'Well, well.'

'When she asked for the poison I suddenly thought of the stuff you had spoken of on the night I first heard of Lena's engagement.'

'Curare?'

'Yes. I found some of your surgery, and I—I gave it to her. I read up about it, too, and told her all she had to do was to smear some on a needle and prick the poor animal with it.'

'Oh you should have told me, dearest; but what happened afterward?'

'What happened?—my wife gave a low, mirthless laugh—why, a week later, when she said she'd killed the dog, and I asked her to give me back what remained of the poison, she declined to do so; and now to-day, when I repeated the request, she—'

But at this moment there came a ring at the bell, followed by the entrance of a servant to tell me that a lady wished to see me immediately.

My visitor, a handsome, well-dressed woman of 30, was pacing excitedly up and down my counting room as I entered.

'Doctor Cranleigh,' she cried, excuse my abruptness, but you must come with me at once. Your wife's sister Miss Lena Vernon, is suddenly taken ill. She is unconscious—in a fit, I think. There is not a moment to lose. Don't stop to tell your wife now, it would alarm her. She can be summoned later on, if necessary.'

'Are you,' I gasped, 'Miss Ravensdale?'

'Yes—but come, come.'

Mechanically, I put on my hat, and followed her into the street.

'Now,' I said, briefly, 'you can give me any additional particulars?'

'Not many,' she replied. I had been out, and, returning to the house, went into Lena's bedroom, where I found her on the sofa, as I have said, unconscious. She seemed to have been seized with faintness while dressing; at all events her hair was dishevelled. I tried to bring her round, but my efforts were quite futile. So I called the servant to remain with her, and came off for you.'

I asked one or two further questions, but she added nothing of importance, and a few more minutes brought us to the house.

The girl who opened the door said there was no change in the condition of her mistress, and we made our way immediately to the bedroom.

Lena, her luxuriant hair awry and her eyes closed, lay on a couch by the window so still that at first I feared she was dead. But even as I crossed the room her whole frame shook in a sudden, convulsive movement, which however, only lasted a moment. I bent down to examine her more closely, pushing back some of the loose tresses which strayed over her white forehead. My hand coming in contact with something moist, caused me to withdraw it quickly. Then I started violently. My fingers were smeared with blood!

Without a word I raised the half-lowered gas, and with the aid of the stronger light thus afforded, I saw for the first time beneath the hair just above Lena's brow a long irregular, scratch. I trembled involuntarily.

Lena's symptoms were those of curare poisoning.

I pushed the electric bell, wrote a few words on a sheet of paper, torn from my note book, and, giving it to the servant who answered my summons, told her to take it immediately to my surgery, hand it to my assistant, and wait a reply. Then, uncertain what to say or do, I turned toward Mildred Ravensdale, who sat silent and composed on the chair near the couch.

'This faintness,' I ventured, at last 'seems serious, alarming even.'

'Indeed? I am so sorry. What can it be? Failure of the heart?'

'No,' I rejoined, looking fixedly at her; 'I should rather say it is a case of poisoning.'

She met my eyes with a cold, incredulous stare, but gave no reply.

'Did you ever hear of a poison called curare?'

'Never,' she answered, calmly.

I reflected a moment. Should I tell her what Ella had revealed to me, and challenge her to deny it? No, not yet, I decided.

All this while I had been chafing Lena's hands, but now I let them go, and walked uneasily round the room. At the dressing table I stopped; on it I noticed, abstractedly, a toilet case—my wife's present—and beside the case an ivory comb. There was

something about the latter which caused me to look again, and with trembling hands to open the case. Ah! I could hardly repress a cry—the comb belonged to it; and on the comb, tightly fastened to one of the teeth by a piece of thin wire, was a pin with a discolored point. I had discovered the explanation of the scratch!

Yes, this woman was acting a part; she must be unmasked! A means—not perfect, but still worth trying—suggested itself to me, even as beads of perspiration broke out on my brow, and my heart began to beat with painful rapidity.

'Miss Ravensdale,' I said slowly, 'will you please let me pull this comb through your hair?'

She sprang to her feet. 'What an extraordinary request!'

'Then you decline? I asked, excitedly.

'No,' she said, with a grim smile; 'Oh, no. Do as you will.' She removed the hat she had been wearing and came and stood by my side. 'Come,' she added. 'I am ready.'

'I—I have changed my mind,' I murmured, weakly.

She turned, and, before I could stop her, wrenched the comb from my hand, drew it through her hair several times, and flung it on the ground. Then she said, in a fierce, low voice:

'If death does occur, if I were you, I should certify it as due to failure of the heart's action. That would avoid an inquest, which, under the circumstances, is most undesirable. For your wife's sake, you know.'

'My wife! How dare you suggest—'

'How dare I? Well, you shall hear. Your wife is angry because Lena saw fit to make a will, leaving her property to my brother—her future husband. Your wife was pleased to utter disgraceful innuendoes about him and about me. Even this afternoon she and Lena quarrelled bitterly. I heard them; so did my brother, who happened to be in the house; so did the servant. Your wife, she went on with a harsh laugh, "wanted to keep Lena's money in the family, and as this is a case of poisoning she must have administered it. She thought the will was not to be signed until tomorrow, but she was wrong. It was signed yesterday. She was too late, too late!'

There was a loud ring at the front door. In a dream, a nightmare, rather, I ran down stairs, and, admitting the servant-maid, took from her the syringe furnished with an injection of strychnine, which I had demanded from my assistant.

I returned to the bedroom, and, avoiding Miss Ravensdale's inquiring look, made an incision in the patient's arm. A little while, and I noticed a slight, natural movement of her muscles.

'Thank Heaven!' I exclaimed. 'The strychnine has proved the antidote I hoped. Lena will live now.'

'She—will—live? Mildred Ravensdale ran from the room.

She and her so-called brother—it was not till long afterwards I found out he was her husband—I never saw again. For Lena's sake, no steps were taken to bring them to justice. But I was soon in possession of enough information to enable me to form a pretty definite notion of the ingenuity of the scheme which my superior knowledge of toxicology had fortunately enabled me to frustrate.

The fact that she did not hesitate to draw through her own hair the poisoned comb she had in pretended playfulness drawn through Lena's an hour earlier, was explained by the fact that she wore a wig—Tit-Bits.



BORN.

Brooklyn, Aug. 6 to wife of F. C. Fader a son.
Halifax, Aug. 9 to wife of H. E. Gibbs, a son.
Salem, Aug. 11 to wife of Jas. Ring a daughter.
Halifax, Aug. 11 to wife of W. H. Graham a son.
Sydney, Aug. 6 to wife of D. G. McPherson a son.
Freeport, Aug. 2 to wife of Milton Haines, a son.
Brooklyn, Aug. 2 to wife of James Houlahan a son.
Albert, Aug. 6, to wife of Ernest H. Fyles a daughter.
Yarmouth, Aug. 2 to wife of L. M. Mitchell a daughter.
Halifax, Aug. 9 to wife of Jno. P. Fitzpatrick a son.
West Pubnico, July 31 to wife of Moses Doughty a son.
West Pubnico, Aug. 1 to wife of Ludger Amiro a son.
Shediac, Aug. 16 to Madame Jean Malenfant a son.
Hopewell Cape, Aug. 7 to wife of H. B. Coonan a son.
Lunenburg, Aug. 5 to wife of Nathaniel Hebb, a son.
Long Island, Aug. 4 to wife of J. D. O'Handly, a son.
Dewey Terrace, Aug. 7 to wife of A. D. McIsaac, a son.
Yarmouth, Aug. 11, to Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Wilson a son.
Amherst Highlands, Aug. 9 to wife of John Morse a son.
Long Island, July 28 to wife of R. A. O'Handley, a son.
North Sydney, Aug. 8 to wife of Wm. Rogers, a son.
Halifax, Aug. 9 to wife of Theophilus J. Jones a daughter.



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MARRIED.

Mace's Bay, Aug. 6 to wife of D. H. Mawhinney a daughter.
Long Island, to the wife of H. G. Nicholod, a daughter.
North Sydney, Aug. 8 to wife of E. G. McCullough a daughter.
New Glasgow, Aug. 8 to wife of Charles Turnbull, a daughter.
West Pubnico, Aug. 1 to wife of Paul A. D'Entremont a son.
Barrington Passage, Aug. 6 to wife of F. L. Wilson a daughter.
Freeport, July 25 to the wife of Joseph W. Morrison, a daughter.
Albert, Aug. 3 to the wife of Renforth L. Fullerton a daughter.
Edmonton, July 25, to the wife of Rev. C. B. Freeman, a daughter.
North Sydney, Aug. 19 to Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Lammie a daughter.
Westfield, July 18 to the wife of Dr. S. J. Jenkins a daughter.

Andover, Aug. 8, by Rev. J. F. Esty, Robert E. Coffin to Berdella Bink.
Hillsboro, Aug. 9, by Rev. C. W. Townsend, Alton Layton to Maud Tower.
Yarmouth, July 30, by Rev. G. M. Wilson Alward Trotter to Sarah Brannen.
Sackville, Aug. 10, by Rev. Mr. Daly, David Johnston to Julia Allen.
Weymouth, July 4, by Rev. A. Ross, Cecil T. Greene to Vine Wythers.
Yarmouth, Aug. 3, by Rev. H. B. Dunn, Benj. C. Tedford to May Hibbard.
Everett, Mass., by Rev. Charles M. Hall, Harry S. Jacobs to Carrie M. Burris.
Truro, Aug. 10, by Archdeacon Kaulback, Colonel W. Crowe to Florence Shaw.
West Dover, Aug. 8, by Rev. N. E. Ingram, Isaiah Publicover to Emiline Zinc.
Windsor, Aug. 10, by Rev. Jos. A. Cahill, James A. Thomson to Inez M. Britton.
South Ingonish, Aug. 3, by Rev. J. Fraser, Angus Matheson to Mary A. McLeod.
Baddeck, Aug. 8, by Rev. D. McDougall, Norman Munro to Mary A. McDonald.
Pleasantville, A. Co., by Rev. F. Davidson, Elmer C. Steeves to Louisa Colpitts.
Pisano, Aug. 3, by Rev. A. Boyd, Samuel Ferguson to Bertha E. Gibralth.
New Carlisle, July 27, by Rev. J. N. Sutherland, Arch. McKay to Emma Tozier.
Moncton, Aug. 8, by Rev. W. W. Lodge, George Fitzsimmons to Mary McDonald.
Kilgus's Mills, Aug. 9, by Rev. Abram Perry, Ebenezer Perry to Blanche Fawcett.
Newcastle, Aug. 4, by Rev. T. G. Johnstone, Geo. W. Drummond to Elizabeth J. McDougall.

DIED.

St. John, Aug. 9, James McElroy.
St. John, Aug. 9, James Wilson, 80.
Fairville, Aug. 15, James Durdan, 61.
Bellville, Aug. 7, Mrs. Leon Potier, 77.
Delap's Cove, Aug. 1, Joseph Sims, 56.
Halifax, Aug. 11, Charles E. Nelson, 70.
St. John, Aug. 14, Mr. Joseph Bates, 78.
New York, Aug. 4, R. Ernest Roach, 28.
Halifax, Aug. 11, Samuel J. Morrow, 56.
Manila, July 25, Capt. Robt. C. Perry, 62.
Bocabec, Aug. 1, Wellington Hanson, 66.
Calais, Aug. 6, Earl F. Montgomery, 10 mos.
Woodstock, Aug. 7, Mrs. Richard Magee, 45.
New York, Aug. 8, Agnes wife of Charles Ray.
St. John, Aug. 15, Mary Kathleen Cocoran, 3.
East Pubnico, July 29, Mrs. Fannie Hipson, 73.
Sambro Light, July 29, Charles A. Gilkey, 19.
Central Norton, Aug. 9, Mrs. Sophie Wiggins, 83.
Roxbury, Mass., Aug. 9, Mr. William J. Curran.
St. John, Aug. 15, Mr. Robert W. McIntosh, 71.
Port Hawkesbury, July 30, John McPherson, 71.
Parker's Cove, July 30, Mr. W. Allen Wade, 38.
Kempt, Queens Co., July 30, Mr. Chas. Ellison, 77.
Pictou, N. S., Aug. 2, Miss Lucy Temple Robinson.
Kingston, Kings Co., Aug. 15, Mrs. John Coran 85.
Quebec, Aug. 6, Mrs. Margaret Burray Weddell 92.
Yarmouth, N. S., Aug. 8, Mrs. Thomas Darrah, 21.
Wickham, Queens Co., Aug. 12, Mr. W. J. Roop.

Amherst, Aug. 8, Sherman, infant of Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Page.
Wickham, Queens Co., Aug. 12, Mr. Jas. W. Peters, 88.
Wickham, Queens Co., Aug. 11, Annie May Glen-deaning, 16.
Hubbard's Cove, Halifax Co., N. S. Mrs. Edward Conrod, 68.
St. John, Aug. 12, Willie, son of Chas. and Frances Sullivan, 6.
Halifax, Aug. 15, Bertha, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. P. Gilroy, 11.
St. John, Aug. 11, Katie M. daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Kelly, 14.
Newport News, Aug. 3, Alfred Mills Rowan, son of James Rowan, 27.
Beverly, Mass., July 30, John C. Dexter, son of the late Dr. G. B. Dexter.
Mace's Bay, Aug. 15, Teresa S. daughter of Thos. and Margaret Boyle, 20.
Bay Du Vin, Aug. 5, Phoebe Wathen, widow of the late Alex. Williston, 87.
Windsor, July 22, George, eldest son of George and Elizabeth Morrison, 25.
St. John, Aug. 12, Jean Russell, infant of Wm. and Nettie McIntyre, 13 mos.
Sambro Light, Aug. 2, Ethel, youngest child of Alfred and Janet Gilkey, 9.
Windsor, Aug. 12, Wilfred, youngest child of Jas. and Margaret Fitzgerald, 2.
St. John, Aug. 9, Mary Genivieve, eldest child of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Delaney.
Oak Bay, N. B., Aug. 9, Mary Flora Adelia, daughter of Rev. J. W. and Mrs. Millidge, 14.
Eastport, Me., Aug. 2, Jane Randall, infant daughter of the late Augustus and Alice Stover, 2.
New Glasgow, N. S., Aug. 6, Deborah A. McDonald widow of the late John McDonald, 60.

STEAMBOATS.

Star Line Steamers

—FOR—

Fredericton.

(Eastern Standard Time.)

Mail Steamers Victoria and David Weston

Leave St. John every day (except Sunday) at 8 a. m., for Fredericton and all intermediate landings, and will leave Fredericton every day (except Sunday) at 8 a. m., for St. John.

Stmr. Olivette will leave Indian town for Gagetown and intermediate landings every afternoon at 4 o'clock (local time). Returning will leave Gagetown every morning at 5 o'clock. Saturday's Steamer will leave at 6 o'clock.

GEO. F. BAIRD, Manager.

Steamer Clifton.

On and after July 7th.

Leave Hampton for Indian town,

Monday at 5:30 a. m.
Tuesday at 3:30 p. m.
Wednesday at 2:00 p. m.
Thursday at 3:30 p. m.
Saturday at 5:30 a. m.

Leave Indian town for Hampton,

Tuesday at 9:00 a. m.
Wednesday at 8:00 a. m.
Thursday at 9:00 a. m.
Saturday at 4:00 p. m.

CAPT. R. G. EARLE, Manager.

RAILROADS.

Dominion Atlantic R'y.

On and after Monday, Aug. 1st, 1898, the Steamship and Train service of this railway will be as follows:

Royal Mail S.S. Prince Rupert,

DAILY SERVICE.

Lve. St. John at 7:15 a. m., arr. Digby 10:15 a. m.
Lve. Digby at 1:45 p. m., arr. St. John, 4:30 p. m.

EXPRESS TRAINS

Daily (Sunday excepted).

Lve. Halifax 6:30 a. m., arr. in Digby 12:28 p. m.
Lve. Digby 12:40 p. m., arr. Yarmouth 3:15 p. m.
Lve. Halifax 8:45 a. m., arr. Digby 1:35 p. m.
Lve. Digby 1:45 p. m., arr. Yarmouth 3:45 p. m.
Lve. Yarmouth 9:00 a. m., arr. Digby 11:43 a. m.
Lve. Digby 11:55 a. m., arr. Halifax 3:45 p. m.
Lve. Yarmouth 8:35 a. m., arr. Digby 10:25 a. m.
Lve. Digby 10:30 a. m., arr. Halifax 3:35 p. m.
Lve. Annapolis 7:15 a. m., arr. Digby 8:30 a. m.
Lve. Digby 8:30 p. m., arr. Annapolis 4:00 p. m.

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W. R. CAMPBELL, Gen. Man'gr.
P. GIFFKINS, Superintendent.

Intercolonial Railway.

On and after Monday, the 20th June, 1898, the trains of this Railway will run daily, Sunday excepted, as follows.

TRAINS WILL LEAVE ST. JOHN

Express for Hampton..... 5:30
Express for Campbellton, Pugwash, Pictou and Halifax..... 7:00
Express for Halifax..... 11:50
Express for Sussex..... 16:45
Express for Hampton..... 17:40
Express for Quebec, Montreal..... 18:20
Accommodation for Moncton, Truro, Halifax, and Sydney..... 22:30
A sleeping car will be attached to the train leaving St. John at 18:20 o'clock for Quebec and Montreal.

TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN

Express from Hampton..... 7:15
Express from Sussex..... 8:30
Express from Halifax, Quebec and Montreal..... 17:00
Express from Halifax..... 17:00
Express from Hampton..... 21:50
Accommodation from Moncton, Monday excepted..... 1:25
Accommodation from Pt. du Chene and Moncton..... 11:25
All trains are run by Eastern Standard time.

CITY TICKET OFFICE,
57 Prince Wm. Street,
St. John, N. B.