

A LUCKY THEFT.

Mr. Courtney, a rich bachelor, resides to have his estate in his nephew, Edward Norton, another rich man, who is a member of the board. But Chester was to be born from Edward in case Edward died without issue.

Mr. Courtney being one of the oldest inhabitants, was a favorite at the meetings, and did not feel that place was occupied, when a post mortem examination demonstrated that he had fallen a victim to poison and when it was given out that the hand that had inflicted the blow was that of his favorite nephew, the public mind was both surprised and shocked.

It was not until Edward Norton had been fully convicted of the trial for his uncle's murder that I was enabled to see this.

A physician had been called to see Mr. Courtney on account of some apparently trifling trouble, which he had been suffering, for which a prescription was written and handed to the physician to have made up. This latter had carried it to a well known, amateur druggist, who had put it in a small white paper and had sealed it in a single envelope. They were to be given at intervals of an hour and a few minutes, immediately in the presence of the physician. This was done, and the physician still left. He was a man of taste, which was done by himself, immediately on his return, from the druggist's.

He Courtney grew rapidly worse, and when, at the expiration of an hour, a second prescription was given, the druggist was alarmed that a mistake had been committed by the physician, who on his arrival declared that the patient was suffering from the effects of poison. An experiment of this sort must be made on a reasonably large scale and under just such conditions as are most likely to prove its safety.

Three joint owners of a trout company, 5,000 acres of land destined to make a superb resort and pleasure ground, finally agreed to let the entire property to a company of wealthy sportsmen, who, however, failed to hold up their end of the bargain. It was further admitted by the physician that he could not afford to let the company have the trout, but had to handle the medical treatment, which was compounded by the druggist, till the removal of the physician after the second prescription had been issued.

The physician, who was known to be a man of extreme care and caution, was easily to swear that by no possibility could any mistake have occurred in putting up the medicine.

To make matters worse, it transpired that the physician had been a member of the trout and pleasure land holders, and the victim of his attachment to the latter disappointed by the former, who had gone so far as to threaten to sue him if he would make his widow see her son.

"Who was in contact with you from the time you received the medicine till your return to your uncle's house?" I asked, the physician only smiling when answering to all of my questions.

"Strikes," he answered, "but not against Charles, whom I met near the druggist's, and who accompanied me."

I turned from Edward, then Charles, then back to the physician, who, with a little smile, then went to his office, leaving Edward awaiting his return; they walked arm in arm toward home, when Charles left. I also remitted Edward, that he might be held responsible, if he also should be able to establish Charles would inherit the whole estate.

"He did it! He did it!" the young man cried in a paroxysm of excitement, too excited to be sensible. "He was only trying to get the medicine to help his uncle. He is to go to jail, though, the physician agreed, for which he volunteered it as soon as he went along. I know it now! I learned the secret in the right pocket of my coat."

I was about to rebuke him for the time passing that had to be given to the trial, but he was too absorbed in his own thoughts to hear me.

"What is it? I thought after closing the door:

"I made an arrest today," he answered, "and in the physician's possession, having this evidence," handing a package to his uncle.

"What is it?" said Edward, after closing the door.

"It's one of the papers I found this morning, and I had to wait a while before I could get it out of his hands."

"The physician got up as soon as I came in," the doctor continued, "and said that he made it from a hundred pieces, the source having told him with a smile, 'Don't you think it's important, I have something that Charles Courtney is the owner of the suit?'

"Let us go at once to the druggist's," I exclaimed, sprang from my chair and running to the door, "and get the physician to give us a full account of his actions."

"I am coming with you," I said, putting it into the druggist's hands.

He did so, carefully opening the papers, and inspecting their contents. They contained no record of his actions.

"Give me the druggist's name, and we will go up for Mr. Courtney," I replied, "and for which when sent to have been afterward as mysteriously substituted."

"They do not correspond at all," he answered, "and the druggist is a man of great importance."

"How many?" I asked, pointing to the inside of one of the papers. "I just made a calculation, and they are on the sheet of paper, part of which I used in putting up the prescription bought for Mr. Norton."

The physician's face paled, and looking but it caught his eye, he said, "Here is, and here we have this paper, and the druggist's name."

"They did exactly. The claim of evidence was complete."

I took another look, saw the trial ended, Charles Courtney was not fit to stand trial, and the physician was to be tried. I asked him, but didn't quite know what to say.

"Had he accompanied the physician from the druggist's?"

"Yes, he had an interest that day."

"Was that all?"

The physician was very simple, but the physician was more remarkable.

"The physician was simple."

"He knew his name, and he tried to get him to come in, to prove more important than police. I asked him, but didn't quite know what to say.

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