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Administrator's Notice.

Notice is hereby given that letters of administration, with will annexed, on the estate of C. J. Hampton, deceased, were granted to the undersigned, by the Probate Court of Chariton County, Missouri, on April 1, 1911. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to exhibit the same to us for allowance within one year from the date of said letters, or they may be precluded from any of the benefits of said estate; and if such claims are not exhibited within two years from said date they will be forever barred. This April 4, 1911.

A. N. HARDING,
W. D. RICHARDS,
912 Administrators.

Administrator's Notice.

Notice is hereby given that letters of administration on the estate of Peter Frandson, deceased, were granted to the undersigned Public Administrator within and for Chariton County, Missouri, by the Probate Court of said county, on March 20, 1911. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to exhibit the same to me for allowance within one year from date of said letters or they may be precluded from any of the benefits of said estate; and if such claims are not exhibited within two years from the date of said letters they will be forever barred. This April 4, 1911.

O. P RAY,
912 Public Administrator.

Executor's Notice.

Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary upon the estate of Sherod Tucker, deceased, were granted to the undersigned executor of said estate, by the Probate Court of Chariton County, Missouri, bearing date January 9, 1911. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to exhibit the same to me for allowance within one year from the date of said letters or they may be precluded from any of the benefits of said estate; and if such claims are not exhibited within two years from the date of said letters they will be forever barred.

SAMUEL LEWIS,
912 Executor.

Final Settlement Notice.

Creditors and all other persons interested in the estate of B. F. Hendrix, deceased, will hereby take notice, that I, as administrator de bonis non of said estate, will make final settlement thereof, at the next regular term of the Probate Court of Chariton county, Missouri, to be begun and holden at the Court house in the City of Keytesville, on the second Monday in May, 1911.

O. P. RAY,
1114 Public Administrator.

$100 Reward $100.

The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials.

The Bronze Bell

By Louis Joseph Vance

scandal," said Raikes, with a chuckle. "Oh, well! it's shop with us, you know."

"Of course. . . . Then I understand that the tamasha is the reason for the encampment beyond the walls?"

"Yes; they've been coming in for a week. By tomorrow night, I daresay, every rajah, prince, thakur, baron, fief, and lord in Rajputna, each with his 'tail,' horse and foot, will be camped down before the walls of Kuttarpur. You've chosen an interesting time for your visit. It'll be a sight worth seeing, when they begin to make a show. My troubles begin with a state banquet tomorrow that I'd give much to miss; however, I'll have Farrell for company."

"I'm glad to be here," said Amber thoughtfully. Could it be possible that the proposed abdication of Balig Singh in favor of his son were merely a cloak to a conspiracy to restore to power the house of Rutton? Or had the tamasha been arranged in order to gather together all the rulers in Rajputana without exciting suspicion, that they might agree upon a concerted plan of mutiny against the Sirkar? The state affair of surpassing importance had been arranged for the last day of grace allotted the Prince of the house of Rutton. What had it to do with the Gateway of Swords, the Voice, the Mind, the Eye, the Body, the Bell?

"By the way, Mr. Raikes," said the Virginian suddenly, "what do they call the gate by which we entered the city—the southern gate?"

"The Gateway of Swords, I believe."

Farrell, on the point of entering the house, overheard and turned. "Is that so? Why, I thought that gateway was in Kathiapur."

"I've heard of a Gateway of Swords in Kathiapur," Raikes admitted. "Never been there, myself."

"Kathiapur?"

"A dead city, Mr. Amber, not far away—originally the capital of Khandawar. It's over there in the hills to the north, somewhere. Old Rao Rutton, founder of the old dynasty, got tired of the place and caused it to be depopulated, building Kuttarpur in its stead—I believe, to commemorate some victory or other. That sort of thing used to be quite the fashion in India, before we came." Raikes fell back, giving Amber precedence as they entered the Residency. "By the way, remind me, if you think of it, Colonel Farrell, to get after the telegraph clerk tomorrow. There's a new man in charge—a Bengali babu—and I presume he's about as worthless as the run of his kind."

Amber made a careful note of this information; he was curious about that babu.

In the drawing room Raikes and Farrell impressed Clarkson for three-handed bridge. Sophia did not care to play and Amber was ignorant of the game—a defect in his social education which he found no cause to regret, since it left him in undisputed attendance upon the girl.

She had seated herself at a warped and discouraged piano, for which Raikes had already apologised; it was, he said, a legacy from a former Resident. For years its yellow keys had not known a woman's touch such as that to which they now responded with thin, cracked voices; the girl's fine, slender fingers wrung from them a plaintive, pathetic parody of melody. Amber stood over her with his arms folded on the top of the instrument, comfortably unconscious that his pose was copied from any number of sentimental photogravures and "art photographs." His temper was sentimental enough, for that matter; the woman was very sweet and beautiful in his eyes as she sat with her white, round arms flashing over the keyboard, her head bowed and her face a little averted, the long lashes low upon her cheeks and tremulous with a fathomless emotion. It was his thought that his time was momentarily becoming shorter, and that just now, more than ever, she was very distant from his arms, something inaccessible, too rare and delicate and fine for the rude possession of him who sighed for his own unworthiness.

Abruptly she brought both hands down upon the keys, educing a jangled, startled crash from the tortured wires, and swinging round, glanced up at Amber with quaint mirth trembling behind the veil of moisture in her misty eyes.

"India!" she cried, with a broken laugh: "India epitomised: a homesick, exiled woman trying to drag a song of Home from the broken heart of a crippled piano! That is an Englishwoman's India: it's our life, ever to strive and struggle and contrive to piece together out of makeshift odds and ends the atmosphere of Home! It's suffocating in here. Come." She rose with a quick shrug of impatience, and led the way back to the gardens.

Petulant, the girl trained her long skirts heedlessly over the few deteriorated flowers. Amber at her side, himself speechless with an intangible, indescribable, unnerving sense of oppression. Above, he told himself, had a lover's hour been more auspiciously tinted or staged; and this was his hour, situation his! . . . If she be minded that the words of wooing to speak, his lips were sealed; all else, all else, tomorrow, could be no less in the wake of the morrow a world of chances stirred—contingencies that might in a breath set them a world apart.

They found seats in the shadow of a pepul.

"Are you in the habit of indulging in protracted silences?" she rallied him gently. "Between friends of old standing they're permissible, I believe, but—"

"A day's journey by tonga matures acquaintaceship wonderfully," he observed abstrusely.

"Indeed?" She laughed.

"At least, I hope so."

He felt that he must be making progress; thus far he had been no less inane than any average lover of the stage or fiction. And he wondered: was she laughing at him, softly, there in the shadows?

"You see," she said, amused at his relapse into reverie, "you're insurable and ungrateful. I'm trying my best to be attractive and interesting, and you won't pay me any attention whatever. There must be something on your mind. Is it this mysterious errand that brings you so unexpectedly to India—to Kuttarpur, Mr. Amber?"

"Yes," he answered truthfully.

"And you won't tell me?"

"I think I must," he said, bending forward.

There sounded a stealthy rustling in the shrubbery. The girl drew away and rose with a startled exclamation. With a bound, a man in native dress sped from the shadows and paused before them, panting.

Amber jumped up, overturning his chair, and instinctively feeling for the pistol that was with his traveling things, upstairs in the Residency.

The native, reassured him with a swift, obsequious gesture. "Pardon, sahib, and yours, sahiba, if I have alarmed you, but I am come on an errand of haste, seeking him who is known as the Sahib David Amber."

"I am he. What do you want with me?"

"It is only this, that I have been commissioned to bear to you, sahib."

The man fumbled hurriedly in the folds of his surtout, darting quick glances of apprehension round the garden. Amber looked him over as closely as he could in the dim light, but found him wholly a stranger—merely a low-caste Hindu, counterpart of a million others to be encountered daily in the highways and bazars of India. The Virginian's rising hope that he might prove to be Labertouche failed for want of encouragement; the intruder was of a stature the Englishman could by no means have counterfeited.

"From whom come you?" he demanded in the vernacular.

"Nay, a name that is unspoken harms none, sahib." The native produced a small, thin, flat package and thrust it into Amber's hands. "With permission, I go, sahib; it were unwise to linger—"

"There is no answer?"

"None, sahib." The man salaamed and strode away, seeming to melt soundlessly into the foliage.

For a minute Amber remained astare. The girl's voice alone roused him.

"I think you are a very interesting person, Mr. Amber," she said, resuming her chair.

"Well! . . . I begin to think this a most uncommonly interesting country." He laughed uncertainly, turning the package over and over. "Upon my word—! I haven't the least notion what this can be!"

"Why not bring it to the light, and find out?"

He assented meekly, having been perfectly candid in his assertion that he had no suspicion of what the packet might contain, and a moment later they stood beneath the window of Residency, from which a broad shaft of light streamed out like vaporised gold.

Amber held the packet to the light; it was oblong, thin, stiff, covered with common paper, guiltless of superscription, and sealed with mucilage. He tore the covering, withdew the enclosure, and heard the girl gasp with surprise. For himself, he was transfixed with consternation. His look wavered in dismay between the girl and the photograph in his hand—her photograph, which had been stolen from him aboard the Poonah.

She extended her hand imperiously. "Give that to me, please, Mr. Amber," she insisted. He surrendered it without a word. "Mr. Amber!" she cried in a voice that quivered with wonder and resentment.

He faced her with a hang-dog air, feeling that now indeed had his cause been made hopeless by this contretemps. "Confound Labertouche!" he cried in his ungrateful heart. "Confound his meddling mystery-mongering and hokum-pokus!"

"Well?" inquired the girl sharply.

"Yes, Miss Farrell." He could invent nothing else to say.

"You—you are going to explain, I presume."

He shook his head in despair. "No . . ."

"What!"

"I've no explanation whatever to make—that'd be adequate, I mean."

He saw that she vacillated by the moment. "I think, Mr. Amber, I think you will find it best to be [illegible] right hand you are to be."

"I said . . . " He stammered and paused, acutely conscious of the voices of the Englishman, Farrell, Raikes, and young Clarkson, drifting out through the open window of the drawing room. "If you'll be kind enough to return to our chairs," he said, "I'll try to make a satisfactory explanation. I'd rather not be overheard."

The girl doubted, was strongly inclined to refuse him; then, perhaps moved to compassion by his abject attitude, she relented and agreed. "Very well," she said, and retaining the picture moved swiftly before him into the shadowed garden. He lagged after her, inventing a hundred impracticable yarns. She found her chair and sat down with a manner of hauteur moderated by expectancy. He took his place beside her.

"Who sent you this photograph of me?" she began to cross-examine him.

"A friend."

"His name?"

"I'm sorry I can't tell you just now."

"Oh! . . . Why did he send it?"

"Because . . ." In his desperation it occurred to him to tell the truth—as much of it, at least, as his word to Rutton would permit. "Because it's mine. My friend knew I had lost it."

"How could it have been yours? It was taken in London a year ago. I sent copies only to personal friends who, I know, would not give them away." She thought it over and added: "The Queen had no copy. It's quite impossible that one should have got to America."

"None the less," he maintained stubbornly, "it's mine, and I got it in America."

"I can hardly be expected to believe that."

"I'm sorry."

"You persist in saying that you got it in America?"

"I must."

"When?"

"After you left the Queen."

"How?" she propounded triumphantly.

"I can't tell you, except vaguely. If you'll be content with the substance of the story, lacking details, for the present—"

"For the present? You mean you'll tell me the whole truth—?"

"Sometime, yes. But now, I may not. . . . A dear friend of mine owned the photograph. He gave it to me at my request. I came to India, and on the steamer lost it; in spite of my offer of a reward, I was obliged to leave the boat without it, when we got to Calcutta. My friend here knew how highly I valued it—"

"Why?"

"Because I'd told him."

"I don't mean that. Why do you value it so highly?"

"Because of its original." He took heart of despair and plunged boldly.

She looked him over calmly. "Do you mean me to understand that you told this friend you had followed me to India because you were in love with me?"

"Precisely. . . . Thank you."

She laughed a little, mockingly. "Are you, Mr. Amber?"

"In love with you? . . . Yes."

"And how soon will you be free to tell me the whole truth?"

"Only after . . . we're married."

She laughed adorably. "Mr. Amber," she protested, "you are dangerous—you are delightful! Do you really believe I shall ever marry you?"

"I hope so. I came to India to ask you—to use every means in my power to make you marry me. You see, I love you."

"And . . . and when is this to happen, please—in the name of impudence?"

"As soon as I can persuade you—tonight, if you will."

"Oh!"

He was obliged to laugh with her at the absurdity of the suggestion. "Or to morrow morning, at the very latest," he amended seriously. "I don't think we dare wait longer."

"Why is that?"

"Delays are perilous. There might be another chap."

"How can you be sure there isn't already?"

He fell sober enough at this. "But there isn't, is there, really?"

She delayed her reply provokingly. At length, "I don't see why I should say," she observed, "but I don't mind telling you—no, there isn't—yet." And as she spoke, Farrell called "Sophia!" from the window of the drawing room. She stood up, answering clearly with the assurance that she was coming, and began deliberately to move toward the house.

Amber followed, deeply anxious. "I've not offended you?"

"No," she told him gravely, "but you have both puzzled and mystified me. I shall have to sleep on this before I can make up my mind whether or not to be offended."

"And . . . will you marry me?"

"Oh, dear! How do I know?" she laughed.

"You won't give me a hint as to the complexion of my chances?"

She paused, turning. "The chances, Mr. Amber," she said, without affectation or coquetry, "are all in your favor . . . . If you can prove your case. I do like you very much, and you have been successful in rousing my interest in you to an astonishing degree. . . . But I shall have to think it over; you must allow me at least 12 hours' grace."

"You'll let me know tomorrow morning?"

"Yes."

"Early?"

"You've already been bidden to breakfast by Mr. Raikes."

"Meanwhile, may I have my photograph?"

"Hush, if you please! . . . I think not; if my decision is favorable, you shall have it back—[illegible] that."

(To be continued.)

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