

Half A Chance

BY FREDERICK S. ISHAM.

Author of "The Strollers," "Under the Rose," "The Lady of the Mount," Etc.

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(Continued.)

The curtain went up at last. The music began, and melodies that seemed born in the springtime succeeded one another. Perennial in freshness, these followed them; what joy, what gladness, what merriment, what madness! How long was the act; how short? It came to a sudden end. After applause and bravos men again got up and walked out. He, too, left his seat and strolled toward the back.

"Mr. Steele! One moment!" He found himself once more addressed by the good humored Captain Forsythe. "Behold in me a Mercury, committed to an imperative mission. You are commanded to appear not in the royal box, but in Sir Charles'."

"Sir Charles Wray's?" John Steele regarded the speaker quickly. "You see, I happened to mention I had seen you. Why didn't you bring him with you to the box?" queried Sir Charles. He, by the by, became a governor. "Only had time to shake hands this morning." "Yes; why didn't you?"

spoke up Miss Jocelyn. "You command me to bring him?" I inquired. "By all means," she laughed. "I command." So here I am.

John Steele did not answer, but Captain Forsythe without waiting for a reply turned and started up the broad stairway. The other, after a moment's hesitation, followed, duly entered one of the larger boxes, spoke to Sir Charles and his wife and returned the bow of their niece. Amid varied platitudes Steele's glance turned oftener to the girl. She was dressed in white; a snowy bow drooped from the slender bare shoulders as if it might any moment slip off; a string of pearls, each one with a pearl of pure light in the center, clasped her throat.

She waved her hand to the seat next to her and as he sat down, "Isn't it splendid!" irreverently.

"The spectacle or the opera?" he asked slowly, looking into blue eyes.

"It was the opera I meant. I suppose the spectacle is very grand; but, enthusiastically, "it was the music I was thinking of. How it grips one! Tell me what you think of 'The Barber,' Mr. Steele."

"I'm afraid my views wouldn't be very interesting," he answered. "I know nothing whatever about music."

"Nothing?" Her eyes widened a little. In her accent was mild wonder.

He looked down at the shimmering white folds near his feet. "In earlier days my environment was not exactly a musical one."

"No? I suppose you were engaged in more practical concerns?"

He did not answer directly. "Perhaps you wouldn't mind telling me something about Rossini's music, Miss Wray?"

"I tell you?" Her light silvery laugh rang out. "And Captain Forsythe has only been telling me—all of us—that you were one of the best informed men he had ever met."

"You see how wrong he was."

The abrupt appearance of the musicians and the dissonances attendant on tuning interrupted her response. Steele rose and was about to take his departure when Sir Charles intervened.

"Why don't you stay?" he asked, with true colonial heartiness. "Plenty of room! Unless you've a better place! Two vacant chairs!"

John Steele looked around. He saw three vacant chairs and took one a little aside and slightly behind the young girl, while the governor's wife, who had moved from the front at the conclusion of the previous act, now returned to her place next her niece. During the act some one came in and took a seat in the background. If Steele heard he did not look around. His gaze remained fastened on the stage. Between him and it—or them, art's gayly attired illusions—a tress of golden hair sometimes intervened, but he did not move. Through threads like woven flashes of light he regarded the scene of the poet's fantasy. Did they make her a part of it—did they seem to the man the fantasy's intangible medium, its imagery? Threads of gold, threads of melody! He saw the former, heard the latter. He seemed content with a partial view of the stage and so remained until the curtain went down. The girl turned. In her eyes was a question.

"Beautiful!" said the man, looking at her.

"Charming! What coloratura! And the bravura!" Captain Forsythe applauded vigorously.

"You've never met Lord Ronsdale, I believe, Mr. Steele?" Sir Charles' voice, close to his ear, inquired.

"Lord Ronsdale?" John Steele looked perfunctorily around toward the back of the box and saw there a face faintly illumined in the light from the stage, a cynical face, white, mask-like. Had his own features not been set from the partial glow that sifted upward the sudden emotion that swept Steele's countenance would have been observed. A sound escaped his lips—

was drowned, however, in a renewed outbreak of applause.

"Old friend, don't you know," went on the voice of Sir Charles. "Had one rare adventure together, one of the kind that cements a man to you."

As he spoke the light in the theater flared up. John Steele, no longer hesitating, uncertain, rose. His face had regained its composure. He regarded the slender, aristocratic figure of the nobleman in the background. Faultlessly dressed, Lord Ronsdale carried himself with his habitual languid air of assurance. The two bowed. The stony glance of the lord met the impassive one of the man. Then a puzzled look came into the nobleman's eyes. He gazed at Steele more closely. His glance cleared.

"Thought for an instant I'd seen you somewhere before, by Jove!" he drawled in his metallic tone. "But of course I haven't. Never forget a face, don't you know."

"I may not say so much, may not have the diplomat's gift of always remembering people to the extent your lordship possesses it, but I am equally certain I have never before enjoyed the honor of being presented to your lordship!" said John Steele. Steele turned and, holding out his hand, thanked Sir Charles and his wife for their courtesies.

Jocelyn Wray gazed around. "You are leaving before the last act," she said, with an accent of surprise.

"Our day at home, Mr. Steele, is Thursday," put in the governor's lady, majestically gracious.

His face, which had been contained, impassive, now betrayed in the slightest degree an expression of irresolution. Her quick look caught it, became more whimsical. He seemed actually for an instant asking himself if he should come. She laughed ever so slightly. The experience was novel. Who before had ever weighed the pros and cons when extended this privilege? Then the next moment the blue eyes lost some of their mirth. Perhaps his manner made her feel the frank informality she had unconsciously been guilty of. She regarded him more coldly.

"Thank you," he said. "You are very good. I shall be most glad."

And, bowing to her and to the others, he once more turned. As he passed Lord Ronsdale the eyes of the two men again met. Those of the nobleman suddenly dilated, and he started. His gaze followed the retreating figure.

(To Be Continued.)

SPECIAL NOTICE

Of Importance to the People of Medford.

Charles Strang desires to announce to the readers of the Mail Tribune that he has been able to secure the agency for Parisian Sage, the marvelous dandruff cure and delightful hair dressing.

Charles Strang is glad to state that Parisian Sage is a rigidly guaranteed hair invigorator.

It cures dandruff in two weeks by killing the dandruff microbes; it stops falling hair, itching scalp and splitting hair or money back.

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NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS AND BUILDERS.

Notice is hereby given that the board of directors of school district No. 49, Jackson county, Oregon, will receive bids for the erection of an annex to the Washington school, including a heating plant to be installed in the whole building, as per plans and specifications now on file in my office;

Also will receive bids for the erection of an East Side ward school building as per plans and specifications now on file in my office; all bids to be given separately on mason work, woodwork, electric work, plumbing and heating. All bids to be accompanied with certified check for 5 per cent of amount of bid. Board reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Bids to be filed by June 22 by 7:30 p. m.

ORIS CRAWFORD, Clerk.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL SCHOOL MEETING.

Notice is hereby given to the legal voters of school district No. 49 of Jackson county, State of Oregon, that the annual school meeting of said district will be held at high school building, to begin at the hour of 2 o'clock p. m. on the third Monday of June, being the 20th day of June, A. D. 1910, and polls to remain open until 6 o'clock p. m.

This meeting is called for the purpose of electing one director for the term of five years and the transaction of business usual at such meeting.

Dated this 6th day of June, 1910.
J. H. COCHRAN,
Chairman Board of Directors.

Attest:
ORIS CRAWFORD, Clerk.

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ANNUAL TENNIS TOURNAMENT

Second Yearly Event Opened This Morning on Oakdale Courts—Grants Pass, Ashland, Jacksonville and Talent Represented.

The second annual series of tournaments held by the Southern Oregon Tennis association opened this morning at 9:30 o'clock on the Oakdale courts. The following clubs are competing:

Grants Pass Tennis club, Ashland Tennis club, Jacksonville Tennis club, Talent Tennis club and the Oakdale Tennis club of Medford.

The program is as follows:

Friday Forenoon.

9:30—Talent vs. Medford, ladies' singles; Grants Pass vs. Jacksonville, ladies' singles.

11:00—Ashland vs. Grants Pass, men's singles; Medford vs. Talent, men's singles.

Friday Afternoon.

2:00—Ashland vs. Jacksonville, men's singles; Ashland vs. Grants Pass, ladies' singles.

3:00—Semi-finals, men's singles; semi-finals, ladies' singles.

4:00—Finals, men's singles, ladies' singles.

Saturday Forenoon.

9:00—Grants Pass vs. Medford, ladies' doubles; Ashland vs. Talent, ladies' doubles.

10:00—Ashland vs. Talent, men's doubles; Grants Pass vs. Jacksonville, men's doubles.

11:00—Medford vs. Grants Pass, men's doubles; Jacksonville vs. Ashland, ladies' doubles.

Saturday Afternoon.

1:30—Semi-finals, men's doubles; Grants Pass vs. Jacksonville, mixed doubles.

2:30—Medford vs. Ashland, mixed doubles; Grants Pass vs. Talent, mixed doubles.

3:30—Semi-finals, mixed doubles; finals, mixed doubles.

4:30—Finals, mixed doubles.

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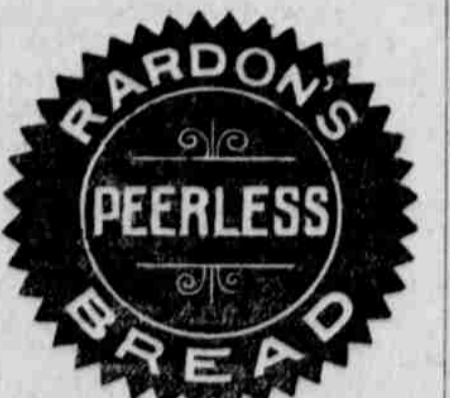
Fine corner lot, close to Oakdale, in good location, for few days at \$450; it's a bargain.

Oak Ridge is the new addition where you get fine lots, with shade trees, and at right prices; 10 per cent cash and 10 per cent per month. Don't fail to "get in" on this and get your lots reserved.

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