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THOMPSON, SONS & CO.

Grain Commission Merchants

700-703A Grain Exchange

WINNIPEG, CANADA

UNION BANK OF CANADA

Established 1865

Head Office - Winnipeg

Paid-up Capital \$5,000,000
Reserve and Undivided Profits 3,175,000
Total Assets, over 63,000,000

HON. PRESIDENT - HON. J. SHARPLES

PRESIDENT - JOHN GALT

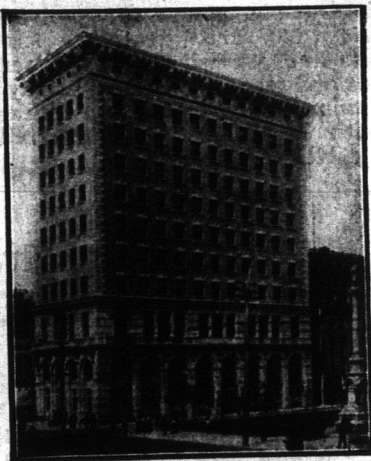
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Head Office, Winnipeg.

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Interest Allowed on Deposits.

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This Bank, having over 260 branches in Canada, extending from Halifax to Prince Rupert, offers excellent facilities for the transaction of every description of banking business. It has correspondents in all cities of importance throughout Canada, the United States, the Continent of Europe, and the British Colonies. Collections made in all parts of the Dominion, and returns promptly, remitted at lowest rates of exchange.

Winnipeg Branch, D. M. NEEVE, Manager. F. J. BOULTON, Asst.-Manager.

"Ah, that is all, is it?"

Uncle Max smiled at his brother. He rose and began to fill the long German pipe on the mantelpiece. Amy helped the servant to clear the table, placed a box of chessmen ready for her father, and, drawing near the lamp, began to darn some socks.

The two old men looked meaningfully at one another. Uncle Max reached for the paper and ran his finger down a column.

"Here, my child—here, Amy, look what I have found for you."

He read aloud:

"Madame Carsetti seeks an accompanist for her forthcoming tour in the States. Salary, five pounds per week and all expenses paid. Apply first by letter, Hotel C—, Strand."

Amy took the paper from Uncle Max and read it attentively.

"It is more than you are earning, my child. It is also a fine opening, and may lead to fame—fame! Ha, Ha! You remember the Carsetti, Adelbert? Her father was Italian-Swiss and her mother a Russian Jew. It was in Leipsic, Amy, when your father and I were playing in the Conservatorium. Carsetti, who had the finest basso I have ever heard, brought her, a little black-eyed child, and she sat on my knee and played with Adelbert's watch-chain. 'You will be famous, little one,' I said to her, 'and then you will sing songs of my brother.' Is it not so, Adelbert?"

The old man sighed.

"The dreams of youth, brother—the dreams of youth."

Amy spoke in her clipped, practical voice:

"It would be no use, Uncle Max; I should never get such a post. You know you do not care for my accompaniments."

Uncle Max pulled at his pipe. His enthusiastic nature would admit of no failure.

"Not so, not so. You will obtain this engagement, and when you are on excellent terms with the Carsetti you will show her your father's songs, and she will sing them. She is soprano. She will take that C in alt. in 'Ariosa,' Adelbert, pure and free like a lark in the sky."

Old Adelbert answered never a word, only his hand trembled as he set the men and the game began.

That evening Amy wrote for a long time. She copied out in her neat handwriting her various testimonials. She composed a stilted little letter applying for the post, and the next day as she went to work she slipped it in the box. She had no hope whatever of a favorable reply. It had been written to please Uncle Max, and from that time the matter went entirely out of her mind.

Nearly a fortnight later she came home to find the two old men poring over an oblong of pinkish-yellow paper. Her father, usually so taciturn, hailed her with enthusiasm.

"The chance of my life has come—the chance of my life!"

"Yes, the chance of his life!" echoed Uncle Max.

Amy had never seen her father so excited. She looked anxiously at the flush on his hoary cheek, the trembling of his gigantic knotted hands.

"What is it, father?"

The telegram was handed to her. It was addressed to "Vinter."

Your passage taken on the Kaiser Wilhelm. Please go on board Wednesday next 11 a.m. Pass follows. Accompany me America.—CARSETTI.

It was now Monday.

"Come, come, do not waste time!" cried Uncle Max. "We must get out your music, Adelbert, and see what the child shall take. The grand opera 'Ariosa,' the oratorio 'Christus,' and the lyrics—above all, the lyrics."

Amy folded and replaced the telegram in the envelope. She was strangely excited herself, and found that her hands were trembling. She went over to Mr. Vinter, and from habit the old man leant heavily on her shoulder to raise himself.

"Come to supper, father and Uncle Max," she said. "We will talk about it afterwards."

"Ha, ha, the little one! How calm she is, how practical; but she has not the artistic temperament. As you say, we must eat—we must eat."

"Accompany me America." The words rang in her ears long after the little household had gone to bed. The wonderful, the unexpected, had happened after all. She had been engaged, and without even a personal interview, a practical test. The testimonials, of course, were excellent, and the examinations. She knew herself to be a conscientious, careful player. There was no fault to find with her technique; incessant practice from her childhood had produced quite a wonderful precision of touch in those naturally stiff, stocky fingers; but what of the soul, the gemuth? More than once she had been reluctantly forced to admit to herself that she was somehow lacking in these respects. She was afraid of the unknown, of possible failure. She almost wished this wonderful chance had not come to her. It was out of the question, however, to refuse the offer. She could not so disappoint her father and Uncle Max. She must set about finding a substitute at once. The large musical Institute which employed her would possibly keep the post open for her for a time; in any case she knew enough about such matters to be aware that having accompanied so great an artist as Carsetti, there would be no further difficulty in obtaining engagements. Consoled by this thought she slept dreamlessly till morning.

Amongst the passengers who thronged on board the great liner at Southampton Dock none looked so self possessed or felt so much the reverse as Amy Vinter. She had seen her trunk—a going concern in more senses than one—hoisted and deposited by the crane amidst numerous others of more robust physique handled by the grimy stevedores. There had been no sign of her patron at Waterloo, and she concluded, rightly perhaps, that the great lady, disliking early rising, had spent the night at Southampton. Travelling, to Amy, was an almost entirely new experience. She had been once or twice to the seaside, but somehow it had always been just a glorified Medbury Road, with bathing-machines at one end and a railway-station at the other. She had no idea what course she ought to pursue, so, grasping her bag and umbrella, she began to explore the warren-like intricacies of the lower decks. Here she became immediately lost. Round and round and in and out she wandered, while busy stewards, shrill-voiced American women, their veils streaming behind them, nurses, children, men and women, all the rattle and roar of an ocean-going steamer passed and repassed before her. Her peregrinations brought her into pink-and-blue velvet rooms of incredible beauty, reading and writing-rooms, where the leather chairs were screwed into the floor and the dullest of dull literature in the shape of time-tables, guide-books, catalogues, and numerous advertisements were strewn on the tables. Once, passing to consider the situation, she took refuge on the edge of a bunk, only to be ignominiously turned out by a stout Dutch woman, who then and there lay down with the palpable intention of stirring no more till Sandy Hook should heave in sight. No one had a minute to spare, and her timid questions answered incoherently or not at all. She was told finally by a gold-laced official to present herself at the office, and in search of this harbor of refuge found the brass-bound treads of the stairs moving under her feet. She clutched at the hand-rail to steady herself. The ship was in motion. This was the crisis of Amy's life, though she did not know it. At the moment when the office appeared in sight, where inquiries for Madame Carsetti would have put an end to her wanderings, she became conscious of a sensation which entirely precluded any possibility of reaching that desirable goal. A kindly stewardess, passing at that moment, placed a stout, supporting arm under hers and conveyed her to some remote corner where she became for the next few hours oblivious of and indifferent to all the more vital problems of human existence. When she regained some measure of interest in life the ship had left Cherbourg, and had turned its face