

balance of the jewellery was sold recently. Our practice is to keep all jewellery for twelve months at least; sometimes for two years—generally two years, I think—and then at the expiration of that time, if no claim is made for it, we sell it. We have not the opportunity of storing large quantities of things here.

2493. You tell us you have never admitted the kinship of the deceased?—No, we have not.

2494. Would you listen to this letter: "To Mr. Arthur E. Dallon, Police Court, Gatton, Queensland, 26th March, 1889.—Marie Dallon, deceased: Replying to your letter of the 9th instant, none of your late mother's jewellery was sold. The boxes of clothing mentioned by you are still at Mr. Morrison's, and will be forwarded to you, with your gold watch and your mother's brooch, if you pay the carriage. Your claim to the residue, as sole next-of-kin, cannot be established without proofs of kinship.—R. C. HAMERTON"?—He says, "Mrs. Dallon is my mother;" we say we cannot recognise his claim to anything belonging to her until he has established his claim in legal form.

2495. What do you call legal form?—By producing marriage certificate of parents, certificates of births of children and of the deaths of such as have died, to know who are the persons surviving who are entitled to share.

2496. Would not that be a difficult thing to do in the case of persons in certain ranks of life?—[No answer.]

2497. *The Chairman.*] Is that done in every case?—We have paid away little things in estates worth £1 10s. or £2, but Mr. Hamerton has taken the personal responsibility of paying, but it is his own personal responsibility. This estate is under the value of £100, exclusive of the jewellery.

2498. Mr. Morrison appears to have received certain things to be forwarded to Arthur Dallon?—Yes; you will find them all detailed there in my writing, I think. There was very little left then. There was her watch, and some few things.

2499. Mr. Morrison writes on the 7th April, 1891: "Sir,—Would you kindly let me know if the jewellery in the estate of the late Mrs. M. Dallon is to be sold yet, as I arranged with the Rev. Mr. De Castro to send me word when they are to be sold, as I intend buying the ladies' gold watch, the bracelet, and the lace as a memento to my wife of the old lady.—I am, yours respectfully, Wm. LESLIE MORRISON.—R. C. Hamerton, Esq., Public Trustee"?—I do not recollect having made any arrangement with Mr. Morrison to let him know when the things were to be sold. It is quite an irregular thing to do. The auctioneer always advertises the sale of deceased's effects, sometimes giving the name, sometimes not.

2500. Do you often give the name?—The name ought not to be given by rights.

2501. Why not?—I believe in that estate Thomas did advertise the name.

2502. Have you a very firm conviction that he did advertise the name?—As far as I recollect.

2503. Would you kindly look at this advertisement?—As a general rule we do not give the name, so I should not be surprised to find that we have not given it in this instance.

2504. This sale took place on the 12th January, and here is the advertisement of it: "This day, Saturday, 12th January, at 10.30 o'clock. Unreserved sale of furniture and personal effects, in the Panama Street Land and General Mercantile Auction-rooms. By order of the Public Trustee. George Thomas and Co. have been favoured with instructions from R. C. Hamerton, Esq., Public Trustee, to sell by auction, at their new and spacious hall, Panama Street, on Saturday, 12th January, at 10.30 a.m. sharp, a large and varied assortment of superior personal effects and furniture, consisting of circular and occasional tables, Austrian and Grecian chairs, chests drawers, washstands, glassware, chinaware, ornaments, ladies' clothing in great variety, particulars of which would occupy too much space in an advertisement. The sale is entirely unreserved. F. W. HAYBITTLE, Auctioneer." Is there anything about Mrs. Dallon there?—I did not say the name was given.

2505. Certainly, if the name is not given in that advertisement, how are relatives or friends of the deceased to know when their effects are going to be sold?—If relatives knew the effects were going to be sold they would not allow them to be sold, but would make a claim for them beforehand.

2506. Would it not be proper that they should claim?—If there were relatives here entitled to receive them.

2507. Do I understand the department deliberately conceals the name with a view to relatives not claiming?—We have never advertised the names; it has been the practice from the commencement to withhold the names except in particular instances.

2508. Then, the practice has been to conceal practically from relatives the fact that the properties of intestate persons were going to be submitted for sale by auction. Do you think it is right, Mr. De Castro?—I think it is quite right.

2509. Do you think it right that concealment should exist?—I do not think it concealment at all.

2510. Does it not follow, if persons have left valuable personal effects and jewellery, that their friends, even if there are no relatives, might desire to possess some memento of them, and that the effects are therefore much more likely to bring a higher price?—We should not sell in such a case as where friends would claim them.

2511. How could friends claim them under those circumstances? Does it not follow, as a matter of common-sense, that they would bring a higher price?—It may be so.

2512. Would it not be advisable, as a matter of ordinary business, to give the names?—We have never thought so.

2513. Is it not possible that relatives might be living at some distance from the place whose attention would be attracted by advertisement of the name of the deceased person, and the fact of his things being sold, which otherwise would not be attracted, and those relatives might have claims?—They would know of the death.