



Polly Chase's Peculiar Predicament

Shall She Give Up Being Adopted Daughter of the World's Richest Playwright to Let Him Marry Haughty Lady Scott, the Antarctic Hero's Widow? And Who'll Be Pretty Polly's Papa Then? Everybody Wonders

THESE are the characters in a real life drama of to-day that has more psychological and sentimental complexities than any Ibsen or Pinero play:

Sir James Matthew Barrie, author of "The Little Minister," "Peter Pan," etc., etc.

Lady Scott, widow of England's Antarctic hero, sculptress, woman of stern idealism.

Polly Chase, once a "Pink Pajama Girl" in the United States, now adopted daughter of Barrie and an actress of universally recognized charm and talent.

A report has been current in very well informed quarters in London that Barrie was about to marry Lady Scott. Undoubtedly they are very intimate friends, and the author considers himself responsible for the future of the widow's little son, Peter. It has even been stated that the pair had been secretly married. This statement was promptly denied, but no information about future plans could be obtained. Barrie himself made this rather puzzling statement:

"There is no reason why Lady Scott should not marry. And equally there is no reason why, if she decides to remarry, she should keep the matter secret."

Now, according to those who have studied the intricacies of this situation the real obstacle to the marriage of Barrie and Lady Scott is simply Polly Chase. Barrie adopted Polly some years ago, when he was still living with his first wife. It is understood that he then made her the principal heir to his fortune, which is estimated at \$2,500,000, almost entirely derived from his enormously successful plays. It is said that "The Little Minister" alone yielded him \$450,000. America has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to the playwright's coffers. He received the title of baronet in 1913, which makes him "Sir James Matthew Barrie."

Lady Scott, it is affirmed, could not endure as stepdaughter Polly Chase, the actress and former "Pink Pajama Girl." Lady Scott, you see, lives most of the time on the heights of Parnassus, devoted to fine art, the memories of a heroic husband and the idealistic education of her children.

"Down Polly Chase or you can't marry me," is in effect Lady Scott's last word to Barrie. Will Polly relinquish her pleasant

position as adopted daughter of the most successful and wealthy playwright of the day? It seems a great deal to expect of her. Will Barrie disinherit her? That is too cruel an act to expect from a man of his amiable character.

Barrie's original course in adopting a charming and well-grown young woman of the stage will appear rather puzzling to many simple minded people. It can only be understood by those who have made a thorough study of all the author's writings. To those who have mastered the extraordinary psychology revealed by such books as "Sentimental Tommy," and "Tommy and Grizel," no sentimental action by Barrie need appear surprising. It may safely be said that there is nothing of the red-blooded primitive man, "the man's man" of American fiction, about Barrie. He is gentle and subtle.

Five years ago Barrie obtained a divorce from his first wife, formerly Mary Ansell, a very handsome English actress. He obtained it on the ground of her relations with Gilbert Cannan, a rising young critic, who in the intervals of calling on Mrs. Barrie was trying to improve the stage censorship. The evidence showed that he had repeatedly abused Barrie's hospitality. Barrie offered to forgive his wife if she would express contrition, but she wouldn't. He wept when he went into court. Then he gave a house in London, a house in the country and a handsome income for life to his divorced wife.

The first Mrs. Barrie was not altogether pleased with Polly Chase as an adopted daughter. The sentimental Barrie discovered that Polly was the ideal child of his dreams from the first time he set eyes on her. Originally she had made her success in musical shows, in which shapely limbs were the great attraction. She went to London from America and after some other experiences obtained an engagement as one of the children in the first production of "Peter Pan."

It was then that she pleased Barrie so much. In the next production of "Peter Pan" she played the title part and made an immense success. She proved that she possessed talent of a serious order.

Nature has marked Barrie as a man to be blessed with many women friends. With so much sentiment and so much money he was sure to be favored in that way. They include many types of femininity and among them one of the most distinguished is Lady Scott.

When the late Captain Robert F. Scott went away on his last voyage to the south polar regions he left his wife and family in a sense in the care of Barrie. He knew Barrie's generous and tender nature, his love for children and his unselfish devotion to women.

Barrie is extremely fond of children and naturally enough he never had any of his own. He has written much about children and he has shown a strong propensity for adopting other children besides Polly Chase.

When the Captain and his companions died heroically in the polar wastes, one of his last messages was addressed to Barrie and related to his son Peter.

"Give the boy a chance, if the state won't do it. He ought to have good stuff in him," the Captain wrote.

This solemn message made the Scott widow a sacred trust to the large hearted playwright. He regards Captain Scott's children as his own. The Captain's message referred to his four-year-old son, Peter, but there is another boy, born while the explorer was away, whom he never saw.

Lady Scott is a sculptress of



talent and an idealist in many ways. She is trying to make her son Peter a perfect specimen of manly strength and beauty, in every way worthy of his heroic father. He never wears shoes or an covering upon his legs. His unconventional costume was remarked at the memorial services in honor of his father. He is allowed to see only what is beautiful and uplifting in art and nature.

Yet another element enters into this complicated situation. That is the public attitude in England concerning Lady Scott's proposed remarriage. Many persons think that as the widow of a national hero she should keep herself apart in sacred and unsoftened loneliness. This theory

would make her a sort of public monument. They point out that the nation has done much for her. The title which would have been given to her husband had he lived was given to her. Her husband's full pay as a naval captain on active service, amounting to \$4,900 a year, was bestowed on her. Out of the public subscription raised for the families of Scott's party, \$42,500 was given to her and \$17,500 to her son, Peter.

The King offered her apartments in Hampton Court Palace, but she declined this on the ground that she could not carry on her sculpture there.

In view of all this many fervent patriots think Lady Scott would be ungrateful and undignified if she accepted the name and protection of another husband. On the other hand there is not lacking many good people who warmly assert that any young widow has a right to remarry

"Pretty Polly Chase Is Up a Tree Just Like Barrie's Famous 'Peter Pan.' Will Lady Scott Be Strong Enough to Shake Her Down? Everybody Wonders."

and that it is wicked to ask her to sacrifice herself to the memory of a dead husband, however heroic. Captain Scott, these people argue, would not have asked her to remain unmarried on his own account, but would unselfishly have wished her to do the best thing she could for herself and the children.

Nevertheless those who think she ought to remain unmarried are influential in her immediate surroundings. It is believed that she might defy them, but she could only do it if Miss Polly Chase would relinquish her position as Barrie's adopted daughter. Some of the puritans would perhaps be unkind enough to speak of the clever young actress as "Polly, the Pink Pajama Girl."

They would groan and roll up their eyes at the thought that she was helping to bring up Captain Scott's little boys. They would say that the British nation had lavished its generosity on Lady Scott in vain.

It seems then certain that Sir James Matthew Barrie cannot win the hero's widow unless pretty Polly Chase will extinguish herself and that is asking too much. It is a predicament as puzzling and cruel as any in which "Sentimental Tommy" ever found himself.

The World-Famous "Hoodoo" Mummy a Secret Passenger on the Titanic?

London, June 1.

THE notorious haunted mummy case in the British Museum is now credited by the superstitious with having caused an even greater tragedy than any yet recorded in its 3,000 years of tragic history.

This time it is the dreadful Titanic disaster that is associated with the deadly mummy case. According to a story which is being widely circulated here the beautifully painted and gilded mummy case, which is an object of remarkable interest, was secured by an American millionaire from the museum, where it had been placed in the cellar to save the attendants and visitors from the baleful effects of its exhibition in the public rooms. The American shipped it on the Titanic, and the great ship went down in the manner everybody is familiar with.

The story of this latest episode is published by the International Psychic Gazette, a journal extensively

read by those interested in psychic research and various forms of mysticism and alleged supernatural phenomena. Here is its account:

"Every one has heard of the malign Egyptian mummy case which was brought to the British Museum some years ago, and whose presence dealt death and disaster to attendants and others who looked upon it. A story is now being told in well-informed circles which is said to have emanated from one of the museum authorities. From this it would appear that several of the museum attendants, convinced that they were in danger of their lives, presented an ultimatum that the coffin-lid must be removed from their vicinity or they would resign."

"Their demands were considered by the curators, and, in view of the catalogue of calamities that somehow seemed connected with the mummy case, their demand was considered reasonable. A replica was accordingly made and painted in exact facsimile, and was exhibited to the public as the real thing, no outsider being any the wiser or the worse. The coffin itself was deposited in an obscure cellar in the vaults of the museum. Then all stories as to the evil influence of the Egyptian coffin ceased."

"The attendants exhibited the replica with calm minds and stolid insensibility. The public who gazed upon it suffered no ill-effects. By and by, however, an American Egyptologist inspected the coffin and ascertained that it was certainly not genuine. It was a faithful copy, but his expert eye discovered it to be a fraud! To drop on the British Museum exhibiting a fake was an event of first-class importance, and an exposure that would have brought world-wide ridicule upon the venerable British repository of antiquarian art and treasure seemed imminent."

"The curators, therefore, took the American visitor into their confidence and explained what had been done. Moreover, they took him to the cellar and showed him the original coffin, and he declared that he was satisfied."

"But look here," he said. "I guess this fine mummy case is not a bit of good to you in your cellars. I want that coffin for America! I'll make you a bid for it!"

"He did, and it was sold to him on

his own terms. It was carefully packed, so that no one could guess what its covering case contained; and arrangements were made so that no hitch would be caused by Custom House examinations. And so the coffin was dispatched to America—on board the "Titanic"! It now rests miles deep in the Atlantic. The question being discussed is whether the coffin's reputed diabolical power buried the leviathan to its doom."

However baseless, irrational and credulous their attitude may appear, many persons undoubtedly believe that the mummy case really had a mysterious connection with this and other tragedies. The fact that so many persons have been affected by terror of this inanimate object is in itself a subject of serious interest.

The Princess Hetara, daughter of the Pharaoh Amen Hotep III. of the eighteenth dynasty, one of the greatest kings of ancient Egypt. The Princess was a priestess of the Temple of Amen-Ra, and lived about 3,000 years ago.

The mummy itself was separated from the case many years ago and lost. This is an important part of the tragic history of the relic. A mummy case is really more interesting than the mummy itself. When the case is of fine quality it bears a striking likeness of the deceased, is richly decorated and is in every way an object of high art. The case in question is a splendid specimen. The mummy itself is but an unsightly bundle of withered flesh, bones and dingy wrappings.

The Princess Hetara deserted the Temple of Amen-Ra in order to aid her half brother, who was fighting for the throne. The curse of the god has rested upon her ever since. Thus began the story which was published when her evil influence first attracted notice. History tells us that she was murdered by a devotee of Amen-Ra, but was buried with royal honors.

Forty years ago the mummy and case were bought by a party of Englishmen in Egypt. On the way back up the Nile the mummy was mysteriously lost, but the party reached England with the case. Soon afterward one of them was shot, another lost his right arm in an accident, and a third was ruined. The sister of the deceased owner gave the mummy case to the British Museum.



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