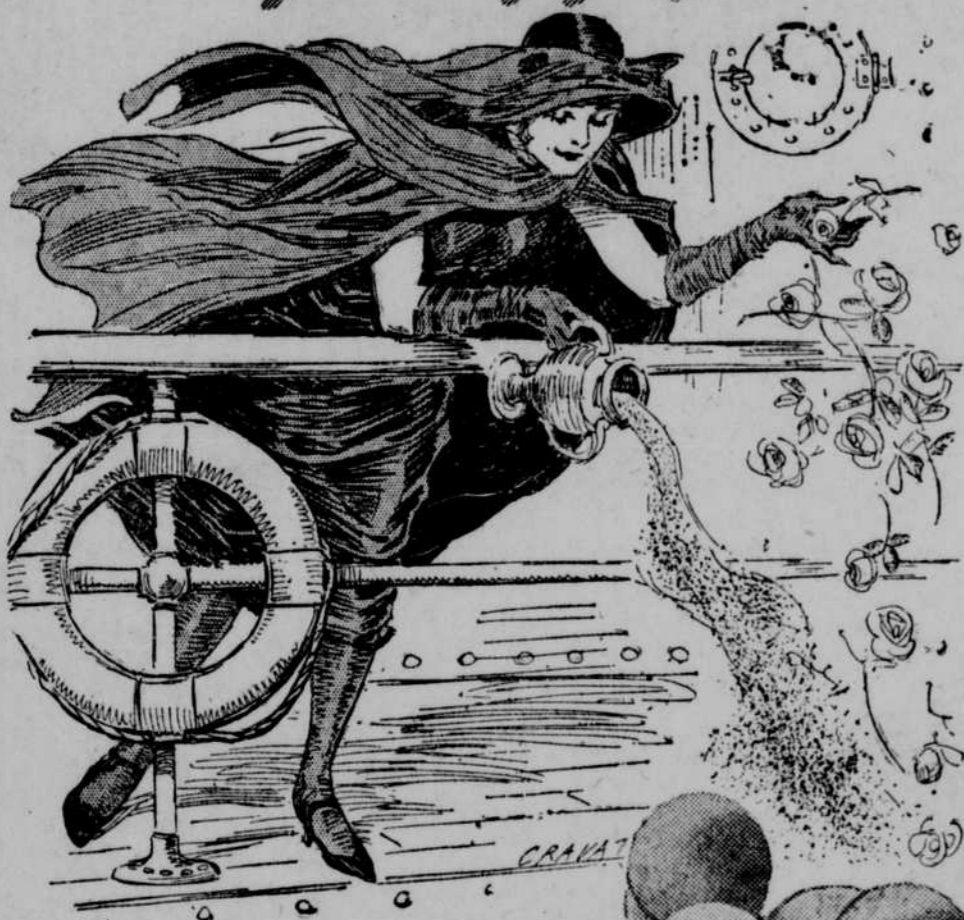


Very Happy Ending of the Former Governess's Sad Trip



"When the liner reached mid-ocean tearful Miss Benjamin bent reverently over the rail, scattering to the four winds the grim contents of the funeral urn and following them with great handfuls of roses and other flowers."

WHEN Miss Anna Marie Bolchi Benjamin sailed for Europe a few weeks ago it was under circumstances remarkably different from those which marked her original arrival in America as a small girl.

Then she was only an obscure Italian immigrant, coming with others of her family to this land of opportunity in the hope of finding a better living than they could make in Italy.

Now this same girl is a rich young woman and a member by legal adoption of one of America's oldest, proudest, most distinguished families. She is the mistress of a fashionable New York mansion, has servants to wait on her, limousines to ride in and all the other luxuries to be had from a fortune of

to give more than a passing thought to the contrast between her arrival here in the steerage and her sailing now as the occupant of one of the most expensive first cabins.

The mission that took her to Europe was a sad one. She carried with her in a costly urn the ashes of the late Park Benjamin, the famous lawyer, editor and financier who had adopted her, left her the bulk of his fortune and defied even his own sons and daughters for her sake.

In his will Mr. Benjamin was not satisfied with disinheriting his flesh and blood and leaving practically his entire estate to the Italian girl who had entered his family as a governess. He gave still another striking bit of evidence of his love for her by directing that his ashes, instead of being buried with those of others of his family, should be scattered in mid-ocean by the hands of his adopted daughter.

The liner reached a point halfway between America and Europe one evening just as the sun was sinking below the horizon. Miss Benjamin, a tearful figure in black, appeared on deck, carrying the funeral urn. While officers of the ship and friends of hers stood with reverently bared heads she scattered the ashes to the four winds and as they vanished she followed them with great handfuls of roses and other flowers.

Little did she realize as she carried out her adopted father's last wishes that the trans-Atlantic trip she had undertaken for such a sad purpose was leading her straight to the marriage altar.

But this is exactly where it led, and the romance that has come into her life is still another: evidence of how dear she was to the late Park Benjamin and how determined he was to safeguard her future happiness in every way possible.

For many years Arthur Louis Fullman had been the personal attorney of Park Benjamin and since the latter's death he has been the custodian of the finances of the estate. Mr. Benjamin had the greatest confidence in Mr. Fullman's integrity and good judgment and among his last words to his adopted daughter as he lay dying were these: "Consult Mr. Fullman whenever you find yourself in any difficulties."

Did the late Mr. Benjamin have in mind something more than mere business matters when he urged his beloved Anna to put her confidence in Mr. Fullman?

Did he, anxious up to the very moment of his death for her welfare, think thus to throw her in the way of exactly

The Late Park Benjamin's Adopted Daughter, Who Crossed the Atlantic to Scatter His Ashes, Will Return the Bride of the Very Man He Recommended to Her on His Death Bed



Mrs. Enrico Caruso, who opposed her father's adoption of the family's servant and was disinherited along with the rest of the children

the sort of man he would like her to have for a husband?

There are many who think so, since the cables brought the news that the former Anna Benjamin, who started her American career as a poor immigrant girl and is now one of the nation's wealthy young women, has become Mrs.

Fullman to the letter. As the weeks went by she found herself going to him more and more frequently for advice in all sorts of matters. Until she reached Europe, however, on her recent trip she is said to have had no suspicion that this friendship between her and the attorney was growing into something deeper.

While visiting her old home in Italy Miss Benjamin was surprised to receive a cablegram, saying that he was sailing for England and asking her if she could not arrange to meet him there. Thinking that some serious difficulty concerning the estate must have arisen, she hurried to London, but when Mr. Fullman joined her there she found it was love and not details of business that he wanted to discuss. The discussion was not long drawn out and, as everybody now knows, it ended very blissfully with Miss Benjamin's marriage to Mr. Fullman in the little Catholic Church of Corpus Christi, in London.

Anna Bolchi was a girl of twelve when she first took her place in the family whose name she now bears and whose fortune has very largely come into her possession. She was a great favorite with Mr. Benjamin from the start and when she was old enough he made her the governess for his daughter Dorothy—the one who afterward incurred his great displeasure by marrying the late Enrico Caruso.

When Dorothy Benjamin grew too old to need a governess Anna Bolchi became her companion. She traveled widely all over this country and Europe with Dorothy and her parents.

Dorothy Benjamin and all her brothers and sisters liked Anna Bolchi and admired her many good qualities. They regarded her, however, only as a faithful servant and with nothing like the fondness which their father had developed for the girl.

It was in 1919 that Mr. Benjamin astonished his family by taking steps to adopt Miss Bolchi by due process of law. Shortly before this there had been several less serious disagreements between him and his children, but this proposal of his precipitated a quarrel that raged bitterly as long as he lived.

The children tried by every means in

The late Enrico Caruso and the daughter whom he left so rich that she has no need to worry about the fortune her mother lost

their power to stop the adoption, but stern old Park Benjamin was not a man to be swerved from any purpose on which he had once set his heart.

In December, 1919, the adoption of Anna Bolchi was arranged according to law at Wilkes-Barre, Pa. The immigrant girl and former governess took her place as a recognized member of the proud Benjamin family.

On Mr. Benjamin's death a few years later it was seen that he had done more than place her on a par with his natural children—that he held her dearer

than any of his own flesh and blood. When his will was filed for probate it was found he had disinherited Dorothy and all the rest and left his entire estate, with the exception of a number of minor bequests, to his adopted daughter. The estate was valued at considerably more than half a million dollars. The will, which was written in Mr. Benjamin's own hand, explained the disinheriting of his children in favor of the former governess on the ground of "unfilial conduct."

The disinherited children immediately

banded together to contest the will and lengthy litigation followed. The matter was finally settled out of court by a bargain which, it is understood, left Anna Bolchi Benjamin almost as wealthy as she would have been if there had been no contest.

What makes the peculiar fondness which grew up in old Benjamin's heart for the Italian immigrant girl whom he employed as his daughter's governess and companion so extraordinary is the fact that he came from the bluest blooded Knickerbocker stock.

He was educated first in some of New York's finest private schools and later at the United States Naval Academy. Abandoning a career as a sailor for the law, he was admitted to the bar and soon became a celebrated expert in patent litigation and also a scientific editor and author.

The chord in Park Benjamin's heart which was so deeply touched by Anna Bolchi's Italian charm singularly failed to show any sympathetic throbbings when his daughter Dorothy fell in love with an Italian—the great Caruso. Most



The former Anna Bolchi as she looks since becoming the adopted daughter of the late Park Benjamin and inheriting the fortune he left to her instead of to his own children



On the left, the former Miss Bolchi in the days when she was only an obscure Italian girl, holding a servant's job in the rich and fashionable Benjamin family

of the things said when he heard the news were quite unprintable.

This is said to have been a surprise to Dorothy and her intimates, who thought that Anna Bolchi's pride of nationality and the strong sold she

had on Mr. Benjamin's affection would enable her to overcome Mr. Benjamin's bitter opposition to Caruso.

But she failed to do anything of the kind. Even after Caruso had proved himself the most devoted of husbands he could not win the old man's forgiveness.

The late Enrico Caruso had his turn for revenge when Mr. Benjamin announced his intention of adopting Anna Bolchi as his daughter. Instead of supporting the cause of his fellow-countrywoman the singer lent his wife and the rest of the children every assistance in the fight they made.

This seems to be a sore spot in the former Anna Bolchi's memories of her eventful past, for the first words she uttered after her marriage to Mr. Fullman in London the other day were these: "I am not Caruso's sister-in-law. I wish they would let the dead artist rest."

Through Caruso's artistic genius and the shrewdness he showed in managing his financial affairs his widow and child were left immensely wealthy. It is the other Benjamin children rather than Mrs. Caruso who have great cause for regret that their father saw fit in his old age to adopt Dorothy's former governess and companion.