Nan Patterson's Past Pursues Her

Though Unconvicted, She Has a Continuous Fight Against an Unkind Fate

A GAUNT and grisly shadow pursues a young woman—a young woman whose fair face has won the love, infatuation and admiration of men; whose beauty has been a blessing and a curse, and who, today, occupies as tragic and pathetic a position as that of any woman in this wide land.

Nan Patterson's career, once glowing with promise of success, is tinged with sorrow. Wherever she goes this shadow of her past pursues her. In her moments of pleasure it dashes the wine of enjoyment from her lips.

By its malign influence her dreams of ambition have been blighted. The plays in which she appeared have been signal failures.

By its persistent, taunting presence she is marked wherever she goes; from city to city it hounds her, and recently, in Pittsburg, took the shape of scandals which resulted in detectives trying to force her to leave the city.

And, for the first time since she left the courtroom, not exonerated, after a third trial, of the murder of "Caesar" Young, a man has stepped forward to protect her.

Indignant because of the hounding of the young woman by the city detectives, who he learned were private employes, Mayor Guthrie suspended one of the sleuths who demanded that the young actress leave the town, and gave her virtually the freedom of the city.

"Spin, spin, Clotho, spin,
Lachesis twist and Atropos sever;
In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever."

SINCE she walked from the courtroom that memorable May day in 1905, the shadow of an alleged crime stalking behind her, poor Nan Patterson has known no peace or rest.

When she left the prison cell she hoped to find in the new life before her true love, success as the reward of honest, hard work and security from the calumnies of her persecutors. But instead of true love she was offered only such tawdry and evil attention as the gamesters and sports of her old world deigned.

Instead of success she was hooted from the boards, and her notoriety as "Nan Patterson, of the Florodora sextette," "Nan Patterson, accused of the murder of Caesar Young," has pursued her relentlessly.

In Altoona last April the billboards carried great flaming posters announcing that:

"NAN PATTERSON
Late of
The Florodora Sextette,
Appears in
THE ROMANCE OF PANAMA."

At the opera house that evening, when the doors opened, only a small crowd gathered. They straggled into the house, morbid curiosity written on their faces. Among the meager gathering were only a few women. Coarse words were bandied about; there were vulgar outbursts of laughter.

Then the curtain rose. The heroine of "The Romance of Panama" appeared. Nan Patterson! The actress accused of killing her lover! Once the pride of the famous sextette, with admirers counted by the scores! Now a stout though pale woman, with telltale lines on her face, nervous, ill at ease. A woman who spoke haltingly, whose acting was stilted. Her voice had become unmusical—because, possibly, she was overcome with nervous confusion.

Before the curtain went down most of the women rose and left. There had been a rumor that there were objectionable features to the play. These were lacking. Also the play and the actors were lacking—lacking in interest.

Back in the wings Nan broke down and wept. This was the most signal failure of her career. It meant the disbanding of the company, her giving up of the stage. Yes, she would leave it forever. Town after town had expressed its disapproval of her appearing on the boards, against her using the notoriety which attached to her name to draw crowds. And Nan gave up. It was all off. In vain the painted and peroxide ladies of the cast surrounded and offered her sympathy.

"I wanted to do the right thing," she wept. "I wanted to make a living on the stage. I had done it. I don't see why people should have turned against me. Oh, if they had only been kinder, after my terrible experience!"

EVERYWHERE UNDER A BAN

From Altoona Nan Patterson went to Washington, where she stayed a few weeks at her father's home. Then she left for Pittsburg. Hounded from place to place while in the musical play by the protests of the public; after the Women's Christian Temperance Union and clergymen had protested against her appearance in Connellsville and the people of Wilkes-Barre had put the ban on the play, now released from the boards, she hoped to find a refuge in the Smoky City.

But, alas! "the shadow of a crime," never proven, stalked in her wake.

Miss Patterson was staying at a downtown hotel in Pittsburg. It is said she had been seen quite often with a steel man, from whom, so his wife alleged, Nan had received considerable money.

One day in the latter part of last July City Detectives Lally and Leff visited Miss Patterson.

"Come along with us to the police station!" Leff brusquely commanded.

"Why!" exclaimed Nan with consternation; "what is the matter? I have done nothing."

"Oh, you've been doing enough," blustered the sleuth. "Come along!"

Going to the telephone, Nan called up a feminine friend, whom she asked to hurry to her apartment. The detectives waited. When the woman arrived they called a cab, and the party were driven to the police station and ushered into the presence of Acting Chief of Detectives John Roach.

"Well, you've got to leave Pittsburg," he declared.

"I've got to leave Pittsburg?" echoed Nan, with a jaunty toss of her head and a defiant glint in her eyes. "Not if you know it."

"Well, I'll know that you do," the chief responded.

"What have I done?" she asked, with all the innocence in the world.

"What have you done? Why, you've been making too free with other women's husbands."

"But supposing I don't leave Pittsburg?" and Miss Patterson's tone indicated that she wouldn't.

"I'll send you to the workhouse."

The workhouse and a daily task of scrubbing floors did not appeal to the former beauty of the Florodora sextette, and Nan finally declared she would quit the town.

Instead, however, she went to an attorney. She suspected, she said, that the detectives were acting on behalf of a woman. Investigation seemed to substantiate this supposition, and Nan's attorney brought the matter to the attention of Mayor Guthrie.

The result was that Detective Leff was suspended and Nan was informed that she could stay in Pittsburg as long as her behavior was proper. As a news report had it, Nan Patterson has the police "on the run."

For the first time since her liberation, Nan Patterson, the focus of morbid curiosity and adverse comment wherever she went, has found protection. She had faced vulgar, prying eyes on the stage, suffered catcalls and sneers; she had been pursued by the protests of women and clergymen who denied her the right of taking up her old life on the stage; from place to place her past pursued her—until the gallant Mayor of Pittsburg declared that mere justice should be shown the unfortunate girl.

And, in this connection, it is singular that just as fervent as was the public's hope of the young woman's acquittal, just so strong was its disapproval of her returning to the stage.

When, after the third trial, the twelve men of the jury deliberated on the young woman's fate, outside the courthouse were massed thousands of persons. And as the twelve men, with grim-set, stern faces, weighed in the balance the evidence against her, from without came the cry, ringing loud and strong, and growing in volume, until it became a clamor:

"Free Nan Patterson! Free Nan Patterson!"

Early the next morning, at 2 o'clock, the jury returned to the courtroom.

"Foreman of the jury, what is the verdict?"

"We are unable to reach a decision."

Nan Patterson, listening, paled, for her suitcase was packed; she expected nothing less than a full acquittal.

Recorder Goff requested the jury to try again. They retired. Within half an hour they returned.

Nan Patterson leaned forward eagerly, with tense face. But again, in slow, deliberate tones, the foreman declared the jury was deadlocked, that a decision was impossible.

With a low moan Nan fell forward in a swoon.

But she was freed. From the cell she walked into the sunlight, the open day. Again it was her privilege to romp the meadows of Virginia as in her innocent girlhood. The electric chair no longer loomed before her.

Outside the prison Nan's friends waited—the painted women, the swaggering, plethorically prosperous men of the turf; outside the prison the cafes of the Great White Way beckoned; outside the prison eager managers, alive to the advertising possibilities of the scandal, but ignorant of a righteous public opinion, were waiting with offers.

Nan physically was free. But what is freedom without full vindication? In a recent novel on prison life one of the inmates, who had been paroled and returned, says: "It's a fine thing that parole business. If you've got a bad friend in the world, he's got ye. Every man has ye foul. Did you ever read the rules for paroled cons? Ye can't breathe the wrong way, or back ye go. Ye're a con just the same. And the whole outside is yer prison. And every citizen is a stool pigeon a-watchin' to tell on ye."

Nan Patterson

Detective John Roach Who Ordered Nan Patterson to Leave Pittsburg

Nan Patterson before the Days of the "Florodora" Sextette

Mayor George W. Guthrie, Who Rescinded the Order of Banishment

Nan Patterson was free to go whithersoever she would. But the world was her larger prison. The eyes of the world were upon her.

She had become a figure—a type of the pitiful woman wrecks of her tawdry, unreal and artificially happy world; the world of the calcium and the turf, of men who ruin women, of women who are bought and sold; a world destitute of the joy in the wine of nature, but whose pleasure is the hectic pleasure of wild nights, of "extra drys" and cigarette fumes, of ribald songs and swaggering oaths.

After her release the public, which had pleaded with the strong voice of public opinion for her acquittal, demanded that she forsake the old life. It had forgiven her sin, it would forget the crime of which she had been accused, but which had not been proved, but it would expect her to don the penitence of the ancient sinner of Magdala.

But no, the call of the calcium was stronger than the call of the flower-grown meadows of her innocent girlhood. And soon news paragraphs were spread broadcast announcing Nan Patterson's return to the chorus.

Posters flamed her name in glaring colors and her photographs took a prominent place among theatrics. And again the cafes witnessed Nan at the tables after the theater; she was again seen at the Brighton racetrack, and again people whispered, as they whispered when a New York woman, shortly after her release, threatened to black Nan's eyes because of alleged too friendly relations with C. Ralph Ash, a lumber broker, of Duluth, Minn., then staying in New York.

Wherever she went Nan Patterson was the cynosure of public attention; her friends were under espionage. And at many places, where her show was scheduled to play, people voiced their indignation, clergymen declaimed against the young woman's appearing on the boards, and her path from town to town was marked by public resentment, curiosity and reproach.

When, some months ago, weeping and broken-hearted, Nan Patterson left the stage, did she finally bow to the grim ghost that followed her and, cowering before the gaunt, outstretched arm, did she regret leaving the forests of the old Virginia plantation?

Nan was born in Washington, but most of her girlhood was spent in Virginia. There she romped over the fields. There she wandered in the woods, played amid the sunshot leaves, and, like Rosetti's "Jenny," wondered, in a vague way, what the far-off city must be like. And like the unhappy girl of the wonderful poem, knew in these her girlhood days nothing of the din and sin of the city's awful ways.

When 17 years of age Nan Patterson met in Washington, where her father had secured a government position, Leon J. Martin, whom she married and with whom she went to New York. The marriage was unhappy. A divorce was secured after a year. And then Nan, fired with ambitions for the stage, joined the original Florodora sextette.

Nan was pretty, with a full face, red lips, soft brown hair and gray eyes. In the courtroom lady impressionists described her eyes as cold, her nose as heavy-nostriled, pleasure-loving, and her lips as sensuous, selfish and pouting.

But she was brave. All said she was brave. As the story of her life and her infatuation for Caesar Young, as the shameful narrative of her life with him was told, she preserved an undaunted demeanor. The people observed it and cheered.

Since then she has been brave. The shadow of her former life she challenged, until, defeated, she left the chorus. It was the sign of vanquishment. Ambition left her. She tried to earn a living, she said, and the people prevented her.

Then she went to Pittsburg. They tried to run her from the city. The shadow afar off haunted her. But there are still chivalrous men, and such is the Mayor of Pittsburg. Nan Patterson at last found security in his protection. She remained in the city where, again, scandal was associated with her name.

And the shadow? Has it been exorcised? Or, like the curse which compels Herodias to wander the earth eternally, according to old tradition, will the shadow still drive Nan Patterson over the country, a wanderer, the unhappy victim of an unhappy love affair? And this ghost of tragedy, it will drive her—where?

Our own Fault that Our Girls Marry Titles

Countess Pappenheim — The Duchess of Marlborough — The Countess of Yarmouth — Princess Hatzfeldt

FOR two generations, all of us handsome, intelligent, generous, affectionate American men—that's what we are, aren't we?—have been puzzling our brains, if not our hearts, which have managed to get along fairly well meanwhile, to solve that perennial problem:

"Why—why the dickens—do so many rich American girls marry titled foreigners?"

In spite of the multifarious rejoinders, most of them distinctly uncomplimentary to the taste of the girls, there has been a calm consensus of opinion, embodied in the simple explanation:

Because they like the titles.

Yet down in their chivalrous hearts—the male American heart is chronically chivalrous, isn't it?—the forsaken ones have been loath to believe their fair compatriots are so eaten up with the base ambition of the tuft-hunter. The explanation has not fully satisfied.

Now, at last, comes the expert analysis of the disheartening mystery. The experts a.. Frenchmen, and any Frenchman who does not know the feminine soul, from ostrich plume to silk-stocking heel, is unworthy to tread the boulevards of Paris.

Our rich girls marry the titled foreigners, not because they love the titles, but because they love the foreigners.

It is—alas, and also ouch!—all our own darned fault.

THE Vicomte G. d'Avenel, who is one of those august contributors to the Revue des Deux Mondes who analyze everything that is worth analyzing anywhere, has just finished analyzing the United States and the Americans in the solemn pages of the Revue, and he is now getting his observations out in book form. Close at his heels follows the equally profound Hughes Le Roux, with his portentous book on "Love in the United States," which ends by finding that there isn't any worth speaking of.

Taken together, the opinions of these two infallible authorities make it apparent that the American may be all right as a worker—perhaps as a husband and father; but the foreign brand of lover, in the fond eyes of his womankind, has him faded to the fare-you-well which she hastens to hand him the minute a morphine-mummied duke tells her he needs her, and politely refrains from adding that he needs her money.

The vicomte, who is earning an honest living by honest work, deals especially with the American people in the type, without the attentive regard for their love affairs that is accorded them by his contemporary, Le Roux. He finds much to admire.

"In obeying the impulse to work," he observes, "Americans wish only to make money. They think that they merely make money; but from it they have made their greatness. By work their wits are sharpened, their moral level raised. Above everything, their enthusiastic acceptance of the struggle becomes the pride and the strength of the nation. By honoring the holy law of work more than any other people, America keeps its strength and moral health."

Right at that stage of the social syllogism the merciless Le Roux takes up the terrible tale of our romantic disaster.

"The American father has made of his daughter an aristocrat without a court, a goddess without an Olympus, an exquisite without an atmosphere for the realization of her ideals.

"She knows precisely what she wants; she turns her gaze beyond the sea. She demands, in the first place, a man of leisure, created by an old civilization, who has time to do her bidding, to listen to her, to answer her, to understand her. Before the man who brings to her the atmosphere of ancient glory, the American's mere commercial success pales as the moon before the sun."

There it is, laid out as nearly as any surgeon discloses the secret seat of weakness.

Americans have qualified themselves to be good enough for fathers; but only foreigners—preferably titled—are good enough for lovers and husbands.

All the girls who are planning marriages across the seas will unite in thanking the vicomte and M. Le Roux. So will numerous European gentlemen who prefer love-making to work.

As for the American men—well, if they don't like it, they can quit working, and take to love-making.

Many of them have been practicing this summer.