

## DIVORCED

**S**HE was free. That was her main and abiding thought. After eight years she had shaken off the shackles of something—disgraceful. She was free again.

That was the way she viewed her marriage—as something disgraceful, one of those things you put behind you and don't think of any more. Not, at least, if you can help it. But there was the difficulty; put her marriage behind her as she would, cast it out of her thoughts wholesale as she did, she couldn't get away from it altogether. In a queer way it still enveloped her life, this marriage of hers. Divorced as she was, free of husband and all a husband's claims, she was still a married woman. And a married woman she would go to her grave.

Her marriage had been a definite and ghastly failure. One of those failures that are so absolutely failures that they almost make the circuit and come round to being successes again—they are so positive. For isn't the mark of a failure the being negative—the not having succeeded in getting where you wanted to get—the not having succeeded in getting anywhere at all? But Ella Hume's marriage had been definite enough. It had been an out-and-out mistake. Thousands of times while she had been married Ella Hume had cursed the day she ever saw her husband. She had hated him at moments—she had wished for singleness for weeks at a time—she