



ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PLAY AS PRODUCED BY HENRY W. SAVAGE.

(Continued from last week)

Lathrop cut him short with a sharp: "Better get busy—before the train starts. And I'll pay you in advance before you set off the fireworks." The flippant pained Rev. Charles, but he was reassured by one glance at the bill that Ira trust into his palm. If a man's gratitude for his wife is measured by the size of the fee he hands the enabling parson, Ira was madly in love with Anne. Rev. Charles had a reminiscent suspicion that it was probably a counterfeit, but for once he did not mind.

The ritual began with the pleasant murmur of the preacher's voice, and the passengers crowded round in a solemn calm, which was suddenly violated by a loud yelp of laughter from Wedgewood, who omitted guffaw after guffaw and bent double and opened out again, like an excited umbrella. The wedding-guests turned on him visages of horror, and hissed silence at him. Ashton seized him, shook him, and muttered: "What the—what's the matter with you?" The Englishman shook like a boy having a spasm of giggles at a funeral, and blurted out the explanation: "That story about the bridegroom—I just saw the picture." Ashton closed his jaw by brute force and watched over him through the rest of the festivity.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Foiled Yet Again.

Mallory fled from the scene at the first hum of the minister's voice. His fate was like alkali on his palate. For twelve hundred miles he had ransacked the world for a minister. When one dropped on the train like manna through the roof, even this miracle had to be checked by a perverse miracle that sent to the train an early infatuation, a silly affair that he himself called puppy-love. And now Marjorie would never marry him. He did not blame her. He blamed fate.

He was in solitude in the smoking room. The place reeked with drifting tobacco smoke and the malodor of cigar stubs and cigarette ends. His plans were as unworkable as old and faded ends. He dropped into a chair, his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands—Napoleon on St. Helena. And then, suddenly he heard Marjorie's voice. He turned and saw her hesitating in the doorway. He rose to welcome her, but the smile died on his lips at her chilly speech: "May I have a word with you, sir?"

"Of course. The air's rather thick in here," she apologized. "Just wait!" she said, ominously, and stalked in like a young Zenobia. He put out an appealing hand: "New, Marjorie, listen to reason. Of course I know you won't marry me now." "Oh, you know that, do you?" she said, with a squelched jaw. He rose and said: "But, really, you ought to marry me—not merely because I love you—and you're the only girl I ever—He stopped short and almost smiled as she taunted him: "Go on—I dare you to say it." He swallowed hard and waived the point: "Well, anyway, you ought to marry me—for your own sake." Then she took his breath away by answering: "Oh, I'm going to marry you, never fear."

"You are," he cried, with a rush of returning hope. "Oh, I knew you loved me." She pushed his encircling arms aside: "I don't love you, and that's why I'm going to marry you." "But I don't understand," he said as "Of course not," she sneered, as if she were a thousand years old, "you're only a man—and a very young man." "You've ceased to love me," he protested, "just because of a little affair I had before I met you." Marjorie answered with world-old wisdom: "A woman can forgive a man anything except what he did before he met her."

He stared at her with masculine dismay at feminine logic: "If you can't forgive me, then why do you marry me?" "For revenge!" she cried. "You brought me on this train all this distance to introduce me to a girl you used to spoon with. And I don't like her. She's awful!" "Yes, she is awful," Mallory assented. "I don't know how I ever—"

"Oh, you admit it!"

"No."

"Well, I'm going to marry you now—this minute—with the proviso, then I'm going to get off at Reno and divorce you."

"Divorce me! Good Lord! On what grounds?"

"On the grounds of Miss Kitty—Kitty—Lewington—or whatever her name is."

negotiation, with undignified necessities and harrowing situations at every step, and disillusion begins its deadly work.

This young couple was undergoing all the inconveniences and temper-exposures of marriage without its blessed compensations. They promised to be well acquainted before they were wed. If they still wanted each other after that ordeal, they were pretty well assured that their marriage would not be a failure.

Mallory recoiled to see that the beneficence of Marjorie's jealousy had only whetted up the serpent in her soul. The great depths were still calm and unbroken, and her love for him was in and of the depths.

Soon after leaving Oden, the train stopped upon the great bridge across the Great Salt Lake. The other passengers were staring at the enormous engineering masterpiece and the conductor was pointing out that, in order to save forty miles and the crossing of two mountain chains, the railroad had devoted four years of labor and millions of dollars to stretching a thirty-mile bridge across this inland ocean.

But Marjorie and Mallory never noticed it. They were absorbed in exploring each other's souls, and they had safely bridged the Great Salt Lake which the first big bitter jealousy spreads across every matrimonial route.

They were undisturbed in their voyage for all the other passengers had their noses flattened against the window panes of the other cars—all except one couple, gazing each at each through time-wrinkled eyelids touched with the magic of a tardy honeymoon.

For all that Anne and Ira knew, the Great Salt Lake was a sweet lagoon, and the arid mountains of Nevada which the train went scaling, were the very hillsides of Arcadia.

But the other passengers soon came trooping back into the observation car. Ira had told them nothing of Mallory's confession. In the first place, he was a man who had learned to keep a secret, and in the second place, he had forgotten that such persons as Mallory or his Marjorie existed. All the world was summed up in the fearfully happy little splinter who had moved up into his section—the section which had begun its career draped in satin ribbons unwittingly prophetic.

The communion of Mallory and Marjorie under the benison of reconciliation was invaded by the jokes of the other passengers, unconsciously ironic.

Dr. Temple chaffed them amiably: "You two will have to take a back seat now. We've got a new bridegroom to amuse us." And Mrs. Temple welcomed them with: "You're only old married folks, like us."

The Mallorys were used to the misunderstanding. But the misplaced witticisms gave them the assurance that their secret was safe yet a little while. At their dinner-table, however, and in the long evening that followed, they were haunted by the fact that this was their last night on the train, and no minister to expect.

And now once more the Mallorys regained the star roles in the esteem of the audience, for once more they quarreled at good-night-kissing time. Once more they required two sections, while Anne and Marjorie's berth was not even used. It remained empty, like a deserted nest, for its occupant had flown south.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Fresh Trouble Daily.

The following morning the daylight creeping into section number one found Ira and Anne staring at each other. Ira was touselled and Anne was unsmug, but her blush still gave her cheek at least an Indian summer glow.

After a violent effort to reach the space between her shoulder blades, she was compelled to appeal to her new master to act as her new maid. "Oh, Mr. Lathrop," she whimpered, "Ira, she corrected, "won't you please book me up?" she pleaded. Ira beamed with a second childhoodishness: "I'll do my best, my little cotsun-totsuns, it's the first time I've ever tried it."

"Oh, I'm so glad," Anne sighed, "it's the first time I ever was booked up by a gentleman." He gurgled with joy and, forgetting the poverty of space, tried to reach her lips to kiss her. He almost broke her neck and bumped his head so hard that instead of saying, as he intended, "My darling," he said, "Oh, hell!"

"Ira!" she gasped. But he, with all the proprietorship he had assumed, answered cheerily: "You'll have to get used to it, duckie dear. It won't even learn to swear." He proved the fact again and again by the remarks he addressed to certain refractory hooks. He apologized, but she felt more like apologizing for herself.

was the last day aboard for everybody and they showed a certain extra animation, like the inmates of an ocean liner when land has been sighted.

Ashton was shaving when Ira swagged into the men's room. Without pausing to note whom he was addressing, Ashton sang out: "Good morning. Did you rest well?" "What?" Ira roared.

"Oh, excuse me!" said Ashton, hastily, devoting himself to a gash his razor had made in his cheek—even in that cheek of his.

Ira scrubbed out the basin, filled it and tried to dive into it, slapping the cold water in double handfuls over his glowing face and puffing through like a porpoise.

Meanwhile the heavy-eyed Fosdick regarded with amazement by Dr. Temple and his wife, who were already up and breakfasting.

"I can't imagine," said his wife, "two old couples are the only normal ones." "Some more coffee, please, mother," he said.

"But your nerves," she protested. "It's my vacation," he insisted. Mrs. Temple stared at him and shook her head: "I wonder what mischief you're up to today? You've already been smoking, gambling, drinking—have you been swearing, yet?"

"Not yet," the old cregyman smiled. "I've been saving that up for a good occasion. Perhaps it will rise before the day is out."

And his wife choked on her tea at the wonderful train-change that had come over the best man in Ypsilanti. By this time Fosdick had reached the stateroom from which he had been banished again at the Nevada station-line. He knocked cautiously. From within came an anxious voice: "Who's there?"

"Whom did you expect?" Mrs. Fosdick popped her head out like a cork. "Oh, it's you, Arthur. Kiss me good morning." He glanced round stealthily and obeyed instructions: "I guess it's safe—my darling."

"Did you sleep, dove?" she yawned. "No, I didn't. The 'Oh, it's you, Arthur. Kiss me good morning.'" He glanced round stealthily and obeyed instructions: "I guess it's safe—my darling."

"Oh, these awful divorce laws!" she moaned, then left the general for the night. "You're not you come in and book me up?" Fosdick looked shocked: "I don't dare compromise you."

"Will you take breakfast with me in the dining-car?" she pleaded. "No, I don't," he said. "I might call it luncheon," she suggested.

He seized the chance: "All right, I'll go ahead and order, and you stroll in and I'll offer you the seat opposite me." "But can't you book me up?" He was adamant: "Not till we get to California. Do you think I want to compromise my own wife? She's somebody's coming!"

And he darted off to the vestibule just as Mrs. Jimmie Wellington issued from number two with hair askew, eyes only half open, and waist only half shut at the back. She made a quick spurt to the women's room, found it locked, stamped her foot, swore under her breath, and leaped against the wall of the car to wait.

About the same time, the man who was still her husband according to the law, rolled out of berth number two. There was an amazing clarity to his vision. He lurched as he made his way to the men's room, but it was plainly the train's swerve and not an inner lurch that twisted the forthright of his progress.

Ministry returned to Wellington with a fierce: "Whom, then?" He was in a dangerous mood, and Ashton came to the rescue: "Oh, don't mind Wellington. He's not sober yet."

This inspired suggestion came like a life-buoy to the hard-pressed Wellington. He seized it and spoke thickly: "Don't mind me—I'm not sober yet."

"Well, it's a good thing you're not," was Marjorie's final growl as he began his own toilet.

The porter's bell began to ring furiously, with a touch they had already come to recognize as the Englishman's. The porter had learned to recognize it, too, and he always took double the necessary time to answer it. He was sauntering down the aisle at his most leisurely gait when Wedgewood's rumpled mane shot out from the curtains like a lion's from a jungle, and he belatedly: "Pawtah! Pawtah!"

"Still on the train," said the porter. "You may give me my portman-teau."

"Yasah." He dragged it from the upper berth, and set it inside Wedgewood's berth without specs were as to its destination. "Does you desire anything else, sir?"

"Yes, your absence," said Wedgewood. "The same to you and many of them," the porter muttered to himself, and added to Marjorie, who was just starting down the aisle: "I'll suitably be interested in that man getting where he's going to get to."

Nothing that she carried Snoozezzies, he said. "Without further discussion," she handed him the dog, and he hobbled away. When she reached the women's door, she found Mrs. Wellington waiting with increasing exasperation: "Come join the line at the box office," she said.

"Good morning. Who's in there?" said Marjorie, and Mrs. Wellington, not noting that Mrs. Whitcomb had come out of her berth and fallen into line, answered sharply: "I don't know. My sure it's that cat of a Mrs. Whitcomb."

"Good morning, Mrs. Mallory," snapped Mrs. Whitcomb. Mrs. Wellington was rather proud that the random shot landed, but Marjorie felt most uneasy between the two tigresses: "Good morning, Mrs. Whitcomb," she said. There was a disagreeable silence, broken finally by Mrs. Wellington: "Oh, Mrs. Mallory, would you be angelic enough to book my gown?"

"Of course I will," said Marjorie. "May I hook you?" said Mrs. Whitcomb. "You're awfully kind," said Marjorie, presenting her shoulders to Mrs. Whitcomb, who asked with malicious sweetness: "Why didn't your husband do this for you this morning?"

"I don't remember," Marjorie stammered, and Mrs. Wellington tossed over-shoulder an apothegm: "He's no husband till he's hook-booked." "Just then Mrs. Fosdick came out of her stateroom. Seeing Mrs. Whitcomb's waist aspe, she went at it with a brief: "Good morning, everybody. Permit me."

Mrs. Wellington twisted her head to say "Good morning" and to ask, "Are you hooked, Mrs. Fosdick?" "Not yet," pouted Mrs. Fosdick. "Turn round and book up," said Mrs. Wellington. After some maneuvering, the women formed a complete circle, and fingers piled hooks and eyes in a veritable Ladies' Mutual Aid Society.

By now, Wedgewood was ready to appear in a tathrobe about as gaudy as the royal standard of Great Britain. He stalked down the aisle, and answered the male chorus's cheery "Good morning" with a ramlike "Good morning."

Ira Lathrop felt amiable even toward the foreigner, and he observed: "Glorious morning this morning." "I dare say," growled Wedgewood. "I don't go in much for mawnings—especially when I have no tub to bathe in." Wellington felt called upon to squelch him: "You Englishmen never had a real tub till we Americans sold 'em to you."

"I dare say," said Wedgewood indifferently. "You sell 'em. We use 'em. But do you know, I've just thought out a ripping idea. I shall have my cold bath this mawning after all."

the door opened, and out stepped Miss Gattie, as was.

She blushed furiously at sight of the committee waiting to greet her, but they repented their criticisms and tried to make up for them by the excessive warmth with which they all exclaimed at once: "Good morning, Mrs. Lathrop!"

"Good morning, who?" said Anne, then blushed yet redder: "Oh, I can't seem to get used to that name! I hope I haven't kept you waiting?" "Oh, not at all!" the women insisted, and Anne fled to number six, remembered that this was no longer her home, and moved on to number one. Here the porter was just finishing his restoring tasks, and laying aside with some diffidence two garments which Anne hastily stuffed into her own valise.

Meanwhile Marjorie was pushing Mrs. Wellington ahead: "You go first, Mrs. Wellington." "You go first. I have no husband waiting for me," said Mrs. Wellington. "Oh, I insist," said Marjorie.

"I couldn't think of it," persisted Mrs. Wellington. "I won't allow you." And then Mrs. Whitcomb pushed them both aside: "Pardon me, won't you? I'm getting off at Reno." "So am I," gasped Mrs. Wellington, rushing forward, only to be faced by the slam of the door and the click of the key. She whirled back to demand of Marjorie: "Did you ever hear of such impudence?"

"I never did," said Marjorie. "I'll never be ready for Reno," Mrs. Wellington wailed, "and I haven't had my breakfast." "You'd better order it in advance," said Marjorie. "It takes that chef an hour to bolt an egg three minutes."

"I will, if I can ever get my face washed," sighed Mrs. Wellington. And now Mrs. Anne Lathrop, after much hesitation, called timidly, "Porter—porter—please!" "Yes—missus!" he amended. "Will you call my—" she gulped—"my husband?"

"Yes, ma'am," the porter chuckled, and putting his grinning head in at the men's door, he bowed to Ira and said: "Excuse me, but you are sent for by the lady in number one." Ashton slapped him on the back and roared: "Oh, you married man! I don't hear anybody sending for you."

Wedgewood grinned at Ashton. "Rather fancy he had you there, old top, eh, what?" Ira appeared at number one, and bending over his treasure-trove, spoke in a voice that was pure saccharine: "Are you ready for breakfast, dear?"

"Come along to the dining-car." "It's cooler here," she said. "Couldn't we have it served here?" "But it'll get all cold, and I'm hungry," pouted the old bachelor, to whom breakfast was a sacred institution.

"All right, Ira," said Anne, glad to be meek; "come along," and she rose. Ira hesitated. "Still, if you'd rather, we'll eat here." He sat down. "Oh, not at all," said Anne; "we'll go where you want to go."

"But I want to do what you want to do." "So do I—we'll go," said Anne. "No, I insist on the dining-car." "Oh, all right, have your own way," said Ira, as if he were being bullied, and liked it. Anne smiled at the contrariness of men, and Ira smiled at the contrariness of women, and when they reached the vestibule they kissed each other in mutual forgiveness.

As Wedgewood stropped an old-fashioned razor, he said to Ashton, who was putting up his safety equipment: "I say, old party, are those safety razors safe? Can't you really cut yourself?" "Cut everything but his hair," said Ashton, pointing to his wadded chin.

Mallory put out his hand: "Would you be kind enough to lend me your razor again this morning?" "Sure thing," said Ashton. "You'll find your blade in the box there." "Yes, orichinally. How did you know it? By my fashionable clothing?" "Yes," laughed Wellington. "But you say I need you. How?" "Well, you've got maybe some beg-gotch, some trunks—yes."

"Yes." "Well, in the first place, I am an ex-pressman. I deliver 'em to your address—yes? Vere is it?" "I haven't got any yet." "Also I am an addressman. Do you want it a nice hotel—or a fine house—or an apartment—or maybe a boarding-house?—yes? How long do you make a residence?" "Six months." "No longer?" "Not a minute." "Take a fine house, den. I got some beauties just wacated." "For a year?—no thanks." "All the leases in Reno run for six months only." "Well, I'd like to look around a little first."

"Good. Don't forget us. You come out here for six months. You want maybe a good quick divorce—yes?" "The quickest I can get." "Do you want it confidential? Or very nice and noisy?" "What's that?" "Ye are press agents and also suppress agents. Some likes 'em one way, some likes 'em anudder. Vich do you want it?" "Quick and quiet." "Fainless divorce is our specialty. If you pay me an advance deposit now, I file your claim de minute de train stops and your own wife don't know you're divorced." "I'll think it over," said Wellington, rising with resolution.

But, whichever view is right, the ordeal by divorce is terrifying enough to the poor sinners or martyrs who must undergo it.

Little Jimmie Wellington turned pale, and stammered, as he tried to ask the conductor casually: "What kind of a place is that Reno?"

The conductor, somewhat cynical from close association with the divorcees—and its grist, grinned: "That depends on what you're leaving behind. Most folks seem to get enough of it in about six months."

Then he went his way, leaving Wellington red, agape and perplexed. The trouble with Wellington was that he had brought along what he was leaving behind. Or, as Ashton impudently observed: "You ought to enjoy your residence there, Wellington, with your wife on hand."

The only reprieve that Wellington could think of was a rather uninspired: "You go to—"

"So long as it isn't Reno," Ashton laughed, and walked away. Wedgewood laid a sympathetic hand on Little Jimmie's shoulder, and said: "That Ashton is no end of a bouncer, what?"

Wellington wrote his epitaph in these words: "Well, the worst I can say of him is, he's the kind of man that doesn't lift the plug out when he's through with the basin."

He liked this so well that he wished he had thought of it in time to crack it over Ashton's head. He decided to hand it to him anyway. He forgot that the cardinal rule for repartee, is "Better never than late."

As he swung out of the men's room he was buttonholed by an individual new to the Little Trans-American colony. One of the camp-followers and sutlers who prosper round the edges of all great enterprises had waylaid him on the way to the battleground of marital freedom.

The stranger had got on at an earlier stop and worked his way through the train to the car named "Snoozedrop." Wellington was his first victim here. His pushing manner, the almost culture-like rapacity of his gleaming eyes, and the very vulturine contour of his profile, his pained gestures, his thick lip, and everything about him gave Wellington his immediate pedigree.

It ill behooves Christendom to need reminding that the Jewish race has adorned and still adorns humanity with some of its noblest specimens; but this interloper was of the type that must have irritated Voltaire into answering the platitude that the Jews are God's chosen people with that other platitude, "Bastes differ."

Little Jimmie Wellington, hot in pursuit of Ashton, found himself checked in spite of himself; in spite of himself deposited somehow into a seat, and in spite of himself confronted with a curvilinear person, who said: "Excuse, please! but are you getting off at Reno?"

"I am," Wellington answered, curtly, essaying to rise, only to be delicately restored to his place with a gesture and a phrase: "Then you need me. Do I need you, do I? And who are you?" "Who ain't I? I am Baumann and Blumen. Our cart, please."

Wellington found a pasteboard in his hand and read the legend: "Real Estate Agents. Register Transfer. Baumann & Blumen. Divorce Outfitters. 112 Highway Avenue, Reno, Nevada. Justice of the Peace. Divorce Secured Satisfaction Guaranteed."

Wellington looked from the crowded card to the zealous face. "Divorce Outfitters, eh? I don't quite get you—"

"Well, in the first place—"

(Continued)