"S'Matter, Pop?" By C. M. Payne

The New Plays

"Lydia Gilmore" One Long Trial for Margaret Anglin

BY CHARLES DARNTON.

THE garrulous old butler who, like nearly everybody else, talked too much in the play at the Lyceum Theatre last night, said a very true thing when he spoke of the latest stage crime as "a regular Mme. Tussaud case." There was such a marked suggestion of "wax works" about the whole murderous affair that it seemed quite possible that Henry Arthur Jones's inspiration to write "Lydia Gilmore" had come to him while he was passing a pleasant hour in a clammy chamber of horrors.

It was a bloody dagger we saw before us when Dr. Gilmore came tottering back from an unprofessional visit to the home of his late neighbor, Mrs. Stracey, whose husband had received him with such fiendish delight that the confession he found himself obliged to make to Mrs. Gilmore was only the beginning of his story. Stracey's sense of humor had cost him his life. This was sad news, for John Mitten had played the part so well that we mourned our loss. There—was—a—struggle, and, to make John Blair's long story short, Stracey was killed. Meanwhile Gilmore's courage had oozed out and left him as helpless as Macbeth would be in evening clothes, so his wife had to brace him up by promising, for the sake of their nice fat little boy, to swear that he hadn't left the house since dinner. Then, like a 1912 model Lady Macbeth, she took the dagger and stealing out into the night buried it deep in the earth.

Miss Anglin as Lydia Gilmore.

It was painful to watch Mr. Blair and even more distressing to hear him, but when he came tapping at the window and slipped in breathing hard he succeeded without a word in telling us that murder had been done. He might have carried off the whole scene with equal success if the author had not tempted him to drag it out until it became very trying on the nerves. It was a relief to turn to Miss Anglin, who kept herself well in hand and displayed her common, as well as artistic, sense by not indulging in heroics. After that she was obliged to worry along until the trial scene, which was delayed until late in the evening by the long-winded author. In fact, the play became one long trial for Miss Anglin.

The only time Mr. Jones showed any inclination to cut it short was at the end of the first scene of the third act, when the curtain came down, after the fashion started by "The Woman" at the Republic Theatre, just as Richard Benham, K. C., began coaching Mrs. Gilmore in the examination he was to conduct as prosecuting officer two days later. He proposed this amazing scheme because he thought more of her than he did of the ethics of his profession. Oddly enough, he had dropped in at the very moment, long ago in that eventful first act, when Dr. Gilmore was trotting off to keep an appointment with his charming neighbor. But Mr. Jones brought so many strange things to pass that by this time we were fully prepared to see the unexpected happen. A little extra strain on the overworked probabilities was scarcely noticed.

And so in due time the somewhat old-fashioned play reached the rather new-fashioned trial scene made popular by "Mme. X" and running as far from "The Hack" to "The Butterfly on the Wheel." Once more the bewigged court went into dramatic session; again the tortured heroine took the stand and faced the stern prosecutor. But this time he wasn't what he seemed. He was a lover in law's clothing. And she knew all the answers to his questions. He may have been a bad prosecutor, but he was a good lover. And she was "a good woman," as the author let us know with heavy emphasis. For the sake of her little boy she would save his father's life by perjuring herself, and for her sake Benham would see the thing through. The examination proceeded according to programme and her ordeal seemed to be over when she swore that her husband had not left the house on the night of the murder. Then up popped an anonymous letter, for all the world as though it had come from "The Butterfly on the Wheel." The judge admitted that he didn't pay any attention to anonymous letters as a rule, but this was such an extraordinary specimen that he asked Mrs. Gilmore to remain while he read it. The writer told of having seen Mrs. Gilmore's boy open a window on the night that the crime was committed and call to a man who entered the house. The boy had hailed his "pal," Benham—true enough! The witness uttered a shriek. That was enough for the judge. He ordered that the boy be brought into court. And then the mother broke out with the cry: "I'll not have my boy brought here to testify against his—!" She caught herself, but she realized that nothing could save her husband now, and the curtain came down on her despair.

John Blair as Dr. Clement Gilmore.

In the violent anguish of this moment Miss Anglin came into her own again. Her pent-up emotion burst forth suddenly and swept the house like a great wave. But the play gave her nothing more. Lydia committed in the fourth act and went to sleep, with Benham watching over her. The doctor meanwhile had taken a dose of his own poison. There probably wasn't a person in the house who had not guessed long before that suicide would solve the problem in the end.

The middle-aged lover as played by Lee Baker did not lend any romantic interest to the play. Mr. Baker looked and acted like a good man, but that was all. His performance was utterly lacking in heart and feeling. Fred Draycott easily stood first among the men in the part of Lydia's delightful uncle—a character both capitally written and capitally acted. William Sampson was clever, though anything but English, in the part of an unusually keen-witted constable. Miss Winifred Arthur Jones, daughter of the author, looked rather large for the size of her role, but she seemed to have a pleasant disposition. She, perhaps, would be the one to tell her father not to write so much.

THE VICIOUS CIRCLE.

The Gossipy Guests—Yes, I have to go on the continent again for my health.

Waiter—How did you lose your health, sir?

Gossipy Guest—Earning money to go on the continent.—London Opinion.

LEARY.

Mrs. A.—Now, Mrs. B., will you come and see our apiary?

Mrs. B. (who has been putting it off all the afternoon)—Well, Mrs. A., the truth is, you know, I'm rather afraid of monkeys.—Christian Intelligencer.

As They Looked a Quarter Century Ago

Old-Time Photographs of Stage Celebrities

GRACE KIMBALL

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Isabel Irving—Grace Kimball.

THE season of 1895-1896 is memorable in histrionic history for the veritable whirlwind of popular excitement and enthusiasm that surged about "The Prisoner of Zenda," as dramatized from the Anthony Hope novel by the late Edward Rose.

Throughout E. H. Sothern's long annual engagement at the old Lyceum Theatre in Fourth avenue he was forced to give nine performances a week to try to satisfy the demand; and later the drama was current at two New York theatres simultaneously. That placed E. H. Sothern and James K. Hackett in direct rivalry in the triple role of Prince Rudolf, Rudolf Rassendyll and King Rudolf V. of Ruritania, and brought Grace Kimball and Isabel Irving, their respective leading actresses, into similar competition.

Miss Kimball was the first player to impersonate the beautiful and self-sacrificing Princess Flavia, in which character so many other well known actresses were fated to appear. Her first successor was Miss Irving, and the accompanying photographs show them in their court dresses.

The photographs indicate the fact that the court-dress of the second Princess Flavia was far more opulent than the first. That is understandable inasmuch as the drama was untried and a risk when Mr. Sothern, with Miss Kimball, produced it on Sept. 4, 1895; but when, Mr. Sothern and his company having gone on tour, Daniel Frohman hearkened to popular demand and cast his stock company in the "Zenda" play, Feb. 10, 1896, large profits were assured and he could, therefore, allow Miss Irving considerably more money to "dress the part."

This drama, by the way, practically marks the turning point in the careers of both women. At the end of its first season Miss Irving withdrew from the leadership of the Lyceum Company, to be succeeded by Mary Mannering, imported from the British provinces for the post; while after only one more season on the stage Miss Kimball married and retired into private life. However, after five years of domesticity, Mrs. Lawrence M. D. Maguire (as Miss Kimball now is) reappeared in the calcium's glare.

Isabel Irving (who, incidentally, married at about the same time) has stuck steadily to her art, stepping from her Lyceum engagement to the enviable post of leading actress with John Drew, and from that to stardom.

ISABELLE IRVING

When You Are Married

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By Alma Woodward

SPORT-ITIS.

"I WISH you'd cut out going with Mrs. Evans, Joan," said my husband the other day.

I was terribly surprised. He'd never before interfered with any of my friendships.

"Why should I?" I asked.

"First, because I ask it. Second, because she's not just your sort, somehow."

"But she's lively and interesting and I'd rather go out with her than with those other women, who talk continually of their homes and their husbands and their laundry bills!" I persisted.

"What does she talk of—other women's husbands?"

"No, she doesn't!" I retorted indignantly. "She talks of the latest books and topics of the day and delightful experiences she's had and"——

"It's her experiences in which you're mainly interested, isn't it?"

"Well, she's travelled all over the world and she's been divorced and everything. So of course she has lots to talk about. What's the matter, Ted? What have you got against her?"

"Only that I do not want her as a boon companion for my wife."

"You're getting awfully fussy. It isn't a man's duty to pick out his wife's friends, is it? Goodness knows he usually has a queer enough assortment himself!"

"That's different."

"Oh, of course that's different—it's always different when it's a woman instead of a man. I wish I were a man—oh, how I wish I were a man!"

I thought maybe he'd come over and take me on his knee, because he usually does when I get into a tantrum, but he didn't then. He leaned back in his chair, his lips set sternly and his eyes staring straight ahead, instead of at me.

"It's a man's duty to protect his wife from anything that may harm her. I do not say that Mrs. Evans has harmed you. But if you continue seeing her so much, unconsciously you will adopt many of her ways—and I do not like her ways, that's all."

"Her hair isn't bleached, even though it looks as though it is," I told him. "Because once she was ill in bed for ten days and I saw her every day, and I watched the roots of her hair to see them get dark, but they didn't—and she couldn't have bleached it in bed, you know!"

"It isn't her hair, Joan. Blond hair and black eyebrows are not necessarily a form of branding! In the first place, she's much older than you, she smokes, and she's fonder of an afternoon cocktail than she is of tea. That's not a good beginning."

"Well, lots of women do that nowadays."

"I know they do. And there are some women upon whom that sort of thing seems to fall naturally. You are not the type, my dear."

"You see," I burst out, unable to keep the secret any longer, "that's just what different women have told me, and that's why I tried to cultivate Mrs. Evans. They said that you have to have some sort of spice about you if you want to hold your husband's love nowadays; they said that a man tires to death of a butter-won't-melt-in-her-mouth woman. Everybody says you must be sporty—and I was trying to be it!"

Then he did come over and lift me up.

"My little girl! My own little girl!" he said very tenderly, "listen to me just for a moment. In a great jar full of tiger lilies there is one calla lily. For a time the splendor of the wilder flowers' coloring and the daring way it is splashed with black fascinates the eye. The white lily is overshadowed. But after a little time the brilliant color glares and the spots dance and irritate the eyes. And then one takes the little white lily from all that garishness, puts it in a vase all by itself, and cherishes it, hoping it will never die! One forgets all about the others, and when they do begin to die the spots look so strange on the shrivelled leaves! Do you understand, dear?"

"So you don't want me to be sporty ever?" I asked incredulously.

"Not ever," he answered—and kissed me.

Schooldays

Find "Patches" and Follow the String!

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By Dwig

The Range Riders

Another Great Cowboy Romance

By C. A. Seltzer, Author of "THE TWO-GUN MAN"

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

"Lanky" is the "two-gun man" and professional desperado of the frontier town, La Junta. He rides into town one day, after a cattle stealing expedition, and suddenly realizes the sentiment of the place has changed. He is confronted by a vigilance committee, headed by Bob Hiller. The committee tells him plainly he is to be hanged. Lanky does not offer to defend himself, but grins at his captors. On the way to the grove where the lynching is to occur, Lanky falls into private talk with Hiller and tells him the latter's son, Tuck, is Lanky's accomplice in cattle stealing. Hiller lets Lanky escape, only to learn that Tuck is innocent. Soon afterward a cowboy who calls himself McNamara, seeks work at the Lazy J ranch. He is nicknamed by his fellow companions "The Sixteen's Man."

CHAPTER VIII.

(Continued.)

The Sixteenth Man.

SIXTEEN was not long in getting acquainted. He talked little and the outfit forebore to question. Even for a puncher he was taciturn and soft-spoken. On his first trip to the Ute River range with the wagon he confided only once. This was to the cook and concerned himself. Back in Texas he had gone through a week's famine. The cook was uncharitable enough to suspect that Sixteen had hinted at his lack of appetite in order to ingratiate himself. That he did not volunteer other information concerning himself convinced the cook that he had learned some things.

Sixteen could ride. No one—not even the cook—who should have been sceptical after Sixteen's admission to him—disputed that. And he made good from the start. Even the range boss—a glum, silent man, wholly without sentiment—admitted to camp-fire councils that he had nothing to complain of.

Sixteen did his share; more than his share. Apparently he worked his hardest to show his worth to Lazy J, and he gained the admiration of the men. On the drives and in the roundup he was a hurricane of good nature and indomitable energy. He knew where to strike when the proper moment came; he rode as well, or a little better, than the other men, and he threw a rope with a skill that more than once drew flattering comments from the entire outfit.

Yet there was a strange something about him that set the outfit wondering. In some subtle manner he imparted the impression that nothing short of a cataclysm or an earthquake could disturb his equanimity. Even Hubbard, the gunfighter, cold and sneering to the point of insolence, could not shake his self-control. This was demonstrated to the outfit one day in the spring after the first batch of yearlings had been branded.

The hatred that had flared up between the two men was as bitter as it was inexplicable. Apparently it had come as a result of a glance, the curl of a lip, the drooping of an eyelash, or something equally intangible. No man of the Lazy J could have told exactly how, and yet hatred was there. The first clash between the two men proved that.

Lounging in the shade of the bunkhouse after a hard day's work in the corral, the men gave the evening over to glowing word pictures of past experiences. Hearing voices outside, the cook had come to the door, ostensibly to take the air, but in reality to listen. He stood in the narrow doorway bracing himself, with a flabby arm resting against each jamb.

Seated upon a headless nail keg the range boss expertly balanced himself, attempting to distribute his weight so that no portion of his anatomy might be subject to the tormenting sharpness of the stave-ends. The gunfighter lounged against the adobe bricks of the bunkhouse, sweeping Sixteen with cold, emotionless glances while the latter talked of his travels. The other men were draped about, each according to his notion of comfort.

"You say you've been from the Mizpah in Montana clear down to the Pecos district in Texas?" queried the gunfighter, making little effort to conceal his incredulity.

"Why, shore. I just told you about it."

"Then I reckon you must have seen a heap of the country," persisted the gunfighter.

"Well, yes," returned Sixteen. "I reckon I've done seen my share of it."

He grinned good-naturedly around at his auditors, disclosing a generous mouth and flashing teeth.

"You said you'd been down to Texas before you came here?" said the gunfighter coldly.

"Shore," was Sixteen's answer.

He glanced up as the gunfighter glanced down. The eyes of the two men met in a searching, intense gaze. For a moment the gaze held. The gunfighter laughed mirthlessly.

"I've done hearn tell of how the climate of Texas makes men want to talk," he said. "They git so they want to keep right on talkin' all the time. The longer they stay in Texas the looser their tongues git."

"I reckon you don't mean"——

"You must have been down there a long time," said the gunfighter.

The range boss stiffened with involuntary readiness. The cook rested his weight on his toes, preparing to retreat precipitately. The men of the outfit sat glumly silent, their muscles tense. Affronts of this character had been known to result in gun-play.

But Sixteen calmly continued whittling his branch of chaparral, not even taking the trouble to look toward the gunfighter. The men of the outfit allowed the muscles to relax, but all sensed the unusual.

"When I was down in the Pecos district, Texas, ridin' for a man named McDonald," said Sixteen, placing subtle emphasis upon the word "Texas" and sending a slow glance upward into the cook's face, "there was a creatoor there that couldn't talk none. Couldn't say a word. But he didn't"——

The gunfighter cursed profanely.

"We was speakin' of men," he sneered.

"This was a man," smiled Sixteen. "Just like you—an' me. Not a bit different. Exceptin' he couldn't talk. But he didn't care none. Had to write on a piece of paper when he wanted to say anything. Used to carry a little pad of it around with him. He wrote on a paper onct' tellin' me it was safer."

"Scared of you," sneered the gunfighter. "I reckon he told you why?"

"Why he wrote?"

The gunfighter nodded coldly.

Sixteen sighed, cutting the notch in his stick deeper.

"Yes," he said drawling. "I reckon he told me why. He said that when he wrote on a piece of paper there wasn't any danger that he'd go around buttin' into other people's business."

The range boss settled heavily upon the sharp stave ends of the headless nail keg and smiled sweetly into the shaded eaves of the roof. The cook wiped his lips upon the tail of his apron and tried to look unconcerned. There was a suspicious movement among the other men.

But the gunfighter's face darkened evilly. The scarf that sagged at his throat was not in pressing need of rearrangement, and yet his fingers hovered around it, lingering near the aperture in his shirt bosom. Knowing from experience just what this movement meant, the range boss rose from his nail keg, crouching.

"I reckon you're a liar!" said the gunfighter.

Glancing sidelong, the range boss could see the gunfighter's fingers closing around the ivory butt of the six-shooter concealed in his shirt bosom.

Sixteen deliberately deepened the notch in his branch of chaparral. The knife blade grated oddly in the strange silence that had fallen. If Sixteen did not know the significance of the gunfighter's words and the menace of his stealthily moving hands he lacked understanding. If he knew and was simulating carelessness, he was a consummate actor. Which was it? Considering the situation, his conduct was marvelous, either way.

And now Sixteen spoke.

"I've done hearn tell of how you're some quick with a gun, Hubbard," he said quietly, almost tenderly, with a strange blending of reluctant admiration and resentment. "That's why you're goin' to prove I'm a liar. You don't reckon I'm goin' to tell you right now that I ain't? Not while you've got a good grip on that fancy 'six.'"

He glanced upward, his peculiar grin flashing over the range boss and the cook. The gunfighter's hand fell away from his shirt bosom. Again the range boss marvelled; until now Sixteen had appeared to be unaware of the gunfighter's preparations for trouble, and yet he had known all along.

On the instant the range boss decided that Sixteen knew something of the man with whom he had clashed. Experience had demonstrated her potency. perfect self-control had governed a situation that might readily have become violent.

The range boss again sought the headless nail keg. The cook vanished within the bunkhouse door; the men of the outfit breathed freely once more.

The gunfighter sauntered away in the direction of the corral, whistling a popular cowboy ditty. Sixteen unconcernedly continued whittling his branch of chaparral. The talk drifted to the work of the coming summer, which told plainly that the incident just closed was of a nature that forbade discussion.

For days following the clash with the gunfighter Sixteen conducted himself as though he had entirely forgotten it. Apparently he was a trifle more care-free than before, giving himself up wholly to his work and taking no part in the songs and talks that ran around the camp fires at night.

For some unexplained reason the gunfighter seemed to take Sixteen's indifference for insult. His manner, when he chanced to be near the latter, was the acme of studied politeness. And yet beneath it, concealed by his slow-spoken words and cold nonchalance, was the cunning insolence that maddens. But apparently Sixteen gave little attention to the gunfighter at these times. Around the circle at night, during the singing and the rough jest, Sixteen would lie on his back and gaze at the stars.

But the cook foresaw trouble. One night, standing beside the chuck wagon, he gave voice to a prophecy:

"One of them boys is goin' to quit Lazy J mighty sudden before the fall round-up."

As the summer waned it seemed the cook's prophecy would be groundless. During the hard work of the round-up the men had little time to devote to their strange quarrel. And then Tucker issued an order that created a stir among the men of the outfit. The gunfighter and Sixteen were to be two of three men who were to drive a bunch of cows to Trinidad for shipment. The third man was to be Webb Ball, the Buster.

(To Be Continued.)