

# Why Good Actresses Make Good Wives



ROBERT EDESON TAKES SOLID COMFORT IN HIS HOME LIFE, WHICH IS IDEAL.



AMELIA BINGHAM HAS A COZY HOME NEAR THE THEATER WHERE SHE SCORED HER FIRST MANAGERIAL TRIUMPH.

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**W**HENEVER a man of social standing and wealth marries an actress, there arises a tremendous how-de-do. Mrs. Grundy turns her lognette in the direction of the benighted youth, society shrugs its shoulders and exclaims: "It is a shame, when he is so delightful; but then, you know, she is quite impossible." And the fight for social recognition is on.

A sensation-loving public is largely responsible for these conditions. The domestic infelicities of the profession have ever proved salable reading. A fair divorcee will find her photographs in as many boudoirs as bachelor halls. The mass of theatergoers prefer to think of the players as an emotional class, given to hysteria and heroics off the stage as well as on, and it positively resents the idea of a chorus girl enjoying any fare save lobsters and champagne, while the joys of a five-room flat and bath are not for a real soubrette.

The omnipresent press agent is largely responsible for this false conception of the actress in private life. He does not employ stories of domestic tranquility to draw money into the boxoffice. He is bound by rivets of iron to the champagne-lobster-divorcee idea, and society, as it is popularly understood, is even less catholic in its views. The only difference between the two is that the press agent knows better, but has his salary to earn. Society does not know better, for it is too madly engaged in its own little schemes for attaining social precedence to interest itself in any class of humanity which will not further these schemes.

The ambitious American actress of today is trained in a stern school. She is not content with the old advice to begin at the bottom and work her way up, gathering practical experience as she goes. The stage is too narrow a schoolroom to meet her requirements. Her life is given over to study—the languages, music, dancing, history and the drama from its earliest beginnings. She studies the people she meets in all cities where she plays, and she is pastmistress of the arts of grooming and gowning. She must know how to carry her gowns as well as to design them. She realizes that to succeed in the modern play one must be the modern woman, not only behind the footlights, but in everyday life. She cannot be a sloven at home and a fashion plate at the theater. Thus it is that the training of the twentieth century actress corresponds practically to that of a daughter of the millionaire previous to her entrance into society.

The financial success which comes to a popular star makes it possible for her to live in excellent if not luxurious style. She takes as much pride in the appointments of her home and understands as thoroughly the management of her servants as does

Milady Millionaire. And if she takes it into her well-balanced head to marry a man whom society has always claimed as its own, she feels that she is admirably equipped for taking her position at his side and managing his household.

The exceptional position of George Gould as head of a great family and as a financier with whom all multimillionaires must reckon has given his marriage with a member of the profession more than ordinary prominence. What the world said when his engagement to Edith Kingdom was announced and what it says today of his singularly happy domestic life would make entertaining reading, if arranged in parallel columns—a veritable case of "before and after."

While Mrs. Gould has attained her social ambitions, she has not made one false or theatrical move. Her ascent has been gradual, but absolutely sure. And though the spectacular was always expected of her, she left eccentricity and constant striving for unexpected effects to her rivals who had never trod the boards.

The home life of the George Goulds is quoted as a worthy example to emulate by the good, old-fashioned and most exclusive element of metropolitan society. Women who, none too sure of their own positions, once looked askance at Edith Kingdom-Gould, now regard it as a special honor if they are invited to the week-end gatherings at Georgian court. The Goulds' Lakewood home is their favorite, and here Mrs. Gould is rearing her children in an elegant simplicity which puts to shame the charge of tawdriness and artificiality usually laid at the professional woman's door.

While it is not given to every actress who marries into private life and retires from public view to score any such success as Mrs. Gould has, there are scores of women whose names once adorned the play bills in large type who are now happy in a quiet, domestic atmosphere, and, further, are making equally happy the men who braved popular tradition and married professionals.

Is the American public so fickle as to have forgotten Mary Anderson and Julia Arthur, both of whom retired from the calcium glare to bask in the softer glow of the hearth?

Actors are less apt to marry outside their profession. This may be because a man who succeeds on the stage is so entirely centered in his work and himself—for there is no denying the fact that an actor is almost invariably self-centered—that he meets few women from the other side of the footlights. Matinee girls he regards as useful principally at swelling the box office receipts. He is more apt to find his recreations at his club than in the drawing room of some social dame who would lionize him.

In England, actors of prominence lead a social sort of existence. When their long

London run is established they go in for tea-drinking and visiting to an extent which would seem a waste of time to the American actor. The latter counts that day lost when he has not laid one stone in the foundation of his future success, when he has not given his press agent excuse for manipulating the every-ready typewriter. If he strays into the social highway, it is in the direction of some function in which his own profession is interested.

He goes to the horse show and to charity bazars given in prominent places, not because he cares much for horses or for the worthy poor, but because his manager says it is a good thing for him to put in an appearance. The average actor is a hale fellow, well met, just so long as social duties do not interfere with the advancement of his stellar interests. The ways of woman are past finding out, and for love or the satisfying of her hunger for a home the actress will sacrifice what the world and her world call brilliant prospects. The actor never loses sight of the prospects; love is a side issue to him.

Another barrier which stands in the way of the actor who would marry in what might be termed the social ranks is the American woman's deeply rooted objection to burning incense. If she has family, position and money in her own right, she insists that the incense burning be done by the party of the second part. She is not laying this tribute at the feet of a popular matinee idol.

One instance may be quoted which is quite fresh in the minds of New York theatergoers, and which goes to prove the assertion. A typical matinee idol married a widow with one child, a charming home, and a goodly income. She burned incense first across the footlights and later on the home hearth. Likewise, she burned a comfortable share of her worldly goods in advancing the interests of her actor-husband. He wore raiment which, while quiet in taste, was of a quality to make his fellow workers open their eyes. He came to rehearsals in a smart coupe which made the leading man's hansom look decidedly cheap and tawdry. He met the Broadway stars on their own particular reservation—and the antique shops. And his manager, being an individual of broad experience, took note of these things and decided that here was a man worth starring. With an adoring backer there was no question of financial loss.

The still adoring wife played the role of "angel," and on the opening night was the proudest, happiest woman in the theater, as, half hidden by the curtains of her box, she heard the vociferous applause accorded her handsome young husband's initial starring venture.

Six months later, and with the best of grounds, she was a petitioner in the divorce court. To the credit of the New York the-

atergoers it must be chronicled that while the actor continues in the stellar ranks, he has been made to feel that he has lost the oldtime tribute of personal friendliness. His play is sufficiently strong to balance the ill feeling which the public bears him, but he is shorn of his glory as a matinee idol.

When an actor marries in his own profession he cherishes the ambition of sooner or later seeing his wife retire. This is not due, as frequently charged, to professional jealousy alone. He knows better than any one else the terrific struggle for recognition, the nervous strain of simulating emotions night after night, and the temptations which beset not only the actress but any woman in the public eye. He feels that, so long as his wife works in their chosen profession, she must give the lion's share of her thought and time to her art. The average manager, too, does not care to engage husband and wife in the same company, and so, unless they are in a position to dictate terms to the autocrat in the office, they must separate at least ten months in the year. Mrs. Mansfield, once known as Beatrice Cameron, has not appeared behind the footlights in many seasons. David Warfield's wife travels with him, but never treads the stage at his side. Maud Durbin seldom plays with her husband, Otis Skinner.

If ever an actor may hope to flee the limelight of public notice, it is at his own fireside, and if his wife shares his art as well as his home, between interviewers, managers and modistes he will have little or no comfort or seclusion.

There has never been a time in the history of the stage when the average fireside of the actor has been more attractive. It is an age of big financial returns for stage folk. Actors are no longer traveling mountebanks, with only a chance resting place in sight. They are in a business that boasts a secure financial setting, and their abiding place is of their own choosing and not in the gift of fate.

Where both husband and wife are on the stage, their joint income offers them every worldly comfort and many luxuries. Nat Goodwin and his beautiful wife, Maxime Elliott, lead a most leisurely existence, playing profitably when they will and in the summer running over to England, where Miss Elliott is one of the popular, as well as pretty, figures in Mayfair.

James K. Hackett and Mary Manning have most artistic New York apartments, and during their recent runs in the metropolis they made the most of their home, which, though simple and severe in its furnishings, bespeaks the artistic taste of both husband and wife. Their summers are spent principally in the woods.

Amelia Bingham has a massive residence close to the theater where she scored her first stellar success. Her husband, though

still identified with his interests in Wall street, gives most of his time to the management of his wife's many companies, and can almost be classed in the profession. Both Mr. and Mrs. Bingham have a fond for collecting works of art and their home is a veritable repository for curios.

Mrs. Fiske finds a sympathetic manager and comrade in her husband, Harrison Grey Fiske. His playhouse is primarily a home for his talented wife during her season, but away from the theater they have long since gathered around them a charming circle of friends, and their Sunday evenings are noted for their artistic and literary flavor.

Never was a star more carefully guarded than is Henrietta Crossman by her husband and manager, Maurice Campbell. He can spot a prospective interviewer three blocks away and ward him off as only an ex-newspaper man can. Mr. Campbell travels with his wife during the season and in the summer they flee to some retired resort, there to enjoy a placid, outdoor life with their only son.

Both Robert Edson and Alice Fischer, two newly launched stars, lead ideal home lives. Mr. Edson's wife, Ellen Berg, travels with him as his leading woman and their idle hours are spent in planning their country home at Sag Harbor, which recent good fortune has awarded to their joint efforts.

Alice Fischer is known in private life as the wife of William Harcourt, a leading man of excellent standing. Their home overlooking Central park is kept open by a faithful maid the year round, and their Sunday afternoons are exceedingly popular, when fate is kind enough to bring them to New York simultaneously.

The "road" never sees the best side of the popular actor or actress. Here and there are scattered congenial friends, but to the majority New York is home, and their social interests seldom stray many miles from Broadway. Here they establish their lares and penates until hot weather drives them to the shore or the mountains but even then they avoid fashionable resorts and seek the quiet companionship of a few friends, as far removed as possible from the maddening, wearing atmosphere of the theater.

## Opprobrious

Mrs. Nuritch—Mrs. Betterdaze told me she was going to send her boy to you for a job.

Mr. Nuritch—Yes, she sent him and I turned him down proper. You'd oughter seen the high-banded letter she sent with him—said she sent him to me because he "must have work of some kind even if he had to work for a mere pittance." The nerve of her callin' me names like that!—Philadelphia Press.