

JAZZ WRECKS MANY HOMIES, SAYS JUDGE

Work of Evil Deity Is Seen in Divorce Court.

OTHER INFLUENCES CITED

Average of 25 Suits for Separation Filed Weekly—Oregon Law Is Declared Too Easy.

Each day of the calendar year, with undulating regularity, not less than three Multnomah county couples discover that marriage ties are irksome and apply for relief through the courts.

Presiding Judge Tarwell, whose court calendar Wednesday becomes the mill of marital wrangles, whence issues freedom, holds with the English poet who declared that "all men kill the thing they love," and that bitter looks and cruel words, springing from petty disputes, part the bonds of marriage and bring untold measures of unhappiness into thousands of lives—where the virtue of forbearance is the only virtue exercised. And he holds, too, that the brass pagan deity of jazz is responsible for a malign influence that wrecks homes.

25 Suits Filed Weekly. Twenty-five divorce suits are filed weekly, as an average, with a total of 1078 recorded for the first ten months of the present year. Only a search of the court archives would reveal the number of decrees that have been granted, but it is estimated that 25 per cent seek freedom in court and find it through the law.

Divorces have maintained this average for the past three years, and do not advance—neither do they decrease. It is as if the evil in full stride is bent upon a consistent long distance record. Fifty per cent of all cases that enter circuit court are divorce cases. In 1918 the total was 1125 and in 1919 the total for 1919 the divorce calendar soared to 1763.

It is a physical and spiritual impossibility for that woman to tell the truth," commented Judge Tarwell yesterday at a recess in one particular case focused his reveries. "She is a constitutional liar, but how can proof be adduced? Her husband is ruined financially through her extravagance. I have asked her to live with him and unite in an effort to mend their lives and their fortunes—but the farm is too dull for her. She has had her taste of the city."

More than 20 divorce cases were heard by the presiding judge at yesterday's session, and with few exceptions decrees were issued. There were sniffling young couples who had experimented with marriage, and gray-haired parents who had traveled almost of the full mile before they determined upon different routes to the sunset. Sordid detail, silly charges, tears and haughtiness are the melange of the divorce court. One learns that love's young dream, grown old and cold, may forfeit the term of sweet-heart for those of nauseous abuse and vilification; that the arm that embraced, in a June twilight, can throw a plate or strike a blow with the vigor of hand.

Gresham Case Problem. The couple from Gresham, who sought divorce yesterday, have reared 16—count 'em—children in their 33 years of wedded life. And there isn't a trace of the mild, middle-aged obtuseness which Will Carlton celebrated when he wrote "I am Nancy and I am Out."

The Nancy in this every-day story of the divorce court reprimanded her husband with a leveled shotgun, and pitched a serving fork at him with such force and precision that it called her lord between the eyes and hung there, wagging. Obviously, divorce is indicated—but the court would know, for the benefit of humankind, what certain of black magic is tapped to produce such hateful results.

"Such cases," said Judge Tarwell, "indicate a married status that is not and should not endure, and that no amount of kindly words and counsel can remedy and this is quite true of most of the divorce suits brought by older married persons. The younger ones, for the most part, come into court with grievances magnified from petty causes—and not infrequently the influence of the great American evil, jazz, is plainly discernible."

Many Fall for "Jazz." "Some of the younger married women need sadly to be turned over the knee and soundly spanked—until the tears come. They are wilful and will not compromise, and the same fault applies to many of the younger men. I have no way of estimating how many youthful marriages are ruined by the worship of jazz," but it is safe to say that hundreds of recent Portland divorces were caused by the glitter and freedom of false amusements.

Desertion and cruel and inhuman treatment are broad legal terms. Under their definition in the Oregon law divorce is too easily obtained. Human nature remains unchangeable, but the impulse toward hasty separation is fostered by laws that invite such a course. That so many divorces are granted is not the fault of the court, but the fault of the law. The court has no discretion if cause is established under the statute.

Court's Task Hated One. "Divorce Wednesdays, as we call them, are peculiarly disillusioning. We grow to hate the task imposed upon us—this ceaseless repetition of charges that the one's faith in human character. They come in here, many of the younger couples, arm in arm to seek their decrees, giggling and sniffling, not in the least ashamed of their quest or the notoriety, and seemingly with no sense whatever of the solemnity of their marriage contract. They come in bent and gray, querulously complaining, with the embittered purpose to separate for the rest of the way. In between come all manners and varieties of folk, alike wearied of marriage.

MOVIE PICTURE NEWS



BETTY BLYTHE, IN A MOMENT FROM "NOMADS OF THE NORTH," AT THE LIBERTY.

TODAY'S FILM FEATURES. Rivoli—Al Christie's "So Long Peoples—Constance Talmadge, "Good References," Majestic—Tom Moore, "Officer 666," Liberty—Lon Chaney, "Nomads of the North," Columbia—Thomas Meighan, "Conrad in Quest of His Youth," Star—Will Rogers, "Cupid, the Cowpuncher," Cine—Constance Talmadge, "A Pair of Silk Stockings," Globe—Bert Lyell, "The Price of Redemption."

DRAMATIC story of life in the Canadian northwest, that is somewhat different, is presented in "Nomads of the North," now showing at the Liberty theater.

The picture gets its name from two animal characters—Newwa, a bear cub, and Brimstone, a puppy, little nomads of the north country. They play a prominent part in the unfolding of the plot, and make a strong appeal. The opening scenes of the picture are laid in a lonely trading post in the forest wilderness of the northwest. Nanette Howland watches her father in a losing fight against death and anxiously awaits the return of her sweetheart, Raoul, who is returning from a trapping expedition. Her father is heavily in debt to Duncan McDougall, factor of the post, who refuses his community with an iron hand. McDougall forces Nanette to consent to marry his worthless son, Raoul, who is a drunkard and a gambler, losing his little home. In the midst of the grim wedding ceremony, Raoul returns. Nanette marries Raoul and they live in a small cabin in the forest. A baby is born in this secluded home and the pair are completely happy. Then comes Corporal O'Connor, of the royal Northwest mounted police, to arrest Raoul. He is interrupted by a terrific forest fire, which provides many stirring scenes and rather unusual close-ups of wild beasts in panic.

A feature of the production is an excellent cast, which includes Lon Chaney, as Challoner; Betty Blythe, as Nanette; Spottiswood Aitken, Lewis S. Stone, Francis MacDonald and Melbourne MacDowell.

The presentation of the picture at the Liberty is marked by an interesting atmospheric setting and prologue. The Manhattan trio sings, and Kenri Keates entertains at the organ.

Screen Gossip. "Outside the Law," a drama of the underworld directed by Todd Brown, will be released next month. Priscilla Dean, star of "The Virgin of Stamboul," has the leading feminine role. Lon Chaney, whose remarkable character parts in "The Miracle Man" and "The Penalty" will long be remembered by film fans, appears in

between the lines of testimony. More than one-half the women who sue for divorce have already decided upon marrying other men.

Law Declared Too Easy. "Three a day and better, for every day of the year, Multnomah county clutters its courts with divorce proceedings. And other jurists in agreement with Judge Tarwell, point to the Oregon divorce laws as the contributing cause of the beggars from home to the courthouse, where the shackles of marital duty are stricken off with ease and dispatch.

The remedy is distinctly up to the legislature, says Judge Tarwell, as he left chambers to preside at his 17th case for the day.

SALEM TO BE PROTECTED. Drainage District Proposed to Care for Winter Flood Waters.

SALEM, Or., Dec. 8.—(Special.)—Organization of a drainage district following amendment of the present drainage laws, to include state property in the project, is advocated in a report prepared by Percy Cupper, state engineer, as the most feasible means of taking care of flood waters in certain sections of Salem during the winter months. The district, if organized as proposed by the state engineer, will include a large area and will include the property of several state institutions. Construction of a dyke also will be required, and other improvements aggregating an expenditure of many thousands of dollars.

NEGLECT OF ALASKA RESOURCES CHARGED

Territorial Governor Seeks More Liberal Policy.

CAPITAL IS TURNED DOWN

Enactment by Congress of Development Board Bill Is Recommended in Annual Report.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8.—An appeal for greater co-ordination in the policies of the federal government and for "the greatest possible amount of self-government" was presented in a series of recommendations for governing the territory of Alaska submitted in the annual report of Thomas Riggs, Jr., the territorial governor, made public here.

"Sentimentalists have done and are doing more damage to Alaska," Governor Riggs declared, "than can ever be undone, unless a broad policy of development is undertaken which recognizes the rights of invested capital and the welfare of the individual. Laws should govern, instead of revocable regulations, but where there must be regulations, such regulations should be promulgated by authority local within the territory and not 4000 miles away.

Colonial Policy Wanted. "In the interest of good citizenship, to promote self-reliance and to strengthen the desire for public welfare, the greatest possible meed of self-government should be allowed the residents of the territory. The Alaska governor urged the definition of some sort of a colonial policy, asserting that absence of such a policy has caused capital, supposedly headed for Alaska, to turn to British Columbia, to the loss of Alaska. This says in part that "in Canada the founder of a great new industry gets knighted; in Alaska very often indicted."

Resources Held Neglected. Honest and energetic attempts, he added, have been made by the Washington government to open up Alaska through construction of government railroads, but little attention has been paid to development of the territory's natural resources and little encouragement in the way of legislation has been provided to meet anyone to settle along the railroad now under construction. As a remedy for this condition, he submitted as his chief recommendation, the enactment by congress of the pending Alaska development board bill. This measure, he asserted, will do more for Alaska than any other piece of legislation and seemingly, he added, is opposed only by the government bureaus at Washington.

Appropriations Cut Possible. The prediction was made by Governor Riggs that should the development board bill and other recommendations be adopted, appropriations for Alaska can be cut below similar amounts appropriated for any state, and the territory "instead of simply being the greatest per capita contributor to the national revenues will, in addition, soon become self-supporting and self-sustaining."

Laborers' Condition Better. The governor said the condition of the laboring man in Alaska was better than in the states, while the opportunities for saving were greater, as there was not the same temptation to spend on amusements or "boiled shirts, silk stockings and high heeled shoes."

Highway Contract Is Signed. EUGENE, Or., Dec. 8.—(Special.)—The contracts with Washburne & Hall for the grading of 11.22 miles of the Willamette Valley-Florence highway, by way of the "low pass" over the coast mountains into Lake creek valley, was received by the Lane county court for the signatures of the members of that body, having already been signed by the contractor and the state highway commission. It is expected that the work of clearing the right of way will start at once. The stretch of the new highway extends from a point near Goldson to the summit, three miles from Blachly.

Tacoma to Practice. TACOMA, Wash., Dec. 8.—(Special.)—Guy Kelley of Tacoma, republican national committeeman from Washington, was admitted to practice before the supreme court Tuesday. He was introduced by Senator Jones.

Paving Bids Are Close. ABERDEEN, Wash., Dec. 8.—(Special.)—Contractors yesterday sent to the city commissioners bids for the Simpson avenue and Park avenue paving in Aberdeen. The Grays Harbor Construction company bid \$125,740 for paving with concrete. The Aberdeen Paving company's bid for the same kind of work was \$126,220, and for asphalt \$222,220. The commissioners, in conjunction with the Aberdeen city council, will act on the bids in two weeks.

Idaho Property Values Fall. ROSE, Idaho, Dec. 8.—(Special.)—Property valuations in Idaho have suffered a decrease in 1920 over those of 1919, according to Miles Cannon, commissioner of agriculture. In 1920 the assessed valuations for the state were \$50,000,000, which is \$12,000,000 more than in 1919, but Commissioner Cannon states that in the latter year the assessed valuation represented one-third of the actual value, while in 1920 the valuation was based upon about 50 per cent.

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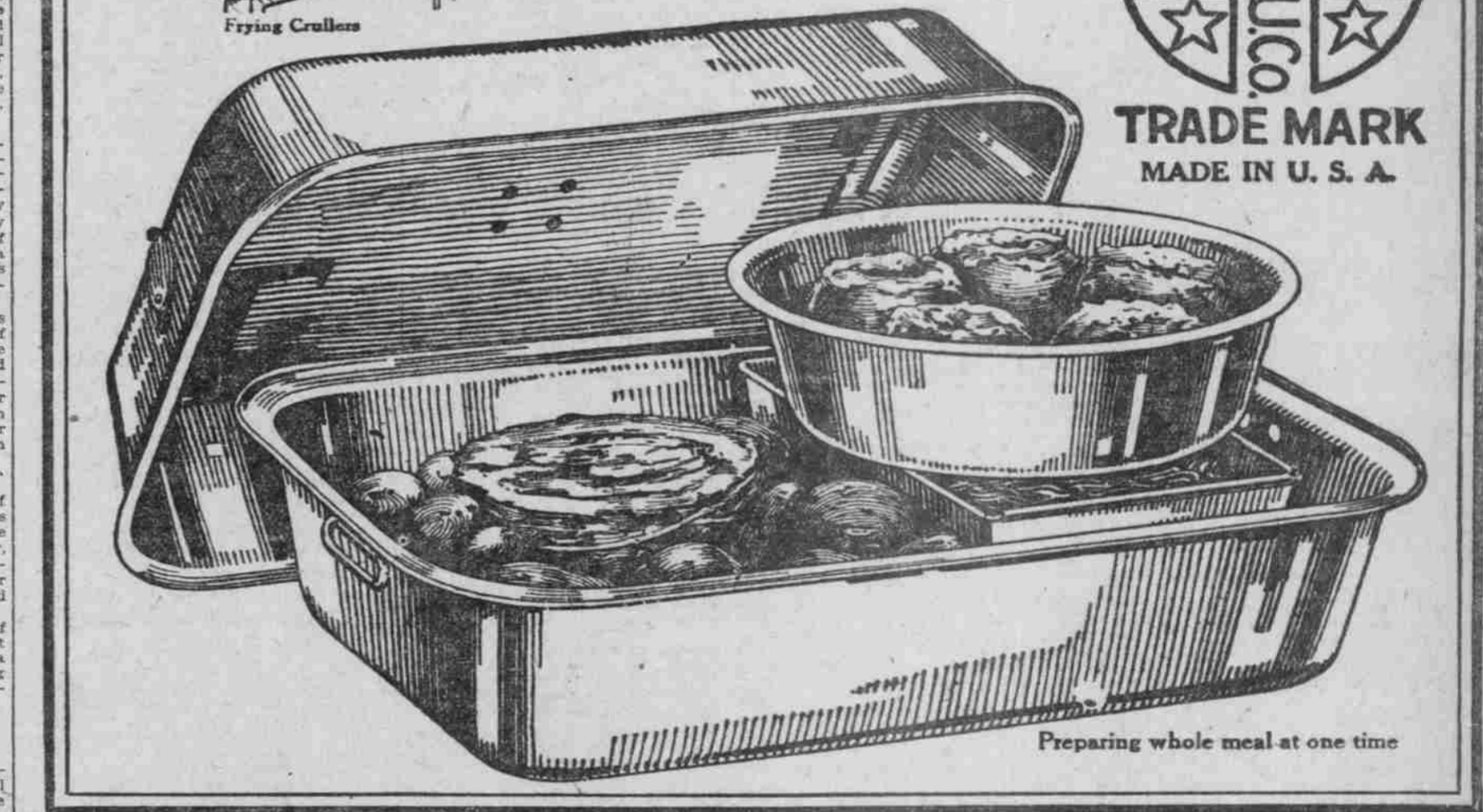
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