

PUPILS TO SEE "BEN HUR" AS OREGONIAN'S GUESTS

Three Hundred Tickets Will Be Distributed to School Children Who Win Essay Contest



THE QUARREL BETWEEN BEN HUR AND MESSEALAH, A SCENE OF INTEREST IN THE DRAMATIC INTEREST



BEN HUR INFORMS SIMONEDES IN THE DOWRY OF THEIR ALDERIM THAT HE IS A SON OF WITHMAR PRINCE OF INDIA



SCENE FROM BEN HUR, BEN HUR REBUKES IRAM FOR HER LACK OF WOMANLY MODESTY

THREE HUNDRED school boys and girls are to be the guests of The Oregonian at a production of the great historical and religious drama, "Ben-Hur," at the Helling Theater January 18. Every pupil of the high schools, seventh, eighth and ninth grade grammar schools and Catholic schools may become a member of The Oregonian's theater party, which is to be given the opening night of the play in Portland.

In order to determine to whom shall be given the 300 tickets to "Ben-Hur," The Oregonian today inaugurates a simple educational competition. All boys and girls who are enrolled in the schools and grades mentioned are invited to write essays on the subject of "Ben-Hur" and send them to The Oregonian. Each essay should be about 150 words long, although a few words more or less than 150 will not disqualify the writer. The writers of the best 300 essays will receive the tickets.

The Oregonian believes that practically every pupil in the Portland schools is familiar with the story of "Ben-Hur." General Lew Wallace's remarkable novel, which has been a source of memory and for the benefit of those who may not have read the book, this paper tomorrow will begin publication of an epitome of "Ben-Hur," which will be concluded in the Friday issue.

Those who are now sufficiently familiar with the story may write their essays immediately. They are at liberty to take any phase of the novel that they wish. For instance, they can

tell who Ben-Hur was; in what country he lived; how he came to be sent to the galleys as a slave; how he won the chariot race; how he found his mother and sister, or any of the lessons that the book teaches. The essays should be written on one side of the paper only. On the upper left-hand corner of the first page the pupil should write his name, address, school and grade in which he is enrolled. The essays should then be mailed to "The Ben-Hur Editor, The Oregonian, Portland, Or."

All essays must be in the hands of The Oregonian by January 12. A list of the winners will be printed in the issue of January 14, and the tickets will be given out by The Oregonian January 18.

The essays from pupils of the public schools will be submitted to a committee of 25 on awards, to be appointed by Frank Higler, Superintendent of City Schools, from among teachers in the various schools. This committee will select the best essays and decide who shall receive the tickets. The tickets will be apportioned among the seventh, eighth and ninth grades and high schools in such a manner that pupils of one grade will not be compelled to compete with pupils of a higher grade than their own.

Rev. Father Edward V. O'Hara will name a committee from among teachers of the Catholic schools, and essays from pupils of these institutions will be passed on by this committee. Pupils should keep in mind that all essays must be in the hands of The Oregonian by January 12, and the conditions of the contest will be found very easy to comply with. The Oregonian believes that the study of "Ben-Hur" will be of great educational value, and it urges all boys and girls

FLORENCE ROBERTS WRITES OF UNJUST ENGLISH DIVORCE LAWS

Famous Actress Compares Women's Status in Other Countries, Ancient and Modern, with Condition in America.

BY FLORENCE ROBERTS. It is quite natural that the turbulent demonstrations of England's suffragettes, which have of late interested and astonished the world, should be followed by a renewal in Parliament of the agitation for amendatory divorce laws giving women equal conjugal rights with men. While opinions may differ as to woman suffrage, there is not a civilized country in the world where it is not generally admitted that the English divorce law is an outrage in these modern days. Yet in Parliament they have for years struggled without success for remedial legislation.

Divorce is a theme which from the very inception of the Moslem law has engendered radical and unbridled differences among lawmakers. Even today, it is approached from such varying points of view by legislators that nearly any one of the male persuasion can obtain an absolute divorce if he cares to change his residence to suit the facts under which he thinks himself aggrieved. The biblical law contained in the precept of Matthew, that "Whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder," is not recognized in the law of any land and only among the British Catholics and Episcopalians is it thoroughly respected as morally mandatory.

Women of this country have an equal opportunity with their husbands in the law of divorce, despite the varied causes of the states, but in England it is different. There a male spouse may go to court with evidence of his wife's infidelity and obtain an absolute decree, with all the privileges of remarriage or liberty that it entails; but not so with the wife. She must not only prove infidelity, but also physical cruelty or desertion in addition. Her husband may be ever so lax as to his marriage vows, but unless he displays the brute and deliberately beats her, or is the cad and leaves her without support, she has no redress in law. She must meet him over the meadow in the morning or the connoisseur in the evening; accept, perhaps, his verbal taunts, insults and defiance, and while he may go to court if she errs, she, in turn, is powerless. This injustice has been the source of spasmodic violent agitation in the British Parliament for years, but not yet has a majority been secured for its remedy, a fact which justifies the American conviction that we at least are a trifle more gallant than our cousins across the Atlantic Pond, in our attitude toward the fairer sex.

There is probably a general belief throughout the civilized globe that there should be a uniform law governing the marital relations, but men differ so radically in regard to its just scope that there is little hope that, even in this country, a constitutional amendment could be passed that would bring about such a result. The difference of mankind on this subject dates back to that



FLORENCE ROBERTS.

Mosaic law which, translated, reads as follows: "When a man has taken a wife, and it comes to pass that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has seen in her some unclean thing, then let him write her a bill

of divorce, and give it in her hands and send her out of his house."

In pre-Christian times the precise import of this language was sharply contested, some giving it a general meaning and holding that a man might divorce his wife for the most trivial cause. Others held that such a phrase could mean only "adultery." Thus, in the first instance, the early Romans divorced their wives for such causes as "feasting with strangers," "frequenting the theaters without the husband's consent" or "counterfeiting the husband's keys." Among the most forward nations of ancient times, the Greeks had little regard for woman's rights, despite their vaunted progress. When they were most progressive in the arts, literature and other evidences of culture, they yet bought and sold their wives. Until very recent years, many countries gave the husband paramount rights in regard to divorce, it is only for a comparatively short time that in France a husband could not act as he pleased in his attitude toward women. In some parts of Germany, however, the laws have been for years exceedingly liberal. In other sections severe. The old Prussian law which is still in force in some German colonies, allows divorce by mutual consent. And so it runs, down to the Hindu and the Chinese, who still show in their laws little regard for wives.

Nowhere is there such a diversity in the divorce laws as in the United States, where no two commonwealths have exactly the same statutes in this respect. Be it said also in this connection, that in no other nation among civilized powers is divorce so prevalent, statistics proving that in 20 years more than 28,000 absolute divorces were granted in this country. Still, those who criticize us most must admit that easy laws are better than laws which give to the man what the woman cannot obtain, for we all must admit that Mary isn't as bad as John and should certainly have just as fair a day in court.

"The House of Bondage" deals directly with the English law of divorce, which makes it at least secondarily interesting to American audiences, for the common law of the United States is based upon British ideas of justice. "The House of Bondage" is the work of Seymour Obermer, an American, who from force of circumstances has spent most of his life abroad, and who wrote this play as a protest against the discrimination against women that still stains the English statutes.

The cause which Obermer espouses in "The House of Bondage" is the cause of many British wives. The central figure is the wife of an English peer, the latter a man of intellect and innate refinement, who recognizes and respects the goodness of his lady, but who has little regard for his own morals. He is in love with another woman and takes secret pains to conceal it from his wife, in fact readily admitting, when put to task, that he has carried on a liaison for years. This man ridicules the virtue of the woman who bears his name and by such "wizilla" mainly tortures her life extremely unhappy. Eventually she, in turn, falls in love with another man, and it is the struggle between the spirit and the flesh that these two undergo that forms the basic motive of the play. Fate places the life of the peer in the hands of the man who loves and is loved by the wife, and the honorable manner in which the latter meets the situation finally arouses his Lordship's long-slumbering sympathy and his people's freedom in the morning.

who are eligible to send in essays.

Just write down your own ideas about "Ben-Hur," taking any phase you wish of the book or the lessons it teaches.

The 300 winners in this contest will occupy the best 42 seats on the lower floor of the Helling January 18. Members of the two committees on awards will also be guests of The Oregonian at this time.

his powerful influence can bring about an amendment to the divorce law which may make such an event possible. As the play is supposed to transpose at the present time, the right-minded auditor will hope and assume that he is successful in his endeavors, for the woman, goaded to the limit, declares that unless her husband lives openly with the man she loves.

The lesson that "The House of Bondage" teaches is not confined to the divorce question. It teaches the absurdity of laws which offer relief for the infliction of mere physical pain, while the position of mental cruelty must be suffered without redress. It is a message worth thought and consideration.

MARTIN LUTHER.

His Primary Impulse Was "Hatred of Everything Italian."

PORTLAND, Jan. 3.—(To the Editor.)—After 425 years the world knows Martin Luther well. He has influenced more human beings for good than any other man. All the Protestant generations representing the progress of the race since his day are the fruit of Luther's life.

It is vain to account for a per-

sonality like that of Luther by his environment. His, like Abraham Lincoln's, was a personal force independent of circumstances—a force coming into the current of human affairs to modify its course. He sprang from the tall warriors and stalwart chieftains who confronted the legions of old Rome and remained unconquered.

Margaret Luther, the mother of Martin, told Melancthon that she well remembered the day of the month and the hour when Martin was born, but not the year. James, a brother older than Martin, told Melancthon "it was the 10th of November, 1483, after the hour of 11"—four hundred and twenty-five years ago.

No man ever showed himself to the world a mightier leader than did this Teutonic chieftain, who led the revolt of individual conscience against Rome. His parents were not, as has been erroneously said, at Elisen to attend a fair on the occasion of his birth; they had previously moved to that place from Mohra, and were living in Elisen at the time.

His parents were poor, though John Luther, his father, became a magistrate in Mansfeld, to which place he moved soon after Martin's birth, where he passed his last days in comfort, leaving behind him for a man in his station considerable property. On the rugged frame and genial face of Luther were stamped his determination of character. He was a German of the Germans. The very language in which Germans have spoken and written since Luther is an indestructible monument of his life. He stands at the fountain-head of the modern literature of the Fatherland. His hymns have been sung in churches and households and by armies marching to battle for four centuries. In nothing are the resources of his mind and the vigor of his character more manifest in the midst of a literary warfare with a hundred antagonists than the translation of the Bible, which cost him a world of labor. In this he made a translation which came home to the heart of the common man, the work of our recent revision would have been far less pedantic than

it is if they had shown the good sense of Luther. Think of Martin making a lot of frightened disciples who saw Jesus walking on the sea cry out, "It is an apparition." (Matt. xiv. 26.) Would such a company of unlettered fishermen, scared within an inch of their lives, cry out, "It is an apparition? No! These last translators were the slaves of their own conceit.

Like all true Germans, Luther hated everything Italian, resenting Italian domination in Germany, even in matters of religion. He frankly declared to the cardinals his disbelief in the sincerity of the Pope, and his jubilant confidence in the soundness of his own doctrine: With a readiness to meet any counsel anywhere and "take his neck along with him."

It is the greatness of Luther that he was more than a German patriot. The perceptions and convictions that possessed his soul were broader than his antipathy to the Italian domination of Germany. The truths and verities of religion involved were to his mind the supreme concern. He sought the fountain-head of Christianity as intended by its founder. He planted himself on the essential importance of every man's personal relation to God without intervening priest or Pope. This brought him at once into mortal conflict with the scholastic theology then dominating everywhere.

Looking back at himself as he was before the conflict which gave him emancipation and Protestantism to the world, he says: "What was I then? A poor, miserable monk, more like a corpse than a man, trembling in mortal fear of him whose very nod was terrible, not only to the princes of earth, but to heaven and hell. In what straits my soul was confined. To what submission I descended. In what despair I was involved can be little conceived."

Noble! Other! Liberty of conscience. Science, literature and human progress have been enriched by the Saxon reform. Verily, no man has done so much to emancipate the human soul from superstition and usurpation.

C. E. CLINE.

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Call at City Ticket Office, corner Third and Washington streets, for itinerary of excursion, sleeping car reservations and tickets.

Wm. McMurray

General Passenger Agent
Portland, Oregon

THE LAND OF WEAK KIDNEYS

Why Kidney Troubles Are So Common in the United States



EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

It is admitted that Bright's Disease of the kidneys causes more deaths in the United States than in any other country; that more than half the sickness in America is due to weak or diseased kidneys.

We are a weak-kidneyed people, and the reason is plain. Ambitious to enjoy more than a mere living, to have all the pleasures that our neighbors have, anxious for wealth and success; we overwork, rest little, eat and drink unwisely, and are "on the go" all the time.

This strenuous life of today tells on the kidneys. The human body was planned for a simpler life. There is just so much work that each organ can do. The kidneys filter our blood day and night, receiving it in a ceaseless stream, draining off the poisonous impurities. This duty is heavy enough in a normal average life, but when we work early and late, give up rest and repose for enjoyment, and retire late to troubled sleep, the work of the kidneys is increased enormously. Every bit of energy consumed throws into the blood a quantity of waste like the ashes of a fire, and if the using up is too rapid, the kidneys cannot keep pace with it. A cold, chill, fever, strain or any excess may hasten the inevitable breakdown, and as the circulation of the blood never stops, the kidneys have no time to rest, no chance to mend. Sick kidneys cannot get well alone.

The first warnings of kidney weakness are dull, aching pain in the back,

retention, excessive flow, discoloration or scalding of the urine. This tells of kidney congestion or inflammation. Next come the trouble and dizziness, nervousness, rheumatic pain, swollen ankles and limbs, then a dimming of the eyes, slight sediment in the urine, or fluttering of the heart will mark the near approach of dropsy, gravel, stone in the kidney, diabetes or Bright's disease.

Only in one way can kidney disorders be checked and cured—by prompt treatment of the kidneys themselves with a special kidney remedy. Don't Kidney Pills are for the kidneys only. They cure sick kidneys, clear and regulate the urine, relieve strain upon the heart and nerves, and cure backache, rheumatic pain and dizziness. They are recommended at home by people you know.

PORTLAND PROOF.

A. P. Maney, living on Hawthorne Terrace, Portland, Or., says: "I used Doan's Kidney Pills and the results were so satisfactory that I take pleasure in recommending them to my sufferers. My work subjects me to a great deal of jarring and as a result my kidneys became disordered, causing sharp, knife-like pains in my back. I was greatly handicapped while working and being diseased of the kidneys, I decided to give Doan's Kidney Pills a trial, procuring a box from the Lane-Devil Drug Co. I found prompt relief through their use and finally a complete cure. Although this took place over three years ago, there has never been a return of the trouble, clearly showing that Doan's Kidney Pills cure permanently."

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

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