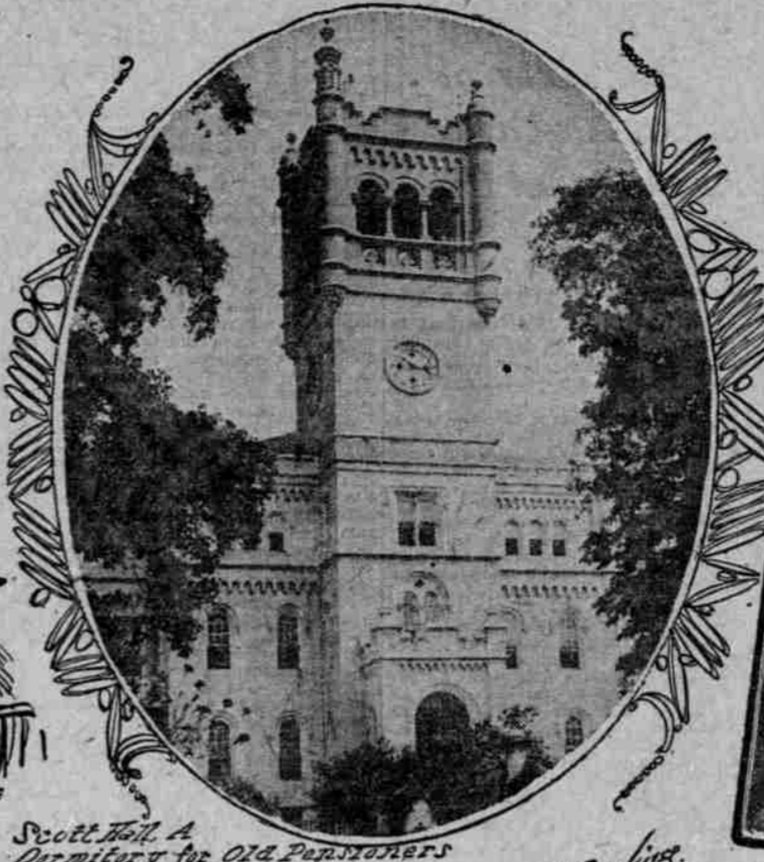


# WIDOWS as a BUSINESS

## Ingenious Frauds on the Pension Fund.

### Business of Marrying Old Soldiers Receives a Stimulus Through the New Pension Law, Which Also Swells Last of Eligibles—"Widow Trade" Recorded.

### HOW MERCENARY WOMEN LIE IN WAIT for DECREPID VETERANS.



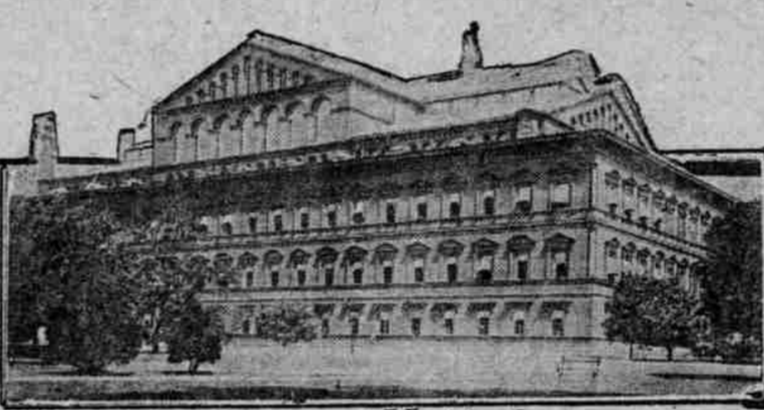
Scott Hall, A. Director for Old Pensioners at Soldiers Home in Washington.



Pensioned Veterans at Soldiers Home, Washington.



Surviving Widow of the Expatriate.



Pension Bureau of Washington.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14.—(Special Correspondence.)—The new pension law has markedly stimulated the widow market. For, while adding considerably to the number of old veterans on the roll, it augments by a total of \$10,000,000 the annual stipend of a multitude of old soldiers already drawing allowance from the Government. This renders them by so much the more desirable as husbands—those of them, that is to say, who are not yet attached matrimonially.

But the chief attraction of the veterans, apparently, from the viewpoint of the young women who are constantly marrying them, is the widow's pension which will be theirs for life after the old soldiers have departed from this world. So thoroughly is this business organized that women, many of them hardly more than girls, camp out in the vicinity of Soldiers' Homes, and literally lie in wait for the inmates of those institutions. The more aged the pensioner, the more desirable he is as a husband, because the prospect of becoming his widow is so much the nearer. If especially on or about "quarter day," when the intended victim is more or less likely to indulge in a little jollification—he can be enticed into the presence of a parson or a magistrate, when the intended victim is more or less likely to indulge in a little jollification—he can be enticed into the presence of a parson or a magistrate, when the intended victim is more or less likely to indulge in a little jollification...

Equally remarkable in its way is the well-known Roscommon case, bearing the number 282,562 on the roll, in which a woman married two old soldiers successively, being divorced from the first. Having secured a pension as the widow of the second, she went back to live with the first husband, without formality of marriage. He also was a pensioner, and consequently, at the present time, this precious couple receive two pensions.

It is understood, of course, that when a widow marries again she loses her pension. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly a fact that thousands of pensioned widows in this country are married again secretly, thus perpetrating a fraud which has to be backed up by a false oath every quarter. They are then a case of the kind is brought to light, but the detectives of the Pension Office, as a rule, do not bother to investigate such matters. They are too busy running down fictitious widows—that is to say, women who falsely impersonate the surviving wives of veterans.

A less successful fraud, where a real widow of a soldier was the victim, was operated by a man who kept a small store in an Indiana town, where a woman in the local almshouse was expecting a check for \$1200 from the Pension Bureau. He persuaded her to come and live with him, to take care of his mother. When the check arrived, he intercepted it, forged the indorsement, and put the money in his pocket. He then married the pensioner, and she was left with nothing.

## ROMANCE—THE RISE OF MARGIE SMITH

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bringing a quick rebound. This was one of them. The young woman who had introduced Miss Smith told Mr. Schneider what that refusal meant to Miss Smith, and then, in a tone of tearful entreaty, said to him: "Won't you be responsible for what Miss Smith needs? Please do."

Schneider looked at the two women just a moment, and then took them back to the credit man. When they left a few minutes later they, figuratively, were walking on air. Marguerite M. Smith had a check of \$266 with H. B. Claffin & Co., and William F. Schneider stood responsible for the sum.

derfully thorough. She examined every dress before it left the shop. She wanted to establish a reputation that was of value to her in the future. Every garment that was made in that establishment was from her design, so everything that went out of that place was practically her creation. She was not content with her designing, she got into the selling and the supervision of the workers, but she even attended to the shipping. She must be a kindly boss, for she never had a strike or a serious difference with her employes.

## FLIRTS—DEFENSE OF THE GREAT SPORT

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heart's content—her faculties for judgment of the character and caliber of her future husband would have been largely enhanced, and she might have been avoiding possible scandal and divorce. Instead she married to escape the stigma of coquetry, and not finding in her partner the man rational choice suggests and imperatively demands, divorce was thrust upon her. Whether she brought suit herself or was sued makes no difference.

When a man begins to make love to a girl he naturally puts on his best colors. If neatness is not part of his nature he affects fastidiousness with the aid of barber, masseur, tailor and haberdasher. If his appetites are gross he plays the epurola for the time being. If he means to assume grandeur, he lacks in fact, he does his utmost to mark the fine gentleman. And provided he acts his part well he may succeed in making the desired agreeable impression and capture the girl temporarily.

postpone a formal engagement or marriage is stigmatised, why, she is "a thorough coquette."

The president of Switzerland is so hedged about by the constitution that, except for official purposes and to facilitate the exchange of courtesies and of amicable understandings with foreign nations, he has no more standing than the other six members of the council of which he forms a part. He is elected for one year, has no official residence, and his chief business is to sign the documents of the Bundesrat or council of neutrality.