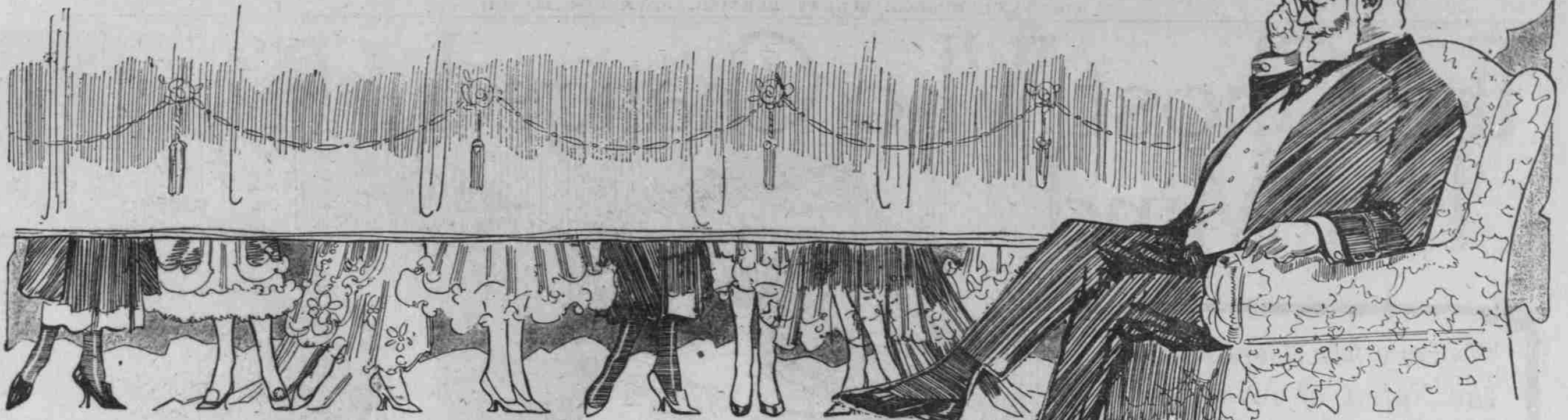


Who Will Win the Richest Widower?



How 70-Year-Old James J. Van Alen Has Stirred Paris and Newport by Building a New Home and Casting an Appraising Eye at Three Widows



James J. Van Alen, the rich widower who went to Paris to have his "fling" at 70.

SOME BOY! one is tempted to say when a man past the three-score and ten, at which the prophet ended human activities, is suddenly thrown into the interesting position of being married to one of three striking social lights, and is regarded as a great catch.

That is just exactly the situation of James J. Van Alen, world-famous as a social arbiter at Newport.

And the women in the case, all of them known wherever society is spelled with a capital letter, are paying just as much attention to the young man who has started out to have his fling in life after the 17th mile-post is passed, as though he were some young and handsome swain who had yet to make his advent into mature life.

Paris sends along the tidings that Van Alen is going to add matrimony to the things he had planned to do when he renounced his American residence recently and solemnly announced that he was going to France, where "prohibition had not operated to take any of the fun out of existence." When Mr. Van Alen made up his mind to shake Newport and reside abroad, he said that the restrictions of the 15th amendment had left him in a frame of mind in which he could no longer be happy on this side of the water.

"I am going abroad," he told friends, "to have my fling in life." Certainly it was not for the lack of alcohol that he determined to migrate, for his own palatial home at Newport, Wakehurst, is reputed to hold the richest collection of liquors and wines that ever assembled under one roof. Some of the liquid joy that hides in the cellar, waiting, as Colonel Ingersoll once said, to kiss the lips of man, came down from the Napoleonic era, and goodness knows that he will find precious little of such nectar in France after the invading and defending millions got through with their visits and visitations.

But it was the restrictions that came to the colony as a whole, and the fact that one has to use a muffer



Lady Newborough, former Grace Bruce Carr of Kentucky, a beauty whose chances of capturing the richest widower are estimated to be excellent.

on a cocktail shaker that sent him on his way to the French capital. There was nothing, at the time, to give rise to the now common report that he is to take a bride.

Now there comes every indication that the magnificent home that is being built for him in Paris, not far from the pink palace of the Duchess de Talleyrand, the former Anna Gould, is not intended for any bachelor establishment.

And Paris is asking which of the three beauties who have been chiefly in the gossip list will grace the new mansion.

First in the list comes Mrs. Alfred E. Norris, a charming divorcee of Newport and Philadelphia, whose only daughter married Raoul Alevra and is now living in Bucharest. There isn't any question that the dashing "Mrs. Alfie" has been occupying a large place in the Van Alen regard for a long time, and when the other two, now leaping to the front in the chat that deals with the intentions of the Newport veteran, are mentioned, the regulars think that they will have to make progress before they side-track the pretty divorcee who has so long been in the graces of "Jimmy."

The most recent trend of the marital gossip deals with Mrs. William Miller Graham, whose spectacular career in society wound up in the divorce courts of the west, and who suddenly ceased to win constant mention following the suit. It seems now that the striking personality of this remarkable woman has staged a comeback, and that Van Alen figures largely in her new plans.

It is recalled that Mr. Van Alen was the chief factor in aiding Mrs. Graham when she made her first essay at Newport recognition back in the days when all well money was not legal tender at Bailey's Beach. Van Alen, ever kind to climbers, held out a hand to her, and it was to his good fortune that she owed much of the early success that came in her social campaigns.

To understand the possibility of the speculation regarding her chances for occupying the Paris mansion, one must recall that it was her own winning presence and manner that took her from the estate of a carpenter's daughter in a little Kentucky town to the proud position where she was known as one of "King Edwards' set" during the days when that jolly monarch and past master in appraisal of feminine worth held sway in Merrie Englands.

When the departed monarch was prince of Wales he picked her as "the original most beautiful woman in America," and she never lost the hold she had on his interest to the very day of his death.

Mrs. Alfred E. Norris of Philadelphia and Newport, is regarded by many as likely to be Mrs. Van Alen No. 2. Before she returned to her American home, bent upon "bringing out" her daughter Geraldine.

Geraldine had the mother's fatal gift of beauty also, and the present Prince of Wales, dancing with her during his tour of the world, enthusiastically proclaimed her as not only the best dancer he had ever known, but as the prettiest girl he had seen in this country. She became engaged to Whitney Warren Jr., representative of one of the best known New York families, and society got a double sensation when it got the news of the breaking of the engagement and the filing of the mother's divorce suit all in a single month.

Since that time one heard little of the mother or daughter, until the recent gossip that connects her with the change of residence of Mr. Van Alen. Indeed, the society journals had it that the divorce settlement did not leave her with any vast fortune and that both mother and daughter

intended to take a fling in trade, as a matter of pure revenue.

Lady Newborough, who was also a Kentucky woman—Grace Bruce Carr—is the third of the wonderfully striking trio now foremost in the tea-room chatter that makes Van Alen its topic. There had come for some time the report that Mr. Van Alen had been unusually attentive to her, and upon a recent summer he created no end of comment by following her to whatever European center seemed to interest, and it was noted that while she publicly appeared to be annoyed by the obvious attentions, she always had him among those present at her affairs, and he got the lion's share of her own attentions.

The spiteful of the social set charged that it would be a great

match for Grace Carr, and, referred to the fact that even her marriage to a member of the British aristocracy did not serve to open the doors at Newport any too wide—a fact that she is supposed to have resented to the point that would have added much zest to the conquest by which the said doors might be pried from the very hinges.

Lady Newborough is the most British of the Americans who have married titles in England. She even out-Britishes the natives in speech, dress and mannerism, and there is where she acquired no little of unpopularity that was evident when she came to Palm Beach for a visit. It was then remarked that society did not break its neck to do her honor.

But, as Mrs. Van Alen, it would be a different story.

PRAIRIE SOCIAL IS EQUAL OF JAZZ AFFAIR IN CITY LIFE

Little Siffack, Parlor Fiddler, Dancing on Oilcloth Floor With Embellishments Make Up Saskatchewan Party.

THE loveliest setting; a little—oh! such a little—shack set in the deep bush, poplars so tall that to us of the prairies they seem to shut out the sky, masses of white blossom on some unpronounceable shrub, real lilacs—yes, come and smell it—just as fine as that in the garden of childhood in the old country.

Of course there has been a frightful scramble to get to the "social." The cry of the husbands goes up from every home on such occasions. "No, you couldn't pay me to go. You can drive yourself quite well; the trails aren't too bad. I'll look after the kids."

—oh, most distinctly—an odor of rye whisky near these patriarchs, but now—why, now, Saskatchewan is dry with an aridity that has to be felt to be appreciated.

In the "parlor" a fiddler scrapes frantically in the heat, while all who can find standing room stamp round in the mazes of a "square" to the bidding of the caller-out, who shouts: "First couple lead, right up and pass through, balance two and swing that pretty girl behind." "Elliman, left and grand right and left!" "Birdie in the center and three hands around; Birdie fly out and Tommy go in, and three hands around; Tommy go out and give Birdie a swing, and three hands around."

Is the dancing graceful? Oh, be charitable! The floor is oilcloth, and when you have avoided the stove, the table with the lamp, the clustered husbands and babies, there is still the cellar door—that outcast square of oilcloth with iron ring, which the hostess presently lifts to reveal a yawning chasm.

She disappears down this and returns with a pitcher of cream—real

cream from the cow, no make-believe stuff.

Someone says the water is boiling, and there is a murmur of "touch."

All the women crowd into the 10-foot by 12-foot kitchen and begin to unpack newspaper parcels of weird shapes.

One takes round a dish pan full of cups, a second a pile of saucers, a third coffee which has been made in the wash boiler, a fourth sandwiches, a fifth iced cakes—all baked in meat tins and cut with an old carving knife, but yet of a lightness to be envied by the Old Country cook, who achieves a round lump of weight and currants and calls it a cake!

The crowd, so anxious to "hand round," melts to the same old few when washing-up comes.

The dancing goes on until 3, 4—perhaps 6—o'clock. Sleeping babies are disentangled from the wraps on the beds, weary husbands hitch up the horses. The "social" is over. And, perhaps we have had just as good a time as you have had in a London restaurant with a jam hand! —Woman Farmer in The Daily Mail.

Dinosaur's Haunt Yields Relics.

CALGARY, Alta.—The haunts of the dinosaur in the Red Deer valley are to be screened by the department of trade and commerce. The place where these relics of millions of years ago are found is about 100 miles east of Calgary, in a canyon of the Red Deer river, which is just as beautiful as the Grand canyon, but about one-seventh its size. It is the only place in Alberta where the cactus grows.