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NEW JURY LAWS MAY BOOST EXPENSE

Lack of coordination on the part of legislators in the preparation and adoption of an amendment to the law providing for a venire of juries and the women jury law may, in case of increased and serious criminal cases, result in a heavy overdraft of the Hood River county general fund before next year. Attorneys, circuit court officials and members of the county court have engaged in speculation as to just where the two inharmonious laws may lead. The women's jury law was referred by the legislature to the people and adopted last June.

Under the old law the county court at the beginning of each year selects a jury list of 200 freeholders. Twenty days before each term of circuit court the sheriff selects a panel of 31 names from this list. Seven of the regular veniremen are selected for the grand jury, and 24 are left for general jury service in the trial of cases. Under the old rule where the panel was exhausted the court was empowered to send the sheriff out for a special venire of as many citizens as were needed, the choice to be made from the general body of the citizenship. Now, however, before the court can order such special venire the entire jury list must be exhausted by lot. The sheriff may, under the amended provisions be compelled to travel 25 miles to the Upper Valley for a prospective juror, who, when placed in the box may prove unqualified on the first question asked him. The next name drawn from jury list may be that of a man residing 20 miles away at Cascade Locks. The law makes it possible for the trial of lawsuits to be drawn out indefinitely. Indeed, the whole machinery of the circuit court may be tied up for a day or more while the sheriff or his deputies seek a single juror. This delay may proceed for several days, in case of a serious murder trial, where procedure is usually formal, and where panels of jurors are quickly exhausted the cost may become stupendous. The women's jury law provides that in any case, wherein a minor under 18 years of age be involved, whether as defendant or complaining witness, one half of the jury of 12 members be women. Another section of the law states that any woman, summoned to jury service, may by written notice decline to serve. The sheriff is compelled, when summoning her, to inform the woman, so served, and to supply her with a blank form on which to formally decline. The woman, who does not desire to sit on a jury, however, has the privilege of withholding her decision until the time for which she is called arrives. Thus women, whose names may be drawn on a panel for the regular jury, do not have to inform the court, in case they declined to serve, until the regular session is convened. Of course, in case court is in session, and

the sheriff calls to summon a woman, whose name has been drawn to fill a jury, she must make her decision at once. It is a known fact that the percentage of women who will be willing to serve on juries is small, and it is very likely, when a case that calls for six women jurors, arises, the sheriff will be compelled to make numerous trips and the county put to much expense, because of the attendant delays to the entire court procedure. Hood River county's appropriations in the current year's budget for circuit court expenses is only \$1,000. One serious criminal prosecution may result, because of this ponderous and tardy process of securing juries, in an increase of this item to \$10,000.

Another phase of the new women's jury law presents itself. Let it be supposed that from the regular panel, drawn by the customary lot, 10 men and two women are drawn on the jury, and these selections prove satisfactory to the attorneys for both sides of the case. The presiding judge then cites them to the provisions of the new law. The attorneys, however, ask that the judge proceed with an elimination of four of the men. How will he go about it? That is a question that members of the local bar have been unable to determine to their satisfaction.

The necessity of applying the new laws in conjunction, it is said, is causing great worry in every county of the state. The amendment, pertaining to an elimination of the special venire procedure, as formerly practiced had its origin in Multnomah county, where courts desired to be free from hangers on, who frequented the court rooms, seeking jury service. The law, it is said, would have served its purpose, had it been limited to the thickly populated jurisdiction. Applied to the sparsely settled rural districts, where citizens reside at great distances apart, the new law will work exceeding hardship and result in an unnecessary heavy expense. It is all the more complicated, when it is found it must be applied in connection with the choice of women on juries in the special cases where they are eligible.

Masonic Dance Next Thursday

The third of a series of winter dances of the Masonic lodge will be held at the Columbia Gorge hotel on the evening of Thursday, January 19. Card tables will be provided for those who do not care for dancing. Lunch will be served. Other dances of the winter series will be given on the following dates: February 16 and March 9.

Members of the committee in charge of the Masonic dances are: Kent Shoemaker, Dr. H. D. W. Pineo, J. M. Culbertson, A. S. Keir, Dr. L. L. Murphy and Harold Hershner.

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Christmas Seals Sales Reach Record

For the benefit of those who contributed so generously to the Christmas seal fund I wish to say that in spite of the scarcity of money, bad roads, etc., the returns of the sale were very gratifying.

We sold approximately 34,000 seals, or \$340 worth, establishing the highest record that has ever been made in this county. Much of the success of this sale is due to the efforts of the chairmen in charge of the sale in the different districts of the county and the hearty cooperation which we received from the teachers and pupils of our public schools.

To those who may not be informed as to the use of this money, it may be well to state that one-fourth of the proceeds are to be used by the Hood River County Health Association and the remainder sent to State Anti-Tuberculosis Association in Portland.

Acting on the assumption that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," the Anti-Tuberculosis Association of the state, guided by its active and efficient secretary, Mrs. Sadie Orr Dunbar, is doing a wonderful work in educating the people in regard to the care of the health and the prevention of disease. In all the counties where a county nurse is employed, 14 in all including Hood River, the association has paid the nurses' expenses of the first three months. In this one activity alone the splendid results of the work done by our own Mrs. Blakely are sufficient proof of the efficacy of this system.

Thanking all who assisted in the further maintenance of this great humanitarian work, I am,

Mrs. Sybil C. Lewis,
County Chairman.

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