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NOVEMBER 21, 1923

CHAPEL HILL, N. C.

VOL. X, NO. 3

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## DIVORCES IN THE UNITED STATES

### XIX—HAMLET'S TOWN AND CASTLE

Elsinore, as everybody knows, is Hamlet's town and castle. It is only a train-hour away from Copenhagen and only twenty ferry boat-minutes away from Helsingborg in Sweden. For many hundred years, the castle guns commanded this bottle-neck of the Baltic and compelled every passing ship to anchor and pay toll into the private treasury of the Danish kings, a highwayman practice that Holland and the United States combined to end in the eighteen-fifties. It was mainly these tolls that built the royal castles and laid out the castle parks and gardens the traveler finds today in every part of Denmark. Most of the earlier castles are now faintly outlined ruins, but many others remain in almost perfect preservation as priceless treasures of beauty. Kronborg Castle for instance. It sits within its walls and moats untouched by time. It looks exactly as it looked when Shakespeare mined the rude chronicles of Saxo Grammaticus for literary material four hundred years ago. I ate my picnic luncheon in the grass of the ramparts that the ghost of Hamlet's father haunted. Even the rampart cannon remain in their ancient places and, but for the crumbling gun carriages, they look today exactly as they must have looked to Hamlet's strolling players and their audience in the castle yard below. I stumbled through the two-story dungeons by the dim light of tallow candles, and I am certain that the air and the odors date from Hamlet's day.

I am not sure that a university school of literature ought ever to forgive me for confessing that Hamlet's town stirs my interest far more than Hamlet's castle—not the ancient village that crouched and cowered in the shadow of the castle walls, but the twentieth century city that leads all Denmark in municipal social enterprise. Elsinore is still Hamlet's town. It illustrates the world that Hamlet lamented, in which "men must work while women weep." It is a brisk little industrial city of 16,000 inhabitants, and as in every other such city its women must work as well as weep—work and weep not less but more and more as modern civilization develops its strange compounds of good and evil, magnificence and misery.

### A Sure Help in Trouble

But Elsinore has a keener ear for weeping than most towns have. And I know Elsinore fairly intimately, for I have been so fascinated by it that I have made three trips to it to make sure of the details of its civic-social enterprises. As elsewhere in Denmark, the city government collaborates with the social-work agencies and institutions of the state on the one hand, and on the other with the local, private organizations busy with this or that phase of human distress or necessity—the infant asylum, the creche where mothers check-in their babies during working hours, the support and education of children removed from vicious homes, the care and guardianship of foundlings and the nameless children of illegitimate fathers, the placing of orphan children in good homes and the supervision of such homes, hot lunch-rooms for poor children in the public schools during the winter months, pensions for widowed mothers, old-age pensions for people over sixty, medical attention, nurses and midwives for poverty-stricken homes, hospital care of poor people temporarily or chronically ill, the burial of the poor in decency and never in a potter's field, the support and education of the deaf, blind, and feeble-minded children of Elsinore in the state or private institutions of Denmark, unemployment support, and counsel for working people, hospital care of the tuberculous, medical attention for the socially diseased and legal supervision of these offenders against decency, and so on down the long list of human frailties and divine dispensations. As in other cities everywhere, private groups of social servants are struggling at their own expense with many or most of these human ills, but in Elsinore the city stands by to help as a declared municipal policy, and to help with the

money of the city taxpayers, not meagerly and grudgingly but readily to the full extent of its income possibilities. The city hall maintains no official machinery for most of this social work, it recognizes the efficiency of first one and then another of its private social agencies, makes them semi-civic bodies, and turns over to them the special work that they can do better than changing city officials could ever hope to do it.

### Social Work Collaboration

It is the Danish way, from the capital down to the smallest city hall. Thus the Danish Health Society began fifty-seven years ago as a private organization financed by membership fees. It is still a private agency, but it developed such efficiency in forestry, drainage and land utilization in general that the state made it a semi-public agency, subsidized it liberally and resigned to it all state work in its particular field of effort. The plan frees the State Agricultural Department for concentration upon other problems of agriculture. In exactly the same way this state department collaborates with the Royal Danish Agricultural Society. Why should the state do at great expense, say the Danes, what a private agency of proved efficiency does better for less money? It is quite as though the state of North Carolina had said to the Masons years ago, Here is some money for your orphan asylum at Oxford; please take over this whole big job of caring for the orphans of the state, and the state treasury to the last limit of possibility will supplement the charities of your order. Or to the Children's Society at Greensboro, Here is an annual state treasury check; please take over this whole big problem of placing bereft children in good homes and the State Welfare Board will concentrate its energies and income upon other pressing social problems. I am not arguing a point, I am merely illustrating a fundamental difference between civic-social service in Denmark and America. Such work gets done in Denmark in vast volume and bewildering variety, and done without bankrupting state and local treasuries or destroying the sense of social obligation in religious bodies, wealthy individuals, or generous social orders.

As one impressive result, semi-public officials and titles in Denmark are more than the leaves of Vallombrosa. For a Dane to be named a guardian of the poor or a director of the public library or the local museum or any other public agency is to be set in high honor above his fellows. And to be removed for indifference or neglect of duty smudges the family record of democratic titles. I am told that such a thing does not happen in Denmark. At any rate the Danes have a delicate sense of social obligation. It saturates their civilization from top to bottom. My deliberate conclusion is that they have less piety and more religion than any people I know.

### The Town as Landlord

Elsinore is not essentially different from other Danish cities, but it is conspicuously in the lead in civic-social enterprise. For instance, it owns sixty-three substantial new dwellings of two-, three-, and four-room apartments occupied by 128 workingmen families paying rents varying from five to eight dollars a month. It is Elsinore's way of side-stepping slums and forestalling tenement landlords who grind the faces of the poor.

### Cooperative Home-Owning

Another achievement is the suburban park property of sixty-eight co-operating home-owners. Two years ago they pooled their savings and credit to secure \$270,000 with which to erect forty-eight single and double dwellings of five rooms for each family. The cooperative society owns the property as a whole and the members own their dwellings as perpetual leaseholders on the basis of an annual four percent payment. At present each family is paying the society \$112 a year or less than ten dollars a month, and out of the fund thus created the society

### BOOKS FOR THE CHILDREN

If North Carolinians make a poor record in a census of those who read books, it is largely because North Carolina boys and girls are not more often turned loose in good libraries. The libraries in home, school, or town have either too few books of any kind or too many that are not attractive to children.

No one questions the fact that good books scatter the seed of culture, of high ambition; that they nourish the seeds of genius. But in fact, this influence of books is very largely ignored, and that is why this week is to be observed as Children's Book Week.

As the winter season comes on, parents take care to provide for the bodies of their children warm clothing and nourishing food; but unfortunately in too many instances the minds of the men and women of tomorrow are left to get what inspiration they may by accident. The wise direction of one's child's reading may be worth more to the nation than all the products of mines, fields, forests, and factories, throughout a century. Let parents not overlook that opportunity and responsibility.—Smithfield Herald.

pays interest on the loan, all taxes and assessments on the property, and retires the debt in thirty-four years. Each owner keeps his house in repair and his lot in order, and pays his own heat, light, water, and telephone bills. He enjoys every privilege that a freeholder has except that he cooperates in ownership and cannot alienate his right in a joint property without the consent of his fellow cooperators. Of course this property is not as extensive and elegant as Myers Park in Charlotte, but it is distinctly an ornament to Elsinore. And moreover, it is an impressive example of what a cooperating colony can do when it learns the fine and final art of working and living together.

### Tender Care for the Aged

But the thing that sets Hamlet's town above all the rest in Denmark and, so far as I know, above all other cities of the world, is its tender care of its old and feeble folk. The week before I visited its three old-age institutions with the mayor, one-hundred and twenty people from ten different countries of the world, among them the United States and Canada, made a similar trip through these establishments. Students come in a steady stream from every country on the globe to see these happy-faced old people in their handsome homes.

If the old folk are widowed, alone and lonely, they live two in a room and dine together in the common hall of the Asylum, as it is called. There are thirty two of these old men and women.

On the same square or court are the three buildings of the Old-Age Home. Here the 107 alumni have each an apartment of two or three rooms. The old women who find their happiness in bustling about and keeping busy with light housekeeping have each a bedroom, a sitting-room, a kitchenette, and a private toilet.

### Life's Honor Graduates

The reader must not miss the title the Danes give to these old souls—they are not paupers, they are alumni or honor graduates in life's hard school. If they are sick and helpless, they go into the infirmary where the doctors and nurses care for them tenderly and lay them away gently when the end comes. All the buildings have steam heat, water, lights, telephones, social rooms with papers, books, and writing tables, and the outdoor spaces are beautifully parked with trees, shrubs, flowers, and seats in sunny places. All without one cent of charge! I lived in a little hotel alongside this establishment for three days before it dawned on me that it was what English-speaking countries call a poor-house! No other single word better characterizes the

heartlessness of our civilization. Old age is not a nuisance and decent poverty is not a disgrace in Denmark, and least of all in Elsinore.

### The City's Pensioners

But Hamlet's town has another rare institution—a block of concrete buildings with 150 three-room apartments, water, heat and light for the old-age pensionnaires of the city. Persons sixty or more years of age in Denmark draw a state pension of ten kroner or about two dollars a month, that is to say, if they have lived lives free from the disgrace of crime or public charity. Elsinore adds a little to this small pension, builds a modern home for these old people and beautifies the open spaces of it with lawns, flowers, hedges, and shade trees. The old married couples with slender earning capacity occupy seventy-five of the apartments rent-free. The other seventy-five apartments are occupied by old couples in better circumstances and able to pay ten kroner a month for their lodgings in the Pensionnaire Home.

If there is any lovelier municipal social enterprise anywhere on earth than Elsinore's care of honorable old age, I think I would be willing to go half a round the world to see it.—E. C. Branson, Gedser, Denmark, Sept. 6, 1923.

### XI—OUR CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

#### Carolina Rubber Tires

As you stand on the sidelines and watch the automobiles roll by, or as you sit in an auto and watch the scenery pass, have you ever stopped to consider that you may be riding over the roads on a Carolina product? Not all the crude rubber gathered by the Brazilian seringueiro, or rubber gatherer, goes to Northern ports. The Old North State is receiving daily at its ports consignments of this Black Gold from foreign shores to be made into thousands of automobile tires in our own four big tire factories.

#### Preparing the Rubber

To produce rubber tires is not a simple process. When the crude rubber is received at the factory, it is passed to the breakers which are powerful machines that crush the rubber between large corrugated rolls. The crepe is next sent to the washing machines which are similar to the breakers with the exception that a stream of water plays on the rubber as it is being worked between the rolls. The latter process leaves the rubber clean and rolled out into thin, porous sheets containing a large percentage of moisture which must be removed, as water has a deleterious effect on the compounding. Therefore, the sheets are next passed through heated drying-rolls, or rolls in which the friction of the rubber produces enough heat to drive out the water. When the rubber is dry it is worked up until it takes on a soft, tacky consistency. Then the necessary sulfur is added for vulcanization, together with other ingredients, according to the product desired. Pure rubber, merely vulcanized with sulfur, would never do, so the chemist compounds and mixes certain chemicals to

toughen, to stiffen or make more pliable the rubber according to the product. With nearly three hundred different grades of crude rubber and a similar number of compounding chemicals, the possibilities are infinite. After proper compounding the various rubber mixtures are ready to be used in tire manufacture. One composition is ready for tread making, another for side walls, another for the bead, and still another as frictioning material for the fabric.

#### How Tires are Made

There are two distinct types of tires, fabric and cord. In the former a fabric of fine grade cotton forms the backbone of the tire, the frictioning produced by impregnation of the fabric with a solution of the proper rubber mixture. In this state only the cords are made. Cord tires differ from fabrics in that they are constructed of layers of rubber-covered, rubber-impregnated cable cords, each layer laid at a long angle to the other, to eliminate the internal friction present in fabrics, instead of the woven fabric. The pliant cord offers a minimum of resistance to the road, yet makes a strong tire. The tire proper is made by laying over an iron core a coated strip of cords cut at the proper angle. Layer upon layer are added until the desired number are built onto the form. Then the bead or rubber covered metal hoop is placed on the tire. After the bead is properly worked on, the sole or tread of the tire is applied; this is yielding or sinewy, literally clinging to the frictioning fabric. The side walls are then adjusted and the tire is ready to be vulcanized in a vat or drum by steam under pressure. Since the friction solution, the tread, the sidewall and the bead are of different thicknesses and must serve different purposes and yet be integral parts of the tire, it is necessary that the compounding be so adjusted that the tire comes out properly cured all over and ready to do the service required.

#### Carolina Plants

Extraordinary testimonials of service bespeak the quality of the high grade of tires that are sent out from North Carolina to serve the autoists in all parts of our country.

The oldest rubber plant in the state is only five years old, two others are two years old, and one is not yet a year old. Their age does not bespeak their importance, for a capital investment of \$2,200,000 and plant valuation of \$2,000,000 have produced \$4,500,000 worth of products in the last year. In 1922 this infant industry employed 525 men and expended \$500,000 in wages.

The indications are that North Carolina will become an important producer of automobile tires. Natural advantages are in our favor. Cords and fabrics are manufactured in abundance at home. We have an abundance of adaptable white labor that can be employed at reasonably low wages. We are nearer the crude rubber supply to the south. Climate favors us. Our only lack is experience, which we are rapidly acquiring.—Frank C. Vilbrandt, Associate Professor of Industrial Chemistry, University of North Carolina.

### RATIO OF DIVORCES TO MARRIAGES

Based on Department of Commerce figures for the year 1922. United States average one divorce for every 7.6 marriages in 1922. North Carolina average one divorce for every 16.9 marriages, against one divorce for every thirty-two in 1916. There were 668 divorces granted in North Carolina in 1916, and 1,317 in 1922, an increase of 100 percent in divorces, while total marriages increased only 3.5 percent. The divorce menace is growing at a rapid pace in this state. Except for South Carolina, which grants no divorces, we made the best showing of all states in 1916. Department of Rural Social Economics, University of North Carolina

Rank	State	Number of marriages to one divorce	Rank	State	Number of marriages to one divorce
1	South Carolina	16.9	26	Rhode Island	6.9
2	District of Columbia	35.0	27	Florida	6.8
3	New York	22.6	27	Illinois	6.8
4	Georgia	19.4	29	Kentucky	6.7
5	North Carolina	16.8	30	Arkansas	6.6
6	Maryland	16.1	31	Delaware	6.5
7	New Jersey	13.0	32	Iowa	6.0
8	Louisiana	12.5	33	Maine	5.8
9	Connecticut	11.7	33	Michigan	5.8
10	West Virginia	11.6	35	Kansas	5.7
11	North Dakota	11.4	36	Colorado	5.5
12	Mississippi	10.9	37	Indiana	5.4
13	Massachusetts	10.2	37	Nebraska	5.4
13	Pennsylvania	10.2	39	Ohio	5.2
16	South Dakota	9.8	40	California	5.1
16	Alabama	9.6	41	Idaho	4.9
17	Virginia	9.5	41	Texas	4.8
18	Minnesota	9.4	43	Oklahoma	4.8
19	New Mexico	8.7	44	Arizona	4.7
19	Utah	8.7	44	Missouri	4.7
21	Wisconsin	8.5	46	Montana	4.3
22	Tennessee	8.3	47	Wyoming	3.9
23	Vermont	8.2	48	Oregon	2.6
24	New Hampshire	7.5	48	Nevada	0.9
24	Washington	7.5			