

Alimony Is Legalized Racket Without Legal Cure, Says Maxine Davis

Alimony may be a racket sanctified by law, but there is no legal cure for it, declares Maxine Davis. Telling how it developed and how it is being fought, but pointing out that it is increasing, she writes in McCall's for April:

"That alimony is a racket beyond the grasp of G-men is a prevalent notion. When six New York millionaires involved in domestic litigation joined the Millionaires' Alimony Defiance Society, heads wagged sympathetically from Wall Street to the Bronx. This Society was founded by the not-too-impoorish Samuel William Rushmore, sixty-five-year-old inventor who said he spent \$25,000 for his own divorce. Mr. Rushmore confided to the public that he had twenty-five other prospective members, 'all hapless victims who were driven to despair and who want to commit murder or suicide as the only escape.' The alimony laws the inventor contends, are 'an irresistible and unscrupulous women.'

'I and everyday folks like me read these reports and we would happen if we too were in a marital disaster.

"Look at the divorce rates. About 18 per cent of the couples who swear to cleave unto each other until death in their marriage contracts, at the time of the divorce courts. One marriage in every six is so tragic a failure that divorce is the only remedy. The number of divorces has increased with depressing regularity ever since the Civil War, or from about 10,000 in 1867 to more than 200,000 in 1936. Population in this country grown approximately 800 per cent and marriages have increased about 40 per cent—and divorces 2,000 per cent.

Men have always secured most of the divorces. In 1867 wives were granted 64 per cent of them; nowadays more than 71 per cent of the petitions are filed by women. This would seem to indicate that a great many men must be suffering for mutual mistakes. The relation of these figures to alimony is illuminating. During the period 1867-1886, only 16 per cent of the wives asked for alimony, and 12 per cent received it. The next reports for the period 1887-1906 show that 13 per cent of the women requested alimony and 9 per cent got it. Today about 9 per cent of the women seeking divorce petition for alimony—and 6 per cent of them are granted this allowance.

All financial settlements when men and women separate to their separate public, or according to agreement. They are arranged without court unless it is obvious that a racket is being conducted. A racket, it is not so general as has been led to believe. Alimony is a curious legal anomaly. It is not, as one might think, a survival of the days when women were regarded as weak, breakable figures. Alimony is first granted by the ecclesiastical courts in England. In those days there was no divorce as we in this country know it. Separation—divorce—was granted when husband was at fault, and alimony was decreed for maintenance. It was literally vital. Though a slight murmur in all sincerity, many worldly goods I these nevertheless as soon as the wife slipped on her finger his bride's property became his. All her tangible and intangible assets, and even her earnings, belonged to him and were collectible by him. The wife, on the other hand, acquired no rights in the property of her husband or his earnings except the right of support during the marriage. That reason for alimony is long gone, but the law lingers on.

"It is difficult to generalize upon alimony. Indeed, there is greater difficulty in laws concerning domestic relations in the United States than on any other subject. Some states make definite provision for it; others do not. Pennsylvania, for example, has no legal provision for any financial award in absolute divorce except where insanity is the grounds for the appeal. Alimony is usually a balm for the wife, but some states allow it to the husband under certain circumstances. The historical source of alimony is the law, and it is a statutory right in most states to pay. Connecticut, Hawaii, Vermont and Pennsylvania require the wife to support her former husband if the divorce is granted for insanity. Then, the law makes no distinction between husband and wife in their right to receive support from each other after divorce in thirteen states and three territories. In Massachusetts the husband may be given a part of his wife's estate in the nature of alimony. In Ohio, if a husband has no property, he may be granted a part of his wife's possessions in gross or in installments even though he was at fault in the divorce.

"In sixteen states, the District of Columbia and the Canal Zone, the husband may be required to contribute to his wife's support no matter which of them was in the wrong before the law. In sixteen other states and three territories the husband is only required to pay alimony if the divorce is granted for his sins.

"Your chances of getting or giving alimony depend largely upon where you live. Whether it is ordered in the decree or not anyhow is usually within the discretion of the court, as is the amount granted. Though the court considers a man's income, his property, his wife's needs, and how much each of them is at fault in fixing alimony payments, it usually allows one-half to one-third. That was the rule in the ancient ecclesiastical courts and that is how it is today.

"There are two methods of financial settlement of matrimonial disasters; the court order for alimony and the private agreement as to the amount the husband is to pay. There are advantages to both methods, from the woman's angle. If alimony is provided by the decree of divorce, then the husband's failure to pay constitutes a contempt of court and he may be put into a civil prison until he purges himself of the contempt' by writing his check.

"The depression was responsible for filling many cells with husbands who actually could not pay. For instance, there was the tragic case of Henry Mandel, a millionaire New York real-estate operator whose first wife divorced him in the gold-leafed days before 1929 with an alimony grant of \$30,000 a year. After the stock market crash he was forced into bankruptcy. This did not wipe out his debt for alimony. Under the Bankruptcy Act in New York, alimony is not dischargeable and continues as a going obligation. As a matter of fact, this same proviso applies to an agreement to pay a stated sum to a divorced wife. Bankruptcy is no way out. Mr. Mandel went to jail.

Another famous instance was that of Giuseppe Bamboschek, one of the assistant conductors of the Metropolitan Opera, who was imprisoned by his first wife for his failure to pay her alimony.

"In New York the Civil Practice Act was amended. Under these amendments Mr. Bamboschek and others delinquent in their installments could give proof of their reduced circumstances, and the court might either modify or revoke its order to pay, and also relieve the unhappy appellants of the charge of contempt. The new laws suspended alimony payments during the husband's confinement for arrears. If the husband's business improves, he will once more have to post his alimony check.

"If alimony by decree has advantages, it also has drawbacks. If the husband objects to paying alimony and moves out of the jurisdiction of the court which granted it, his former spouse will find it difficult to collect. He cannot then be haled into court for contempt. It may or may not be possible to sue for arrears.

"The private contract lacks the beauty of the chance for contempt proceedings for enforcement of payment, but it does have some very definite advantages over alimony by decree: If the husband removes from the jurisdiction of the court which granted the decree of divorce, the wife can commence suit and attach his property or get sequestration. This form of settlement has yet another charm for the genuinely unscrupulous: the court has nothing to do with it, and knows nothing about it. 'If sometimes the lady's bills for fables or speedboats run too high, she can still go into court to ask for alimony after all!

"The opportunities for racketeers are all in the laws in most states, and changes in the laws are slow. Much depends upon the judges; more upon the individuals involved. Investigation into this subject brings out a surprising fact: alimony racketeers are proportionately far more common among the poor than among the rich. By and large women in the upper and middle classes, financially speaking, do not ask alimony at all; they just want to be rid of that man, and free of any association with him! The wives of the poor want to know how much money they can get before they march into court. They want the money, because it is hard for them to live. But they also look upon it as a means of vengeance. The helpmates of the poor are likely to be vindictive and inconsiderate.

"Alimony may be the means of a racket, a racket sanctified by law and custom. There is apparently no legal redress or cure for it. But if you are worried, it is comfort to reflect that, after all, the percentage of divorces are constantly increasing, but the number of wives who ask and get alimony are fewer every year."

either stunt their growth or kill them outright.

Treating the seed with two per cent Ceresan (two per cent ethyl mercury chloride dust) will give the best control now known, Dr. Shaw went on.

Demonstrations on 67 farms last season showed that the average yield from untreated seed was 1,295 pounds of seed cotton to the acre, while treated seed produced 1,548 pounds.

The treatment cost 27 cents per acre, and the increased value of the cotton lint and seed produced averaged \$13.08 per acre.

Dr. Shaw recommends three ounces of dust for each bushel of seed. Place the seed and dust in a barrel mixer or a mixing machine and agitate them violently for about five minutes, he said.

A barrel mixer can be made easily at home, he continued. Full directions for making a mixer and treating seed have been published in the January plant disease notes prepared by Dr. Shaw.

Free copies may be obtained by writing Dr. Luther Shaw at State College, Raleigh.

Supervised Loans Offered To Farmers

John H. Pope, rural rehabilitation supervisor of the Resettlement Administration in Chowan, Gates and Perquimans Counties, has announced that supplemental loans are now being made to families farming under the supervised loan plan and that new applications are being received from farmers in need of such assistance.

Applications may be made at the supervisor's office, located in the old post office building in Edenton, or with county welfare officers who will refer such applications to the County Rehabilitation Supervisor.

"The Resettlement Administration provides rehabilitation loans and practical arm guidance to deserving farm families unable to secure needed credit elsewhere," the supervisor explained. "Loans will be made to farmers who can be depended upon to put forth a honest effort to repay them and to carry out their farming operations in accordance with agreement with the Resettlement Administration."

"The rehabilitation program is often referred to as 'supervised character credit', because a person with farm experience or background, who needs assistance to get on his feet, may qualify for a rehabilitation loan provided he is well thought of by his neighbors serving on a County Advisory Committee and in the committee's opinion can be rehabilitated through a loan and practical farming advice.

"To get a supervised loan, the family must be deserving and must be willing to follow a farm plan. After the applicant has rented or otherwise acquired the use of a good farm, we help him to plan a balanced crop program to suit the particu-

lar needs of his family.

"The farm plan includes food and feed as first essentials, and money crops sufficient to pay off the loan with helpful guidance."

AAA NO GOOD, EH!

The Craven County savings and loan association composed of farmers recently declared a three per cent dividend on business done during the last five years.

Mrs. S. N. Dulin, of Elizabeth City visited relatives in Hertford on Friday.

CARD OF THANKS

We wish to thank our many friends for the kindnesses extended to us at the time of our recent bereavement. For every thoughtful act of kindness and each expression of sympathy we are most grateful.

W. H. KEATON

Damping Off Disease Lowers Cotton Yield

Damping off disease is considered one of the major causes of poor stands and low cotton yields in North Carolina.

Failures to get a good stand, rose farmers in the State of some 155,000,000 pounds of seed cotton every year, said Dr. Luther Shaw, extension plant pathologist at State College.

The fungi and bacteria causing the disease are present in nearly all soils, and are often carried on the seed, he continued.

The germs may destroy the germinating power of the seed, or they may attack the young seedlings and

Timely Questions On Farm Answered

Question: When should chicks be vaccinated for chicken pox?

Answer: All young birds should be vaccinated when they are from 10 to 15 weeks old. All birds, except the old hens which are probably resistant to the disease, should be vaccinated. This vaccination should make the birds resistant to the disease for life. The treatment may be given by pulling a few feathers from the thigh and rubbing the small brush that comes with the vaccinating material over the holes. Another method is to puncture the wing web on the inner side with the point of a knife or scissors that has been inserted in the vaccinating fluid.

Question: Should seed sweet potatoes be treated before bedding?

Answer: Yes. The potatoes should be immersed in a mercuric chloride solution for fifteen minutes. This solution is made by dissolving one ounce of the mercuric chloride in eight gallons of water. After immersion the potatoes are dried and bedded without washing. The solution should be warm for effective control of organisms carried on the potatoes. This treatment will destroy surface borne disease producing organisms, but will not cure seed that are already diseased. Where home pro-

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THE 60-horsepower Ford V-8 engine was first developed for Europe, where fuel costs are high. Two years' usage there proved its unusual economy.

When the "60" came to this country this year, the Ford Motor Company made no mileage claims—waited for facts, written on American roads by American drivers.


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Best of all, the Ford "60" is just as big and roomy—just as handsome, sturdy and safe—as the famous 85-horsepower Ford V-8. And it sells at the lowest Ford price in years.

If you want a big car for a small budget—a car you can drive with pride and profit—see the thrifty "60" soon!

Ford V-8

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Mighty Mules Hitched to a dynamometer (a strength testing machine) these powerful mules record their strength for the photographer.

HERE is a famous pair of mules—mighty creatures with the pulling strength of a pair of four-legged giants. At a recent university test, they threatened the world's pulling record.

What makes these mules unusual? Mother Nature gave them something—her own natural balance of many elements; strength, staying power, the willingness to work. So in actual value, these sturdy mules stand out from ordinary mules—there's just no comparison.

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With Vital Elements in Nature's Balance and Blend

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FAMOUS CHILEAN CALENDAR CHARACTERS

See announcements of leading Southern Stations

many elements that combine to make this nitrogen fertilizer a reliable food for your crops.

Natural Chilean is known for its quick-acting nitrogen, of course. But nitrogen is only one of its vital elements. Because of its natural origin, Chilean Soda also contains, as impurities, such elements as iodine, boron, magnesium, calcium and some 28 others. And always remember that these vital elements are present in Chilean Soda in Mother Nature's own wise balance and blend.

For better crops... Natural Chilean Nitrate.