In the Effort to Accelerate Marriages Two Justices Resort to Advertising

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In Hoboken, N. J.—(do you get that?)—after a string of truly distressing and frequently bizarre things have happened than were ever dreamed of in the philosophy of the Renaissance or any one else, an interesting and-characteristically Hobokenesque ekeat is in progress.

This time it is nothing less than a hand-to-hand and eye-to-eye struggle between three justices of the Peace in an effort to get the business of matrimonially inclined men and women who are seeking to become joined in wedlock.

The situation has become so acute that the two of the more strenuous of the Justices have taken to advertising in the "Personal" columns of New York newspapers, for which, in a word, they are using the old-time dignity, declares that he will not concede to such unprofessional means of soliciting his business. At the same time he keeps his weather eye open and down the street on which his office is located, watching for men and women whose appearance and general demeanor indicate that they are on matrimony bent. In particular, Justice classifies himself as a "regular," while his competitors places in the "premium" bracket.

The merry war reached its height this week when the rival Justices put in the following "Personals" in a New York newspaper:

MARRIAGE wanted, without publicity, but must be secured, open evenings and Sundays. 35 years old, 5 ft. 9 in., 150 lbs. SAMUEL ENGLEH, Justice of Peace, 55 Raymond Ave., Hoboken, N. J.

MARRIAGE licenses procured, for premiums of 10 per cent increase, all hours of day and night. CHARLES H. WARD, Justice of the Peace, 1820 5th St., Hoboken, N. J. Phone 747, Hoboken, N. J. Open Sun. and evenings.

Justice Engler, who is a bright, cheerful, clean-cut chap, no doubt envies the possible advantage of his competitors, greeted me when I called as effusively as does J. Russell Crouse. "You see," he says, he saw my ad, and now he asks me to tell him how much it will cost him to get married and to "serve the Justices." That's the way of it; they all come to Hoboken when they want to be set right.

"What do I think about these other marrying Justices who are trying to steal my thunder?" he asked, "I don't know, but it only shows how much originality some people have, and how they like to 'grab.' It won't be long until that strange little bit of coal is on one of these Dutch steamships down there on the pier, believe me.

"As for this old law, I've never heard of it, but I'm just as pleased as a pike. It's going to be passed on to the next generation, I'm sure."

The third marrying Justice is George F. Seymour, who has lived in Hoboken for over a quarter of a century, and is known to nearly every man, woman, and child there as "Judge." He is a jovial, rotund person, of dryer proportions, and with that size of girth attributed to him. He is a sailor on deep sea vessels, a New Jersey National Guardsman, and a Hoboken volunteer with the redcoats in the war. In nearly twenty-one years he has been a marrying Justice of the Peace, and how many of us could he any man ask?"

"No, let these fellows advertise," he said to me. "I don't want any of that kind of business. I believe in advertising to the public, and in the right way. These methods are not in accord with what I regard as proper legal ethics and deportment."

I don't have to advertise the people I married during my twenty-one years as Justice. Thousands of 'em; I can't tell you how many. And I don't have to stand for any darned funny business with people come in here to get married, and that's more than some other Justices can say. For instance, if I see the feller is lush I simply say, 'I can't marry you to-day.'"

"This is what the woman gets the ‘call down.' At times she laughs and tries to be 'funny.' Then it tells her a few things. Say, 'Where do you think you are? In a circus? I want you to understand that this marrying business is a very serious thing. If you don't take that view of it there's a door there, and you can close it from the outside quick. That generally fixes them, and they cut out the laughs."

"People want to kid the bride, and if so, why?" I asked.

"No, I don't," he replied thoughtfully. "I don't believe in the wedding trip. Well, let them. I don't do it for one reason, because my wife won't let me. Here in Hoboken there is a very good and fast for a couple" (the Judge's mind seemed to be wandering back to his wedding), "but I'm not ready to make sail and leave the office with the witnesses, one of the latter caught out, 'Ain't you goin' to kiss the Judge?'"

"I am," he said. "No, I make it a practice never to kiss the bride in my office. If I want to do so I'll do it elsewhere. Here. They don't know how to take it, but he laughed and they went away. Now I don't want any experimental kindness with strange women. They are many microbes about, so I take no chances."

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