

BANK ACCOUNT OFTEN THE CAUSE OF MUCH DOMESTIC STRIFE, SAYS JUDGE

BY JANE WHITAKER

"The possession of a bank account is frequently the cause of such domestic strife between husband and wife that they grow to dislike each other in their squabbling over the money.

"The law does not require that a man shall give his wife money; many men who are excellent husbands do not give their wives money; the law requires only that a husband shall support his wife.

"Men and women marry without any idea of toleration. A woman owes as much to the marriage contract as a man does; she should feel an equal responsibility. The man who supports his wife has a right to expect that she will fulfill her obligations to him.

"No woman should continue to live with an abusive man, nor with a man who has become repugnant to her. Upon that we all agree. But the question upon which many of us disagree is whether a man should have to support a wife when she decides he is repugnant to her and leaves him.

"Two families, wife and mother-in-law, cannot live contentedly under one roof except in rare cases. A wife's place, however, is in the home her husband provides for her and it is her duty to try to make that home a happy one.

"The court of domestic relations is not an adjuster of marital differences; it is a criminal court where under the law a man found guilty of abandonment of his wife or of non-support may be sentenced to the Bridewell."

That is a little of the philosophy of Judge Hosea Wells, who now presides over the court of domestic relations, and whether you entirely agree or disagree with him you will find a certain amount of homely truth in

his conclusions.

Already I can predict for you that Judge Wells will not be popular with the ladies who patronize the court of "domestic revelations," as it has been called, and, already, by the grapevine route of dissatisfied domesticity, the news has traveled that the "new judge of the court isn't so easy with women." One wife who had expected to have a motion come before the court to have her allowance increased because her husband is earning more money decided she would not take a chance after she had spent a morning listening to the decisions of the judge. Another girl-wife, seeking pointers with the idea that she "wouldn't put up with Frank much longer," decided she would wait a while before she started any action.

Those who have watched the court closely have been a little afraid that it might become a weapon of harm in that women would not feel it necessary to use any tolerance nor attempt to keep up the contentment of home life in their knowledge that it is easy to make a man support a wife by taking him into court. The law is a splendid one to punish worthless husbands and compel them to discharge the obligations they assumed when they married; it is dangerous if it becomes merely a support wedge to render easy the breaking up of a home.

The homely philosophy of the present presiding judge found its expression yesterday in two of the typical cases that come into the court.

"He has \$1,500 in the bank and owns the house," said Mrs. Martin Larsen, who has been married since 1884. "I don't want to live with him any longer; he is mean to me. He wants me to pay rent for the house. I want him to divide the money with me, for we saved it together, and leave me alone."