

## NOBODY LOVES OR WANTS A GOOD MANY OF THE CHILDREN IN THE WORLD

By Jane Whitaker

What a lot of children there are in the world that nobody loves and nobody wants.

If you go into the county court on the day when dependent cases are tried your heart will sicken at the repetition of cases, so very similar, where adults haggle about having to support little ones and often the little ones look on with wide-eyed wonder, feeling in their little minds and hearts that somewhere there is a big injustice and placing it perhaps at the very gate of life that sent them here, unwelcome, and gave them no chance to escape.

A grandfather has been ordered to pay for the support of the baby girl of his son who has run away, leaving the mother dependent.

He pays for a little while and in the meantime the mother of the child marries. She does not herself contribute to the support of her child. She places it with her mother and depends on the paternal grandparent to pay the maternal grandmother.

The grandfather decides that the second husband of the child's mother should support the child and he takes the matter back into court and asks to be relieved of any further burden or if he is not relieved, to be given custody of the child, so that he may keep it on less than the \$2 a week he has been ordered to pay by the court.

You leave the county court with a great pity in your heart for the unwanted baby girl and you go into the court of domestic relations.

Here there is a squabble about the support of three children. The father says he will not support them while they are in the custody of the mother. The mother says she will keep them with her. The father makes charges against her character and Judge Sabath orders an investigation. The case is continued and the mother leaves the courtroom with

the man with whom her husband has charged she is intimate.

Shortly she returns. Whether she dreads investigation or whether it is merely that she doesn't care, she says she is satisfied to give her three children to the father and, this settled, she once more leaves the court holding the arm of the man for whom she gave up the care and guidance of the babies she brought into the world.

You leave there with some of your ideal of motherhood shattered and you go into the juvenile court, and here, in the court of tears, children's tears, you loiter but a little while, for your heart will not stand the pain of erring baby things clinging to their parents, not realizing that their parents have decided to let the state take the burden of the children's support.

You go into the boys' court. Two lads, one 16 and one 17, have been arrested for breaking into a barn. They say they went there to sleep.

The one of 17 has the expression of a man who knows life. There is not a lingering trace of boyhood. The world has grappled with him and he has grappled with the world and he hasn't much respect or love for it.

"I came here from Kansas City," he says. "I was hunting a job. I met this fellow. He told me we would sleep in the barn. I haven't any money, ain't had for three days."

"Where are your parents?" Judge Dolan asks.

"Haven't any," laconically. "Me mother died when I was two and me father five years ago."

"Haven't you any sisters or brothers, or somebody to look after you?"

"Nope!" He is surprised that it matters anyway. He is used to looking out for himself. If they lock him up? Well, nobody cares and he doesn't care, either. He won't ask any mercy.

"Discharged," says the judge. "We