

Highways and By-Ways of Lil' Ol' New York

By RAYMOND CARROLL
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NEW YORK, March 31.—For nearly one whole day this week women cigarette smokers of New York City raged. In the clerks—out at the city hall, and the other at police headquarters—who bear the brunt of the blame of the false cigarette-banning in public places to women for eighteen hours had only waited until April 1, the incident would have been classed as the greatest "All-fools Day" stunt pulled since P. T. Barnum's celebrated elephant, white and human-sized, with its

Luckily no arrests were made and the city of New York is not in for a flock of damage suits. But no apologies, be they ever so humble, can compensate the female smokers for the energy they expended in the white heat of their wrath over their fancied belief that man as exemplified in the board of aldermen had slipped one over on them. They are not for the first time, curses of tormented smoke, and in outbursts of dwindling wrath, at the "despicable invasion of their right."

The women smokers simply went crazy when in many restaurants they were told to pack away their fags or get out. That was when the supposed law was in force. The dismay and consternation that set in was something more profound than that which encompassed those present at the feast of Belshazzar when the coming of Cyrus to Babylon was foreseen upon the walls of the banquet hall.

Think of the troubled dreams that resulted from that one night's anger!

One little lady taking breakfast on one hotel table, was surrounded by marching women moving down Broadway in the direction of city hall to protest against the supposed ordinance. Another said she dreamed of the next board of aldermen composed entirely of smoking women.

Not since the false armistice was celebrated have there been such a gigantic hoodoo perpetrated upon the New York public. Old timers re-called how James Gordon Bennett once turned the wild animals loose one morning from the Central Park Zoo in the columns of the New York Herald.

Briefly, what happened was this: Dan McCoy is an assistant in the office of the city clerk. He has been on the job forty years. His chief task is to notify each city department affected when the board of aldermen adopts an ordinance. Last fall Alderman McGuinness of Greenpoint, which is a part of the old "City of Churches," or Brooklyn, introduced an ordinance banning smoking in public by women.

It was referred to the committee on general welfare, where it died with the nothing daunted, Alderman McGuinness reintroduced his resolution Jan. 24 of this year, and it was "Sled" as before, with a tremendous majority of 53 to 3 against its passage. Clerk Dan found the resolution among his papers and thinking it had passed, sent it to police headquarters, which acted upon it until Commissioner Enright rescinded the order.

Anyhow, it was something in the way of a good joke upon the puffing ladies.

Here is a tale unauthorised by the presentment of the paper. There were "Dover Roads," play built around the satrapping of a wife and a husband, and the frustration of two elements, is playing. The central figure of this piece is a character who devotes his time and his money to enticing runaway couples into his home, situated on the Dover Road, by which he makes a fortune, and then showing up what is to come after by compelling them to see each other in their true colors.

In the intermission on the sidewalk in front of the theater I chance to meet a member of a very exclusive New York club, one of the sort of men who invites and receives distinguished ladies. I told you that gray-haired man seated in the fifth row on the aisle," he asked.

I nodded. My friend continued:

"He is a queer chap, and has taken the moral of this play seriously to heart. He is here most every night, watching not the play, but the actions of married folk to whom he has sent tickets. His mind is to prevent rifts in the families of his friends. He sends them here so they can see the folly of new entanglements."

"How do you know that?" I asked.

The clubman replied:

"Because I know of half a dozen mu-

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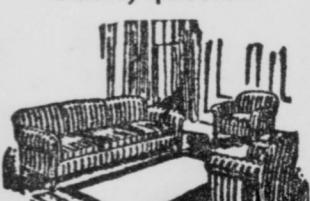
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