

RENO FIGHTS

**RENO ABOUT TO
RAISE DIVORCE
PLAY BY IDAHO**

**Calls on Spirit of '49 to
Protect the Pot.**

[Continued from first page.]

local critics go so far as to declare that competition for railroad traffic in this streamline era may have been one prompting influence with the Idaho legislators. It is only sheer surmise, of course, but suspicion here is that Idaho, in seeking to make its divorces easier and easier, had in mind, among other things, that of building itself up as home of winter sports, for Sun Valley was picked as an ideal skiing resort after a six weeks' survey of the Rockies.

Florida already has been cutting in with its ninety day requirement. Much winter divorce trade which might have waited for spring and Reno is said by lawyers to have been lured by Florida sunshine. But they are not so apprehensive of this competitor, because they say Florida law is not so easily understood by outside divorce lawyers as is that of Nevada, which is based on the New York code coming in via California.

N. Y. Lawyer Right at Home.

A New York lawyer, getting a case up for a client, they affirm, is on his own home grounds when it comes to procedure. In Florida corroborative evidence is necessary in uncontested cases. It is not required here. The competition of Arkansas, too, a ninety day state, gives little trouble here.

**HOUSE IN CALIFORNIA
ADOPTS MEASURE TO
PARDON TOM MOONEY**

Sacramento, Cal., March 10. (AP) - The assembly of the California legislature today adopted, 45 to 28, a resolution designed to pardon Thomas J. Mooney, convicted of the 1916 Preparedness day bombing in San Francisco.

The action was taken after lengthy debate despite presentation of opinions by State Attorney General U. S. Webb and Legislative Counsel Fred Wood that the legislature does not possess pardoning power except in cases of treason and impeachment.

The resolution must be adopted by the senate to complete legislative action upon it.

lawyers saying that Arkansas sometimes refuses to grant divorces in uncontested cases.

But, regardless of whether or not Nevada raises the ante on Idaho by reducing the time limit, which is open to doubt, it is loosening up in another way. The legislature at Carson last week passed a bill making incompatibility a ground for divorce—in uncontested cases.

In this city of about 20,000 a total of 19,351 divorces have been granted in the last six years. They have brought in around 15 million dollars in fees, expenses, living, gambling, horseback riding. Leading members of the bar say on an average a divorce seeker spends \$750. Some are much higher, some are lower, while some land jobs and work their way through.

65 Per Cent Women.

Approximately 65 per cent of the seekers were women, though this is an estimate, and 1,901 children were apparently involved in last year's cases. Filing fees and court costs alone in 1935 brought Washoe county \$90,000.

California last year was biggest

customer with 832; New York second with 812. In 1935 New York led with 955, California second with 740. In California interlocutory decrees are granted which require a year to become effective. No new marriage for a year in California.

Here in Reno it is nothing unusual for a person to be divorced and married on the same day in the same courtroom by the same judge. A different angle was contributed by a sardonic patron of a roulette wheel two nights ago: "I got my divorce in California, which is better because you've got to wait a year before making another mistake."

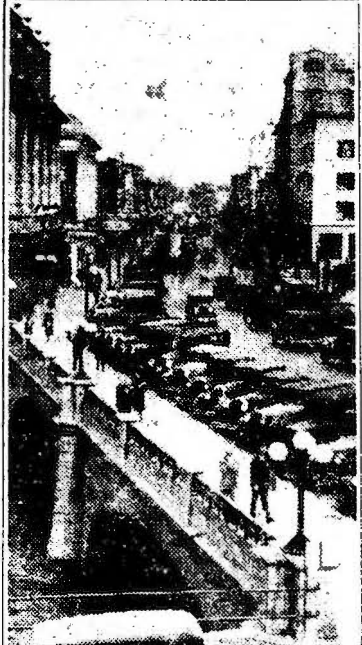
Reno is not only "divorce capital" but a "Gretna Green." They swarm here to get married. The honeymooners exceed the divorce seekers. Last year 7,602 marriages were granted, and in 1935, 6,054. The year before that it was 5,629. In 1931 it stood 5,231.

Blame It on Constitution.

Reno citizens themselves, a delightful, friendly people, are quick to point out to the visitor that the divorce and marriage industry, and the legalized gambling are only a fraction, though the best advertised one, of enterprise, business, and social life here. Back of the roulette wheels and faro tables and the broken marriage rings is an ordinary town of the western type, with seventeen churches, fine schools, a state university with 1,100 students, crisp sunshine in the foothills. It says if any word should be the state motto it is "tolerance."

Two leading lawyers declared Reno got into the divorce business because of its constitution. Back in 1864, when it was admitted, its population was mostly miners, working on the great Comstock lode. They were great ramblers, so the state put in its constitution that a citizen could vote if he had lived in the state six months.

Many years later this point was called to the attention of lawyers in other states, and Nevada began its start as divorce center. Later on it was reduced to three months, and to meet action by Arkansas the ante was raised to six weeks' residence in 1931. Legalized gambling went in at the same time and then the industry began to thrive.



Virginia street in Reno, Nev., the "divorce capital," which is being forced to fight for its business against the competition of Idaho. [TRIBUNE Photo.]



A roulette table in operation in Reno, illustrating how the wealthy divorce seekers while away their time.



Sun Valley lodge in Idaho, which state has cut its residential period for divorce seekers from three months to six weeks. (Story in adjoining column.)