

CHOOSING A HUSBAND

What Mrs. Rinehart Considers the Three Principles of Marriage

EDITOR'S NOTE Few subjects can compete in interest with the story of the personal romance and married life of a woman who has had such an amazingly successful public career as Mary Roberts Rinehart. In this article Mrs. Rinehart carries on the discussion of "The Best Age for Marriage—19 or 29?" with which she opened the present remarkable forum of American writers upon the subject of love marriage, and the modern woman. In her previous article Mrs. Rinehart recounted that after having resolutely stepped out from a sheltered home in the era of sheltered woman at 19, she became a trained nurse, and at 21 the bride of Dr. Stanley S. Rinehart, one of the hospital physicians. By 21 she was the mother of three children and had made an appreciable start upon her career.

Next week Gertrude Atherton, who has already said in this series that a social law should prohibit the marriage of girls before the age of 25, will write on "Career After Thirty."

By MARY ROBERTS RINEHART.
I HAVE said that the average young girl seldom thinks beyond her marriage. From her earliest girlhood this has been her objective. With that in view, either on the surface or buried in her subconsciousness she has risen in the morning and gone to bed at night. Her entire existence, in the majority of cases, is a looking forward to love and marriage. Her haste to "grow up" is a part of it. She is pointed, every natural instinct in her is pointed, toward this culmination.

To impute this inevitable pointing only to sex, or sex urge, is to fail to understand normal girl psychology entirely. What sex there is in it is so buried, so camouflaged by the mental censor of her own mind, that she herself is almost totally unaware of it. It is a purely romantic motivation.

The Woman at Sea.

She looks forward to love and marriage, but not beyond it. When it has come—and gone—she often finds herself completely at sea. Like some men who have reached the goal of life ambition and have nothing further to look forward to, these young women find themselves objectiveless, at a loose end. They have to discover for themselves new interests, new objectives, new substitutes for the formerly engrossing one.

Where children come quickly, the question more or less solves itself. Where they do not—and more they do not—we have the aimless, idle woman, sometimes merely discontented, sometimes only silly, again neurasthenic, and now and then downright vicious. Or the frantic search for some sort of career.

More than the desire for freedom or self-expression, more than any necessity to earn, this feeling that the opened door of marriage has led them nowhere is responsible for the returns to business life, the feverish search for careers, and much of the idle dalliance we see everywhere.

The Only Real Solution.

I admit that to suggest a home and children as a further objective seems flavorless and colorless in the light of the highly colored life of the younger generation today. Personally, I never wanted anything else, but I had been reared with that as an ideal. We are not rearing our children that way now.

Nevertheless, I am convinced that children and a home are the only real solution, the only complete fulfillment. Not for all women. No rule can apply to every individual. But for the great majority.

If it ever came to a question between my family and my career, I could throw away my career in a moment. I would not even have to think about it.

I sit back sometimes and study the eager young women who come to see me, their eyes shining with hope and ambition. And I wonder. Do they know, can they conceive, what they are throwing away? I do not know a woman of 40 who has succeeded without marriage who has not her moment of complete honesty, when she admits that though she may have gained the whole world, yet in some strange fashion she has lost her own soul. And the same applies to the woman who has married and remained voluntarily childless.

Older Women More Cautious, More Selfish.

You see, up to this point, there are certain advantages indicated for the woman who marries late. She does not expect too much. She has already more or less objectified her life, and filled it with interests outside of her romantic imaginings. Her judgment of men, if harsher, is more liable to be correct. She is herself better organized, and the man she chooses at 25 is the choice of her mature mind. From a selfish point of view, she has done fairly well.

But this matter of marriage is one of the nation as well as the individual. And the nation prospers when young wife, with her more



MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

Author of "The Breaking Point," "Tish," "Babs," "The Circular Staircase (The Bat)," "The Amazing Interlude," "Dangerous Days," etc.

Not so very many years ago Mary Roberts Rinehart was a nurse in a Pittsburgh hospital. Today she is in the front rank of American writers, with an income estimated at more than \$300,000 a year. Her books have been read, it is estimated, by 15,000,000 Americans. Two of her plays, "The Breaking Point" and "The Bat," are current now, the latter having established a new record for longevity on Broadway.

Yet to Mrs. Rinehart, her children come first; her career is of secondary importance. She found time to rear her three sons to young manhood, to be a companion to her husband and a busy housewife, while writing her stories of romance and adventure.

Many authors are fond of tracing their literary lineage back to Shakespeare or Chaucer or the Bible. Mrs. Rinehart found her first compelling impetus in a collection of old paper-back thrillers discovered in a corner of the kitchen when she was a little girl of 9. After devouring 92 Nick Carters, Mary Roberts decided that what the world particularly needed was thrills. And from the start, she has produced them.

Her romance is a story in itself. She met Dr. Stanley M. Rinehart when both were on the staff of a Pittsburgh hospital, and she married him at the age of 19.

From the standpoint of a wife and mother, as well as a successful woman writer, Mrs. Rinehart here reviews the institution of marriage, and she will have something further to say in a subsequent article in this series.

frequent child-bearing. The older woman seldom rears a large family. She is more cautious, more selfish, very often, and more ambitious. She has one child, perhaps, or none. She is apt to resent the changes child-bearing makes in her life.

I have said she is better organized. She is often too completely organized.

My own first child was born when I was 20, and by the time I was 25 I had had three. As one child had taken all my time anyhow, I simply argued that three could take no more than that. I paid a price for them, of course. I figured once that in seven years I had never known one undisturbed night!

But I think now, looking back, that it is as well I was not a thor-

oughly organized and meticulous type in these days, and not too worried when the furniture grew battered and the nursery was a seething hive of generally mischievous activity.

And of course I have had this wonderful advantage of the young mother, of being still sufficiently young as the children grew up. Not, of course, being boys, that they will ever entirely grow up, resembling as they do their father in this regard. But as they grew older.

Wasn't it during the Roosevelt regime at the White House that some distinguished visitor was met on the staircase by a pillow fired from above with extreme velocity,

and not intended for him? Well, there were a good many years when that could easily have happened to us, and the pillow has been fired by the head of the house at that. I am proud to say that on the occasions now when all the family get together again, a general rough-house frequently results. Mostly, I'll admit, I am the audience nowadays, but it was not always so.

Women Who Worry and Quit.

That is one priceless result of the early marriage, the companionship between the parents and the children. The closer similarity of interest. Perhaps motherhood is only a happy accident to the young woman, entered into blindly and with the sublime confidence of youth. But the older woman is too apt to have her one lone chick, figure, worry and—quit.

Better six children, made-over clothes, worn shoes, companionship and fun together, than one and a college education.

Sometimes I reflect on marriage, as I have seen it over the world.

We Americans are supposed to be the most mutually married people on earth. Quite literally, we abandon our individual existences in marriage, and are expected to do so.

Each party to the contract makes a tacit demand on the other's entire time, interest, sympathy and affection. Our women are more guilty than our men, perhaps, but it is true of both. Each is allowed a limited circle of interest outside the marriage, the man his business, the woman her woman friends. But the end of the day sees the contract again in force.

When Love Is Tyranny.

Europeans seem to regard this as an evidence of our essential middle-classness. For some reason any strong emphasis on the home tie even in America today seems to be regarded as a bourgeois quality. There is an evidence of snobbery in much of our recent literature, with its attempt to ridicule such virtues as fidelity, decent living and binding home ties. The home-and-mother school is out of fashion.

But there can be no doubt that our American emphasis on the home can lead very easily to its tyranny. Foreigners comment on this, and since they are frequently men, they speak of the subjection of the American man. Actually it is the same for the woman.

I suppose there is an argument for it. It is possible that one may, in time forget, in the four walls of a jail, that there is a world outside. But I, who base everything on the home, do not believe in the domination of the home. It is the family background and sanctuary. But it can hold too closely. Its love may easily become tyranny.

One of the great troubles in American marriage is, of course, this narrowing of an entire universe to a world of two people. After a time habit, that saviour of peace, steps in; and we forget that time when we lived our separate individualistic lives.

Why We Value Home so Highly.

The older woman finds this restraint more difficult than the younger one. That perhaps it is

hardest of all on our men does not enter into this discussion, but remains a fact.

Looking back, I am sure we were as guilty in this regard as the average. But it was not so noticeable to us, for in our early days my husband was in general practice, and we had to take our home life in very small doses.

I have said earlier that in seven years I never had known an unbroken night's sleep. For a much longer period this was true of him. And when one adds the office hours three times a day, the calls and so on, there was little time left. I have wondered since if this is not the reason why we value our time at home so highly now. Those years when we never could accept a dinner invitation, and very seldom got to the theater, made a united home life very important when it came.

By the time the children were old enough to understand, we were prepared with a theory to offset this tyranny of the home.

Our Three Principles of Marriage.

It may not be out of place to say here that we have at different times promulgated three principles to which we have adhered. It is the last one, of course, which applies here.

The first I have already indicated, division of duties and of income. The second one was never to disagree over the children so that they knew about it. The third, developed by the head of the family later on, was that a family is an organization, with partners. In this case we were the senior partners, and our sons the junior ones. Since that time the partnership idea has held; no decision affecting the family is made without it, and any problem confronting any one of us is quite likely to be brought up for discussion before the organization as a whole.

We have been able to get away in this fashion from much of the old parent-children attitude. And there can be no tyranny, even of affection, when every one has a voice and freedom to use it.

Two Types of Selfishness.

I have digressed a little here, because the cry for freedom on the part of our young people is largely a result of this unconscious tyranny of ours. And because women are the worst offenders.

The attempt of the thoroughly domestic woman to hold her family too close, the narrowing of her interest and the shutting out of the world, and the focussing of her entire life on her husband and especially her children, is in its own way as selfish and as stultifying as the attitude of the woman who refuses to have children at all.

This strangle-hold of a certain type of woman is a very terrible thing. With the woman married young it generally includes her husband as well as her children. She gave up everything for this man, so he must give up everything for her. In the older woman, as I have watched it working out, it generally limits itself to her children. She has borne her child or children later; she has risked herself to do so. She will probably have no more.

The Ideal Marriage.

In both cases it is selfish. Mother love can be at the same time the most sacrificing and the most selfish of all human emotions. These are the women who resent marriage for their children, or any outside interest. I never see an older woman, holding tight to some unfortunate daughter or son, that I do not feel like crying out on them.

But we of the home are guilty of other crying evils which affect this question of marriage.

There can be no doubt as to what would constitute the ideal marriage. It would be the union of two young and healthy individuals who sincerely love each other, and who would have children to hold them together when the first fine rapture had passed.

The very reason for such an article as this shows how far we have deviated from the ideal. We are debating the wisdom of early or late marriages, not because there can be any question of what nature intended, but because the question of expediency continually obtrudes itself.

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Next week, "Career After Thirty," Husband, Home and Children First. Then the World is Open to Women, by Gertrude Atherton.

Electric power has been transmitted by wireless within a radius of two miles. Because so much energy is used in the transmission, and too much voltage required to be practicable, the tests were continued.

Dance Crazy London

London, Dec. 1.—The feet of all London are twinkling to the dance. Every ballroom is packed. The season has started with a full swing. There is an enormous demand for the best bands and good music.

Two hundred dancers in a leading hotel gaily pirouetted at tea time yesterday to strains of intriguing music that set the limbs in motion even against one's will. It was irresistible.

Dinner is a combination of eating and dancing. You cannot sit still. The music coerces. A fig for food! Digestion seems none the worse for it.

In the Clubs.

The movement is not confined to the hotels. All the clubs are in a whirl. The dance palaces are packed afternoon and night. A thousand dancers, paying 5 shillings a head for dancing alone, will crowd one of the most popular of these West London halls this afternoon.

It is already a record dancing season. London has never known the like.

There has been much talk about "The Blues," but fashionable dancers cold-shoulder it. This is the general verdict at the hotels and most exclusive clubs.

"The Blues" is a slow affair," said one hotel manager. "It has to be made 'jazzy' to go at all, and it generally becomes elementary jazz.

It puts the new dance movement back two years. It is simply old-time fox-trot done to a slower tempo.

"The waltz is coming into fashion again. It is better than any new dance and real dancers like it. Skill and grace are required for waltzing. But the tango and 'The Blues'—our guests do not want them.

"There is steady advancement in the class of music, too. Composers like Goossens are interested in it.

Buying Green Jade

Rangoon, Dec. 1.—The strangest selling system in the world is to be found in Burma. Here, once a year, the entire quantity of jade quarried in 12 months is put up for sale at one "sitting."

The buyers are representatives of jade-carving firms, several of them from Canton, where the green jade is cut, and others from Peking, Foochow and Shanghai, which specialize in white jade.

On the day before the sale all the stones are exhibited, each bearing a numbered card, and so out that the interior may be examined by intending buyers, who spend the day making notes of specimens they want. The following day the auctioneer takes his stand in the

center of the floor with the buyers around him.

A number is called out, and several men rush to the auctioneer and grasp his hands and wrists under his long, wide sleeves. There follows a moment of silence. Then the auctioneer calls out a price and a name, and one of the men who has clasped his hand is assigned his purchase.

Thought reading? No. The buying and selling of jade all over the far east—except of course, to tourists, who only buy from special stalls and usually on the one-price basis—is done by secret bids expressed by hand-clasps. Every grip has its price, and the auctioneer decides on the winning bid.