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## How Many Times Should a Woman Marry?



Miss Russell Away Back in the Old Times Before She Was Married at All.

**NO--** By EVA M'DONALD VALESH.

Editor and Lecturer.

they have made governing marriage. Those laws contemplate few marriages, one usually, two sometimes, but beyond that number they seldom look. That is right, for marriage was instituted for the protection of posterity and to centralize property. Frequent marriages confuse children, so to speak, and scatter property.

Many marriages not only coarsen the woman, but create what is far from a good atmosphere for her children. The child who has several stepfathers is sure to become a cynic about marriage and to esteem lightly the bonds that should be sacred.

In my opinion women who marry often destroy the fine spiritual essence of femininity. I believe that two marriages are admissible in some circumstances. But I know many fine women whose opinions I respect who consider even a second marriage destructive of the finer side of marriage.

These women, of delicate perceptions, say that marriage is permanent, not only while both live, but while either remains. They do not believe that death itself can destroy the bond. "I belong to a memory," I have heard these sincere widows say and have inwardly applauded the beauty of the sentiment.

I particularly dislike to see a woman in a prominent position contract several marriages. Her name and personality are known, and for the young men and women who are familiar with her fame she sets an example that is not uplifting.

It is a curious comment on the so-called faithfulness of men that they do not marry as often as women do. I know a good many women who have married three, four or five times, but I recall few men who have married more than twice. Nat Goodwin and De Wolf Hopper? Well, yes; but they are of the stage, and we look to the stage for our entertainment, and not for our practice of the niceties of our moral code. The smaller number of marriages by men raises the question whether they have a higher regard for marriage than have women.

Miss Lillian Russell as she is to-day in All Her Unparalleled American Beauty and Charm.



**MISS LILLIAN RUSSELL**, who is the most beautiful American actress, and who, by some, is thought to be the most beautiful woman in America, is going to get married again. This makes her fourth venture into matrimony.

In 1876 she married Harry Graham, a musical director, and secured a divorce in 1884. In 1884 she married Edward Solomon, a composer, and divorced him ten years later. In 1894 she married John Chatterton, a professional singer known as Signor Perugini. She left him four months later and divorced him in 1898. Now Miss Russell is going to try matrimonial happiness again with Alexander P. Moore, a Pittsburg publisher and millionaire.

Miss Russell's conspicuous beauty and stage position make her views of progressive matrimony important. Here she answers the question raised by her fourth marriage, and two prominent women discuss whether it is respectable for a woman to contract an indefinite number of marriages.

**Lillian Russell's Fourth Husband Raises the Question Whether It Is Respectable for a Woman to Have an Unlimited Number of Matrimonial Affairs**

By LILLIAN RUSSELL.

I BELIEVE in re-marriages. If the adage "If at first you don't succeed try, try again" applies to every other condition in life, why not to marriage?

If we make mistakes in business or in professional matters we try again and, benefiting by our first failure, succeed. I regard this as my second marriage. For my first was a disappointment and mistake. My third was not a marriage. My second was, so I consider it, my first and only one. Therefore, that which is called my fourth marriage will really be only my second.

Second marriages are almost always happier than the first. So I expect mine to be. Summing up my views of re-marriages, my own and others, I say that it proves my faith in humanity. I know there are good women, so I know there must be good men. God wouldn't make such a one-sided world that only the women in it are good.

There are not many good men, I admit, but that is because the world hasn't furnished the conditions for goodness for men. It is beginning to do so.

Shouldn't a woman try to find a good man just as she should try to find the best of everything? I think the next two years will show wonderful advance in that direction, and it will come through the votes for women. Men are mistaken when they think that women will vote for better men and for the betterment of men.

If some men have failed in their duty we

should not judge all men by them. It is the large view of men and of humanity that moves a woman to marry again—and again. It is the triumph of hope.

Marriage is the natural state and all women should live in it, if they have found a worthy mate.

It is better to try and try again, marrying several times, than to remain the wife of a man between whom and you there is no sympathy. That is degradation beside which divorce is freedom and purity.

Let me add that no marriage is happy that is based upon the broken heart of another woman. I have never caused any woman's heart to ache, and I never will.

If a woman would wait until she is thirty and a man until he is forty there would be fewer re-marriages. Of course there would be less time—but the truth is, a greater proportion would be successful. The early first marriage so often fails because the two cannot learn that great lesson of marriage—not to expect too much. Extreme youth always expects too much—of friends, of lovers, of the whole world.

Polltiness is the muddle that binds together the affections. Familiarity is the hot water that dissolves them. When a man gets into the habit of excusing his rudeness by saying "O well, she is just my wife"—why then, if the woman is one of modern spirit the domestic ship tacks around and heads right for the divorce court.

Hasn't that woman a right to take herself then to someone who will appreciate her? Because she has found an unappreciative "master," must she continue all her life rating herself at his undervaluation? What nonsense!

Many a man is surprised when someone tells him his wife is clever. He has never taken time to find it out.

A good way to stamp out the selfishness that menaces marriage is to forget the selfish old dogmas of the narrow marriage. My dear mother spoke of that in her book which I have just published for distribution among my friends. I have called it "Memories of My Mother." She said "The motto of the narrow marriage is

"Me and my wife, my son John and his wife."

"Us four and no more."

She was right when she said that such a marriage deserved to be a failure.



Miss Russell and Her Second Husband, Mr. Solomon, Whom She Considers Her First Husband.

**REALLY** nice woman will not marry many times. Frequent marriages suggest commercialism. We think of a woman who has made many marriages much as we do of a horse that has had many masters. The same prejudice that exists against a girl who is known to have been often engaged is entertained, but in a much deeper degree toward the woman who has had many husbands. And as we think of the price of the horse, so we think of the price of the woman, and we wonder how many dollars she has brought at each transaction in the marriage mart. There is the flavor of barter and sale about her.

**YES--** By BARONESS BAZU Formerly Mrs. Frank Leslie.

I DO NOT believe that any limit should be set on progressive matrimony.

There are two reasons that have their roots in the depths of human nature for remarriages. One is that if the first marriage is a happy state, there is a desire to repeat it. The other is that if the first marriage turns out badly, hope triumphs over experience and it is human to want to try again. Each is a good and sufficient reason.

Each answers the question, "How many times may a woman marry?" For she may marry as often as she wishes to perpetuate a happy state or to forget an unhappy one.

The first marriage is usually for love. The man marries for love. So does the woman. The second time and thereafter he is likely to choose a woman who will be an ornament to his home, who will look well at the head of his table and in his carriage, who will set the stamp of her gracious personality upon his success in his combat with the world.

In HER second and subsequent marriages the woman is prone to consider calm and congenial companionship rather than marriage. She knows that man, imperfect creature that he is, is a considerable shield against the buffeting of life.

He is almost indispensable in travelling. He prevents her being cheated by hotel keepers and robbed by train attendants. And many women like to go about a great deal. They need an escort for this service. Call him a wrap carrier if you will. If he has as much money as she has, all the better, for the world will not say he married her for her money.

Some sensitive persons profess to be shocked by what they term the promiscuity of frequent marriages. This seems to me quite unnecessary. The preceding marriage, whether concluded by death or divorce, is over. It is finished, a turned page. In every other department of life we make contracts, but we have also the right to

retire from them and build anew on the foundation of knowledge derived from old mistakes.

The unromantic truth is that many marriages cease, after a time, to be marriages. For when love has gone there is no real marriage, and I do not believe that after five years of living under the same roof a man continues to love a woman, nor a woman a man. The close, commonplace, everyday association has brushed the bloom off love.

I said there is no limit to the number of marriages a woman may with propriety and happiness contract, if she has first freed herself from her old bonds. But there is one point she may well give thoughtful consideration. That is, that if she have sons she will not need to marry for an escort to pieces of amusement nor for a travelling companion. If she have any children she may decide not to let their name be swallowed up and abandoned in a new one. My argument in favor of remarriage applies more particularly to the childless woman, but it is true in a broad sense of any.

### What They Think of Re-Marriage in Other Lands

**F**REEDOM of the widow to remarry is in general an indication of a nation's position in the scale of civilization. The more barbarous and benighted nations forbid the remarriage of widows with various accompaniments of cruelty.

The Hindus forbid remarriage of a widow with the most dreadful penalties that their religion and customs can inflict. The poor Hindu girl is married as a child, and on becoming a widow she is forced to be a slave of her mother-in-law or of any woman who will shelter her. Girls are often widows at twelve. Formerly they were burned alive with their husbands' bodies, but this practice called "suttee" has been suppressed by the British Government.

Among many African races it is customary to execute all the wives on the death of their husbands. In the Barua country a dead chief is arranged in his grave sitting on the lap of his principal wife with all the other wives arranged around them. Then the widows are all buried alive.

Thibet is one-half civilized country where remarriage of widows is freely permitted, but here the men have passed into a condition of effeminacy, leaving all work and initiative to the women. One woman has as many

husbands as she pleases in Thibet, and adds to them whenever she desires it.

In Russia, the least civilized of any European country, the remarriage of widows is severely frowned upon. The Czar requires any widow in the imperial family to retire to a convent. Widows are required by law to wait six months before marrying. Russian priests are permitted to marry, but neither party may remarry on the death of the other.

In Mongolia widows may not remarry, but must become slaves or servants in lazaseries.

In China a woman upon marriage becomes a member of her husband's family, and subject to the others of her parents-in-law under the system of ancestor-worship. As long as the latter remain alive she is expected to live with them, but after that may remarry. The Chinese husband may divorce his wife for talkativeness, but no cause of divorce is permitted to her.

Among the Australian aborigines a widow has her head cut open and covered with plaster of paris, is compelled to remain silent for two years and then is forced to marry her husband's brother.

Among our Western Indians a woman is expected to remain a widow from seven years and may not remarry after forty.

The Malays make a remarried widow the subject of many impolite jests.

### Talks and Reads, Though Deaf, Dumb and Blind

**T**HREATENED with the loss of her last remaining means of communicating with her fellow beings, Mrs. Ella Bennett, of Denver, Colorado, was inspired to invent and perfect an entirely new system of "reading and writing" for the deaf, dumb and blind.

Lying now in a Denver hospital after fruitless efforts to recover her sight, Mrs. Bennett—who was born a deaf-mute—is one of the most contented patients there. That is because, in spite of her triple affliction, she can "talk" quite readily with doctors and nurses—in fact, with any visitor.

While she still had her eyesight

Mrs. Bennett found the ordinary deaf and dumb finger language equal to every requirement. Like most deaf mutes, she could also read the speech of others by watching the movements of their lips. This method, however, works only one way, the mutes being unable to make even the motions of intelligible speech with their lips.

Mrs. Bennett lost her eyesight through much sewing at night—a task necessary for her support. As her sight waned her thoughts dwelt upon the problem of future means of making known her needs and of receiving communications from others. Though blind she could write, but it would be impossible for her to read the writing of others.

She had heard of Helen Keller and the possibility of "lip-reading" with the fingers; but she realized the extreme difficulty in her case of acquiring that accomplishment. The solution of her problem finally flashed upon her. She had noted the extreme sensitiveness of the

nerves of her fingers and the palm of her hand. With her fading eyes closed she could touch the palm or any finger of her left hand with a finger tip of the right hand and the sensitive nerves would telegraph to her brain instantly exactly what point on palm or finger had been touched.

By experiment she found that she was no exception to the general rule. So all she had to do to provide herself with a simple means of intercommunication with her friends after her sight was completely gone was to establish a system of "neurograms"—"neurography," or nerve writing, was the solution.

She set to work with enthusiasm. Each nerve centre between the finger joints and marked by prominences on the palm of her left hand was marked indelibly with a letter of the alphabet. Before her sight became too dim, each letter-position had been fixed by the sense of touch. Now, blindness, added to deafness and dumbness, did not so much matter. Yet she went to the hospital in a flicker of hope that the light of day had not departed forever—a hope, however, that was doomed to disappointment.

On Christmas Day a friend sat beside her cot. Mrs. Bennett's hand lay upon the lap of her friend and, from a casual glance, it appeared one was "telling the fortune" of the other. Physician and reporter investigated.

Mrs. Bennett had renewed the letters on her hand with an indelible pencil. The complete alphabet was there, three or four letters being on each finger and the thumb and the remainder in the palm. Mrs. Bennett, using her right hand, and her friend were alternately touching the printed letters.

The friend, a Mrs. Fall, noticed the visitors, and sent the following neurogram to the blind woman: "These are the doctors."

Mrs. Bennett immediately stretched out her right arm and smilingly shook the hand of the physician.

The wonder of Mrs. Bennett's accomplishment is the more amazing when the proximity of the letters is noted. A is at the end of the thumb, B and C come next, and then the alphabet winds along the fingers and over the palm of the wrist in a sort of labyrinthian style that seems to be without any particular system.



The Hands of Mrs. Bennett, Showing How the Alphabet Is Printed on Them.