Has Barbara La Marr Matrimonial Aphasia?

"I am through with marriage," says Barbara La Marr, the muchmarried star. But is she?



Barbara La Marr says she is through with men. But not until bees ignore the clover and children leave jam-pots untouched on pantry shelves will men be through with Barbara La Marr. She is the woman irresistible.

ORMER husbands should have definition of amnesia as "loss or im- forget that there is such a thing as to their erstwhile wives, but when one's erstwhile spouse is a famous movie star, the temptation to spill terms. the matrimonial beans must be too hard to resist.

band of Barbara La Marr, the year's sensation in movie circles, so far forgot his chivalry as to say, when arrested on a bad check charge, and she is. That woman has matrimonial aphasia."

Probably Phil hadn't consulted the dictionary on just what matrimonial aphasia is. Minus the matrimony, aphasia, according to the dictionary, is:

Loss or impairment of the power of speech.

Now what did Phil mean? Certainly he did not mean that as a legal separation, but not a divorce. married woman Barbara La Marr was at a loss for words. Barbara would never impress any one as Talking is one of the best things she does.

nesia? In view of the dictionary's ever to marry again. I want to

the grace to keep silence in regard pairment of memory; morbid for- marriage. And since my former Phil simply confused these scientific to do with my present life, and

once she is through with a person, Phil Ainsworth, one-time hus- he—or she—means no more to Barbara than a candle flame that has been blown out. He simply ceases to exist for her. She does not remember him.

queried as to his former wife's To illustrate her point, Barbara whereabouts, "I don't know where pointed to a pair of giant candles in beaten brass candlesticks on her living room mantel. It is a new house, just moved into, and utterly manless, except for the small new son, who, Barbara says, as she coos at him in orthodox mother fashion, is her only sweetheart.

Barbara is not married and she is not single. There exists between her latest husband, Ben Deely, former vaudeville star, and herself a

#### Never Again

Barbara refuses to comment on ever at any time at a loss for words. her married life—or rather, married lives—because, as she says, "I am through with marriage. I do not Could he have meant that Bar- want a divorce from Mr. Deely. I bara suffered from matrimonial am- do not want to be in a position

getfulness," it is quite likely that husbands have absolutely nothing since I have forgotten those very For Barbara herself admits that unpleasant experiences, I really couldn't think of anything to say about them."

> Barbara's powers of forgetfulness are indeed admirable. And who can blame her for wanting to keep her matrimonial career a thing apart from her movie fame?

But Barbara's life is so in keeping with the Barbara personality, that it is impossible to resist the impulse to tell what we know about her life. The public, in possession of the facts, will certainly feel charitable toward this irresistible woman, little more than a girl in years, who has been wedded four times, and is now "through with men." As to that last phrase, we believe the men will have more to say about that than Barbara. Barbara is one of those women who will always be getting married and unmarried; by no chance will men ever leave her alone. When bees ignore clover, when children leave jam-pots untouched on the pantry shelves. when flappers wear voluminous bathing suits—then perhaps Barbara



La Marr will be allowed to go her way in peace, untroubled by masculine importunities.

#### First

Barbara La Marr began life twenty-six years ago, the daughter of a French mother and an Italian father, but never knew her own parents. She was adopted by people named Watson, and from them got the prosaic name of Reatha Watson. Imagine "Reatha Watson" as the alluring lady of Trifling Women! The name, however, served all practical purposes, and was changed when Barbara was only sixteen to Mrs. Jack Lytelle.

At this period of her life, an incident happened which has given her more incorrect press notices than if she had robbed a bank.

Barbara, as she herself tells the incident, was used, because of her peculiar and arresting type of beauty, as an artists' model. The artists spoke of her, jestingly, she says, as "too beautiful." She was kidnapped, and taken away by people who wanted to collect a ransom from the artists who thought so highly of her beauty. She managed to escape, but was brought before a judge to tell her story. The judge told her that she was "too touched on by our informant, Bar-

ing Barbara La Marr, and, if they whole years. Although she had been have never seen her before, they twice married, she was only sevenlook at her very critically and teen when her marriage with Conquery themselves: "Too beautiful? verse was annulled.

No, no! Not too beautiful! Pretty

perhaps, and fascinating, I grant

Third perhaps, and fascinating, I grant forgotten her various matrimonial experiences.

caveman tactics in his wooing.

#### Second

In 1914, after she had figured in the sensational flight of an Italian lawyer named Riccardi, in



INTERNATIONAL PHOTO "Since my own little baby died, my arms have been so empty, so aching for the weight of a little body," Barbara La Marr said.

some nebulous capacity, not fully People go to see a picture featur- enjoyed single-blessedness for two vows.

you, but not too beautiful." People Barbara was nineteen years old proud to be known as the wife of who are introduced to her have that when handsome Phil Ainsworth, a Ben Deely, famous blackface comequestion sticking out all over them: chorus man, captured her girlish dian. It is said, by a friend who "Am I going to find this Barbara fancy. But Phil sought and ob- has known and loved Barbara all La Marr too beautiful?" It is a tained a divorce two months later, her life, that she had dozens of great injustice, Barbara says, and naming Robert Carville, a dancer as photographs of herself made and she does wish they would forget co-respondent. sent out to Ben Deely's friends and

she named her recently adopted Deely's wife."

to Jack Lytelle, Arizona rancher, Barbara's third husband, was arand that she had at that time been rested on a bad check charge, and a widow for two months. She is made the now famous remark that said to have declared that he used opens this story. But it seems that Converse, husband number two, beat him to it. A husband that will steal another husband's best lines in regard to their mutual wife is certainly not our idea of a gentleman.

#### Fourth

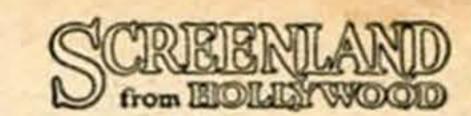
Barbara herself says that she considers that she has had only one husband. You can easily get her viewpoint. The first three were so very temporary. Not one of them lasted more than a few months. Probably the Arizona ranchman was never really her husband. Converse recovered his memory in regard to the existence of a previous wife and three children very soon after their "marriage." All told, out of her first three marriages, Barbara netted little more than a year's wedded life.

But when she married Ben Deely, actor and famous on the vaudeville stage for his black face roles, she learned what real happiness meant. The other three attempts at married happiness had been abortive and hideously disappointing. The woman who married Ben Deely was little more than a child in years. beautiful" to be alone in a large bara again married, but soon dis- At twenty, most girls are just becity. Ever since then, Barbara La covered that her husband, Lawrence ginning to wonder when those Marr has enjoyed the distinction Converse, was a victim of "matrimo- lovely things in the hope chest will of being the "too beautiful girl," nial amnesia," to quote his own ex- be used. At twenty Barbara La a distinction which is distasteful to planation, since he had a wife and Marr for the fourth time promised her, for it carries a peculiar op- three children elsewhere. The mar- to love, honor and obey, until death probrium with it.

riage was annulled, and Barbara parted her from the object of her

And Barbara La Marr—by the way, the name was adopted while Barbara danced in a Los Angeles cafe, about the time of her third marriage - knew happiness with Ben Deely. She was immensely that story as successfully as she has Was Barbara testifying to her re- admirers, writing across the face of gard for this co-respondent when the pictures, "Sincerely yours, Ben

Just what connection there was baby Ivan Carville La Marr? Prob- This friend of Barbara's says that between her "kidnapping" and her ably it is only a coincidence, for the now famous "vampire" loved first marriage is not definitely Barbara has a life-long friend named her husband—we mean her last known, but a little over a year after Virginia Carville, for whom the one—devotedly. He was the father of the abduction experience she an- baby is undoubtedly named. the baby boy that died two years ago. nounced that she had been married Not long ago Phil Ainsworth, When she speaks of Ben Deely, she



voice.

ful over her shattered romance. But she will not talk about it.

"I feel that my marriage is strictly my own affair," she says, "and that the public should not be interested in the reasons why I am at present unmarried and determined to stay unmarried."

But the public is interested in anything that concerns Barbara La Marr, screen beauty and our most potent vampire. For every one of Barbara's experiences has left its mark on her personality. As a vampire, we should say she has had about the most successful and specialized training of any of our film exciters. She learned all the rudiments of the game before she was twenty years old, and now at twentysix, a graduate of the modern school of film vampire technology, she is showing the world just how husbands and lovers may be acquired.

At that, we doubt if Barbara La Marr ever had to learn. Her parents started this vampire career by mixing romantic French blood with passionate Italian corpuscles, and then foisted their offspring upon a world, parentless. The artists for whom the child Barbara—or Reatha as she was known then—posed probably fed her childish mind with the free and easy sex patter of the studios. Undoubtedly she stirred their blood, blase as they were, as they modeled her exquisite face in oils or clay.

Barbara is the type that matures early. In her are the ripe graciousness of Italy, the subtle mystery of France, the emotional impulsiveness of a DuBarry, the warm, languorous grace of Naples, and the almost brusque frankness of a disillusioned American girl.

Barbara's appearance is belied by her manner. Whether her extreme frankness and vigor of speech are a pose to cloak her romantic mind and heart, or whether her appeal is wholly of the body and

is concerned, will probably not man is. And just as men have to A separation became necessary in be decided until Barbara has admit that Valentino has his Barbara's opinion only after Bar- written several more volumes of "moments" and that he is a polbara had begun her studio work. screen history. As for her doing ished gentleman on the screen, so She wrote originals for Fox, and as that, bank on it. Barbara is the one a scenarist made quite an enviable irrepressible element in the motion reputation. It is said that Deely picture world, as far as feminine humiliated her by coming to the charms are concerned. You can no studio drunk, and that his jealousy more hold her down than you can was easily aroused by her screen take the flapper's mind off Valenwork. Barbara is sincerely regret- tino. In fact, Barbara is to the



Photo by MILLIGAN

The mother-heart's wish is fulfilled. Barbara La Marr has adopted a six-months' old baby boy, Ivan Carville La Marr.

does so with misty eyes and softened not of the mind, where romance screen exactly what Valentino as a do women join in the chorus of praise that has suddenly been raised out of nothing into a mighty volume, extolling the fascination of Barbara La Marr.

#### Sex Appeal

Barbara's appeal is of course ninety per cent sex appeal. She is a glorious body vitalized with sex. Valentino is the only other person on the screen who can touch her for sex attraction.

Her four husbands attest the potency of this appeal, more sudden in its effects than hasheesh and twice as pleasant.

Barbara herself in analyzing her own appeal, at the request of the interviewer, says she believes it is due to the overdeveloped mother instinct within her.

"I could not rest, day or night, without a baby in my arms. I have never wanted anything in my life as badly as I wanted a child of my own. God gave me one and took him away. These last two years have been so empty that my arms ached for the weight of a little body-not for the embrace of a man. I have waked up in the night, to find myself rocking a dream baby in my arms."

Barbara La Marr holds her new little son close in her arms as she talks, looking like one of Raphael's madonnas. Sometime someone is going to write a story around Barbara La Marr, the madonna, placing her in an Italy of bygone days, giving her the quaint clothes of that strictly feminine era, and bringing out every phase of that beauty which blends the best of Italy and France. Barbara is already wearing her hair in the Raphaelean Madonna style—parted in the middle and drawn severely, cap-fashion, around her beautiful face, and gathered in a large coil at the nape of her neck. None but a perfect profile, divine eyes and characterful eyebrows could stand such a test of beauty. Barbara not only stands it but is so triumphantly beautiful that every fluffy-headed ingenue would love to copy it—and can't.

(Continued on page 95)

## Has Barbara La Marr Aphasia?

(Continued from Page 21)

It was this unsatisfied mother craving that gave little Ivan Carville La Marr a beautiful home in the Hollywood hills, a slavishly attentive colored nurse, named Irene, and a foster mother who adores him.

Barbara went to Texas to make a personal appearance at an automobile show, and while in Dallas went to Hope Cottage, a foundling home housing sixty children. She went because she loves children, and wanted to hold one for a while in her arms.

But only one baby out of those sixty had a chance. From the minute Barbara La Marr laid eyes on his laughing face and saw him dimple his fascinating little right-cheek dimple at her, she knew she must have that baby or be forever miserable.

"When I want anything I want it right then, or not at all. I never take time to consider whether a thing is expedient or good publicity or wise. I just do it." Thus speaks Barbara of the four husbands. Probably that trait of her character accounts for her many marriages. In each case she wanted the man without considering whether he would be a good husband.

#### All in a Day

Probably no other baby has been adopted with the lightning like speed with which little Ivan of Hope Cottage became the son of Barbara La Marr. Barbara saw him, adopted him and took him away, all in the same afternoon. There is a law that an adopted child cannot be carried out of the state in which adoption takes place under one year, but Barbara found ways of circumventing such a ridiculous and annoying law. She boarded the train that night with little sixmonths-old Ivan in her arms, and spent the night in her Pullman berth, considering the relative merits of Mellin's Food and cow's milk with lime water. One of the weightiest questions which now harass her days is whether California weather is cool enough to justify all-wool flannels. And the famous body is forever bending over to pick up a shoe which the ener-



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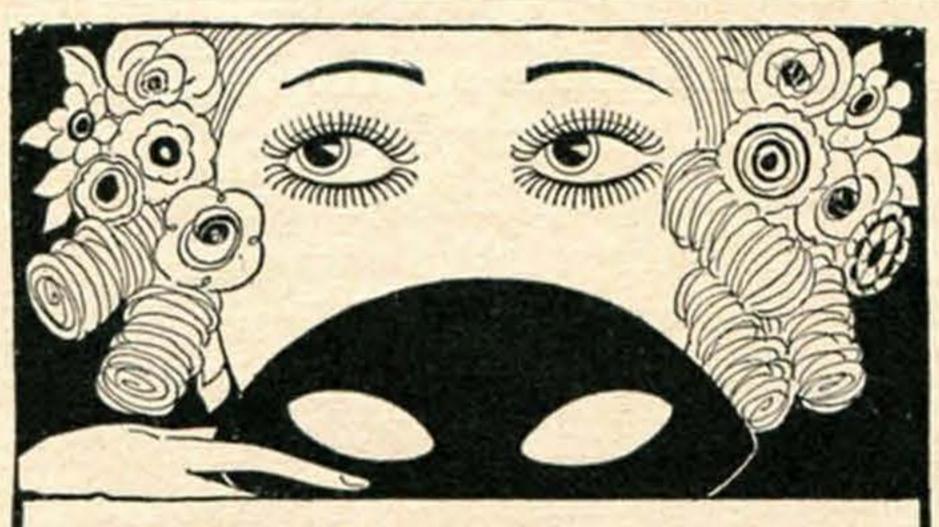
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getic young man is always casting, as he kicks and crows in his Mama's or Irene's arms.

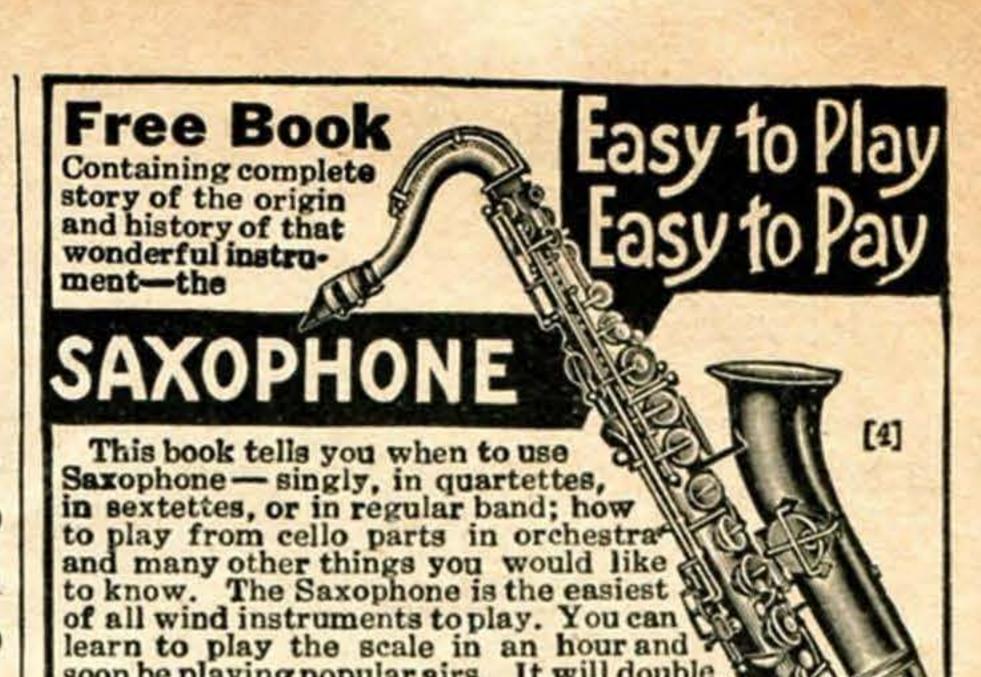
#### Minus Fifteen Pounds

THE increase in duties which motherhood brings has done two things for Barbara. It has put a new happiness and spirituality into her face, taking away the almost insolent restlessness that characterized it, and has reduced her weight from 140 pounds to 125. This loss of weight is more to be prized than rubies and fine wines, for it was just the thing Barbara needed to make her perfect as beauty. She speaks with the utmost frankness about her own person, characteristics and beauty, or rather, lack of beauty, as she sees herself.

"I am not beautiful. When the producers look at me and tell me that my beauty must be clothed thus and so, and I owe this to my beauty, and that to my popularity, I laugh. I honestly don't think I am pretty. And when I hear people discuss me or see things in print about myself, I think of the Barbara La Marr they are discussing as entirely separate from the Barbara I know and live with every day. I don't wear long, slinky clothes; I wear bungalow aprons and lie on the grass with my heels up and my elbows digging into the turf, reading. I cook a lot of my own meals, because, even with "Mammy" and Irene, there always seems to be too much work to do. I dote on Italian cooking, and I eat—well, too much. My worst enemies couldn't say meaner things about me than I say about myself, and I'm not temperamental, and I have a temper, and I forgive and forget easily."

Barbara says this defiantly, all fed up as she is on the kind of interviews she reads in fan magazines.

Since Barbara La Marr is to lure men on the screen, in order to earn bread and butter and caviar for herself and plenty of milk for little Ivan, will she have so much of men in that way that she will really not care for them as Barbara La Marr, offstage individual? Or will this constant dwelling on the gracious art of vamping stimulate the red corpuscles of her French-Italian blood so that she will not be able to resist the importunities of the next man who strikes her volatile fancy?



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