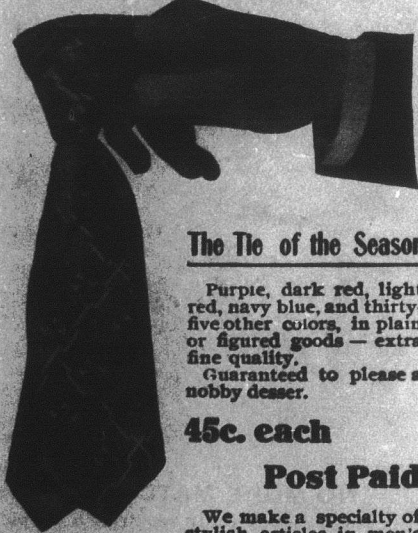


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## Set Invisible Snares to Catch a Lover.

By HELEN OLDFIELD.

Since men object to women who openly show them preference, and at the same time dislike those who snub them, pray what is a girl to do? "Avoid extremes. There is a medium in all things." "It is well to keep to the middle of the road, if one can." It is a far cry from running after a man to fleeing from him in aversion. But of the two extremes the dislike is for the woman who shows her own dislike; while few men care to be pursued, fewer still fail in at least contemptuous pity for the women who manifest their willingness to marry them before they are asked to do so. Moreover, men as well as women like to be well thought of; and no man but that thinks that she who admires him shows good taste and discretion in so doing. Indeed, in spite of the theory that man is the pursuer and the woman the pursued, the woman "who gets there" almost invariably is the one who understands how to hand out unlimited supplies of sympathy under the name of friendship and to show becoming surprise when the man to whom she burns incense invites her to a seat in the

The woman who every day meets a temple of his heart and home. As the saying goes, "it is all in knowing how."

man on common ground in business or in sport is not regarded by him with the "distant reverence" which old romances teach us that the devout lover of former days cherished for the lady of his heart. Perhaps, as we are but human beings, it is quite as well that we are more natural and more practical in our lovemaking nowadays. Women are no longer brought up to believe it scarcely short of a disgrace not to get married, neither are they instructed that it is a still greater disgrace to show the least sign of willingness to fulfil their destiny. A hundred years ago the woman who said "yes" to a suitor the first time of asking was held guilty of unmaidenly anxiety to be wed. Now, the man who asks a woman twice is rather the exception than the rule.

Every normally minded woman who is honest with herself must confess to her own heart, if to none other, that marriage, rightly understood, is the life for which she was intended and the one in which she would find the greatest and sweetest happiness for herself, even though a "career" might afford her a wider, perhaps a higher sphere. If, however, the right man fails to appear she is by no means unhappy. It does not occur to her to regard every marriageable man of her acquaintance as a probable lover, a possible husband; neither does she imagine that all men who seem interested in her conversation or who show a liking for her company are meditating a proposal of marriage which a ten minute tete-a-tete will bring forth surely.

Encouragement does not imply pursuit, and the woman who knows how can encourage a man without manifesting the least disposition to run after him. The woman who has tact can put herself in a man's way without seeming to do so, either to the man or, what is still more important, to others. One great fact which it behooves women to remember is this: "Words are witnesses." No one may help thoughts, but until the spoken word expresses them they are a secret between oneself and one's maker. The true feminine attitude is that of receptivity, which may or may not be passive, as circumstances first and inclination afterwards determine.

Some men, many of them the best, require all the encouragement one is capable of giving them. And when a man shows a disposition to make love to a woman, and she likes it, she may encourage him to do so, yet in no whit fail in maidenly modesty by so doing. The trouble is that men so often make love without serious intentions, and when they have cause to repent, like Adam are always ready

to blame the woman as the tempter. With most men an ample excuse for any amount of dalliance along the "primrose path" is that of the urchin in "The Kiss at School," "I kinder thought she wished me to." None can deny that the game of lovemaking is at best a delicate and dangerous game. When both players understand the rules and observe them, usually no harm is done, but too often one is in earnest while the other is not, and so somebody is forever getting hurt. Sometimes it is the man who mistakes a pleasant manner, a charming way, for the indications of a deeper feeling, but in most cases it is the woman. If she has "proper self-respect" she hides her hurt and never makes any fuss about it; nevertheless she suffers more or less, according to her calibre.

Men have a high respect for women who are able to take care of themselves in love affairs, and equally only contemptuous pity for those who cannot.

There is much in a name. A woman must not love a man until he loves her and tells her so. But she may admire him, flatter him, and show her liking for him in various ways so long as she does nothing to indicate that she is on matrimony bent. It is unmaidenly, indecorous, and unwomanly to set forth frankly and openly upon a husband hunt; nevertheless, it is not in the least unbecoming in the most modest of women to set snares, weave cages, and stroll into the woods with concealed weapons. Still-hunting, in short, is proper, and only unduly suspicious persons will conclude that the girl who takes a quiet walk in the park has designs upon the birds and beasts therein.

As already said, it all depends upon knowing how. "One man may steal a horse where another dare not look at the stable."

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