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ELMER RICHARDS CO., 35th St., Chicago

were spending September in the Catskills, and Alice and her mother were staying at the same hotel. One afternoon we planned a trip to the Giant's Chasm, a picturesque spot well worthy of its name.

There was also a young man from Massachusetts staying at our hotel, and he had been attentive to Alice. I was not surprised therefore when Alice told me that he was going to be her escort to the Chasm. But it did surprise me (at first) when she asked me if I had a pair of long shoe laces.

She was irreproachably shod in a pretty little pair of walking shoes, with laces of just the right length to make a neat bow. Still, I found her a pair of longer laces and she tied these so that the end of one of the laces trailed a little on the floor. While she was doing this I noted that she was wearing a pair of heavy black silk stockings.

"Aren't you afraid you'll step on the end of your shoelace, and untie it?" I asked her.

Alice gave me one of those straight innocent glances by which a woman means everything—or nothing. "No," she said, "I'm not afraid."

We started. It was a gorgeous afternoon. The leaves were in their gayest Autumn colors and I appreciated them, for the first time, how well they harmonized with the forest shades that Alice was wearing. The young man from Massachusetts seemed to appreciate it, too. He and Alice gradually dropped to the rear and once when I looked back for them, afraid they might get lost, he was kneeling on the ground—tying Alice's shoelace!

He must have tied it badly, for when we were scrambling down the Chasm, I glanced back and saw him tying it again. That evening Alice told me she was engaged.

"When's the knot to be tied?" I asked. She tried to give me another of those straight, innocent looks, but she blushed instead. "He wants to be married in October" she said. And he was.

Next to Alice in the photograph stands Kate. Kate is married now, and I'll tell you how she did it. She didn't make love to the man she wanted; she made love to his sister.

They were always together; those two girls—and the brother was generally not far away. Billy was a shy, sweet-mannered young fellow, but his sister's presence gave him courage. The girls went to the theatre; Billy escorted them. They went to the football games; Billy took care of them. They went on motor picnics, and of course Billy drove the car. In other words, Kate knew how to use her most valuable ally. And when I refer to Kate's most valuable ally, I am not referring to Billy's sister. I am referring to General Propinquity!

If I may use such a strange verb, Kate propinquity with brother Billy until their engagement was generally taken for granted. Perhaps it isn't too much to say that every year hundreds of thousands of marriages are thus brought about. A young man wakes up and finds that he has, almost unconsciously, given a girl so much attention that he can't very well stop, especially if she's a nice girl. People look upon them, in the old-fashioned phrase, as being "steadies." Nothing has been said between them; nothing in the way of a conscious courtship has been carried on. But if he backs out, it will create a painful situation; it will look as though he were jilting a girl of whom he is already quite fond. Indeed it might even compromise her, or at least interfere with her other matrimonial chances.

Backing out thus presents its difficulties, but as for going forward, well, that's the easiest and one of the pleasantest things in the world. So with Billy and Kate. An engagement, which did not exist, was taken for granted—thanks to Kate. And

(Continued on Page 15)

"He loves me! He loves me Not!"

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