

LOWNECKS—NEW SPECIES OF MALE

(By Janet Vale.)

"Father, I hope you don't mind—but I have broken my engagement with Major Onestep!"

Mr. Stuyvesant Kelly II looked up from his evening paper.

"What's the matter? What's wrong with him?"

"I discovered today when he called to take me out in his motor that he is a low-neck."

"Low-neck? I can't follow you—have heard of a rough-neck, but"—

"Aren't there any in your club?" asked Ruth Stuyvesant Kelly.

"You must explain—he comes from a fine family, pays a good size income tax and seems to be a"—

"But he is a low-neck—he wears a shirt with a sailor collar and cut away at the throat—his throat is not beautiful, father. Do men think their throats are beautiful, father? When I saw him today and realized that by tomorrow his collar may be edged with lace, that his cuffs may be trimmed to match his collar, or that his gloves may be finished at the wrist with embroidery or insertion, I knew my dream was over. Horrors! What if in a week from now he would be going to my dressmaker and ordering blouses on my model? It quite takes the romance out of life. If he dressed like a longshoreman or a fireman or a farm hand, father, I would love him just the same. But I cannot marry a man who wears a flaring collar and a V-cut shirt. I would rather he would be taken for a butler any time than that we should wear blouses made on the same design and of the same material."

"Then it is final, is it?" queried Stuyvesant Kelly. "How did Onestep take it?"

"I didn't give him a chance to take it. One look was enough, father. I screamed, and in my delirium I think I called him Lizzie."

"Does he seem ill?"

"Not at all—many other men are doing the same thing; they seem to think those collars are sweet or becoming. Haven't you noticed them?"

"No, thank heaven; but, my child, I want you to know that I stand by you in this break with Onestep. Fancy a son-in-law with frills on his shirt! He doesn't wear a corset, does he?"

"Father, I don't know."

The above is by no means an unusual scene in New York households today.

Dear reader, have you seen the men, the low-necked, wide-collared men, on our streets, in trolleys and motors?

There are smooth-faced men and bearded men baring their Adam's apples proudly, exposing their bronzed throats so as to give full sweep to the low-neck shirts.

Are they beautiful, think you?

Are they cool?" ask you.

Some collars are boldly striped and all are wide, with deep points and open generously toward the waist line.

Will these same men wear the high laced shoes which women are to discard in the autumn?

And roses at the waistline?

Will the blouses of the autumn hook in the front or in the back?

Will they be V-shaped back and front.

Will there be girdles and soft little bows of satin at the back?

Over this will they wear shadow lace with an unstanding platted ruche or tulle? Supposing they talk soon of gentlemen's coatees and vestees!

Will the men be carelessly corsetted?

Will they design all their costumes and give out interviews on the well dressed man, how he has all his dresses made at home?

Is it possible that man can ridicule only the clothes that women are wearing?

I wanted to talk with a low-necked man, and I waited on a corner near the Hotel Astor, hoping some man I knew would pass by with a collar.

None did.

I petitioned many men to tell why this style was prevalent and to what it would portend, but every request met with a gasp.

It was beyond them.

They admitted the collar was seen everywhere, but each man denied he knew personally any one with a low-neck cut to his shirt.

"Hammer 'em, though, for me," was the parting shot, universally spoken.

Why not seek, rather, to discover the why of the male shirtwaist?

Can it be a man thinks he is not only beautiful in one, but that he puts over the thought of comfort and coolness? Then his neck, with its few coats of tan, belies the promise of his shirt.

Why doesn't such a man go the limit? Why doesn't he paint a marine scene on his Adam's apple and throat, dashing waves of the Mediterranean, ships tossed thither and yon on raging seas, breakers washed away by storm, towns

flooded, bridges submerged, mountains swept by the pitiless tide.

Or try a peaceful view at low tide, fishermen digging clams, bringing in huge nets laden with sardines, or show us the banks of cool streams, where a man sits and baits his hook and waits for something to happen; or running brooks with nymphs and mermaids making merry in the shadows? The shadows could be formed by huge overhanging boughs of trees.

Or if he chose to be practical and make the most of every opportunity he could put over his profession or vocation. A salesman might show his line of goods—without any vocal effort—boots, shoes, buttons, rings, bracelets, motors, lawn mowers, kitchen utensils, crockery, lamps, pianolas—nothing like it ever attempted before in the way of advertisement.

Try it on the sandwich men! Let them parade with the painted word on their chests and throats. No loafing or sneaking into corners—wherever they go they are doing the thing for which they are hired.

The peace party may flaunt doves—the war elements flag the men equal suffragists a Goddess of Liberty, the Elks need never be without

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