

An Osculatory Risk. The geometrical definition of osculation is the contact of one curve with another, when at the point of contact they both have the same curvature for the greatest number of consecutive points in common. But it is not with the osculatory sphere, or curve, that Lieut. Richmond Pearson Hobson is having trouble. He is, simply, if the reports of the papers in his own country are accurate and reliable, in great danger from the over-powering desire of hero-worshipping women to signify their regard for his prowess at Santiago by indulging in the osculatory ceremony, the ordinary every-day kissing by which some people signify affection, regard and esteem.

According to a New York journal, the officer who essayed to run the gauntlet of the Spanish guns in the harbour of Santiago was talking to a Chicago audience on Sunday night last, under the auspices of the Naval Reserve and the Press Club, and incidentally kissed 163 women in the line of people that shook hands with him afterwards. A crowd of 4,000 persons looked on. At the end of his talk, an invitation was extended to all who wished to meet the lieutenant to form line and march upon the stage. The first two women in the string were daughters of ex-Governor Towle, of North Carolina, and they gave their Southern hero each a hearty kiss. The example thus set, the women behind then followed suit.

Fortunately for readers at a distance from this cluster of kissable womankind, we are not permitted to know what is the character of the osculation to which Hobson seems so fond of submitting. The poet, Byron, in his description of a kiss, said the strength of a kiss should be reckoned by its length or duration.

Shakespeare in writing of this form of salutation with the mouth wrote:—

"He took
The bride about the neck, and kissed her lips
With such a clamorous smack, that at the parting
All the church echoed."

Tennyson, in a tender reference to the practice of pressing lips closely together, and suddenly parting them, penned the pathetic line:—

"Dear as remembered kisses after death."

Any or all of these salutations may have been bestowed upon poor Hobson, who is now qualified to write a learned dissertation upon osculation of every kind, from the resounding Shakesperian *smack* to the tender, timid kiss of the sweet girl graduate. But, in the name of insurance companies interested in the life of Lieut. Richmond Pearson Hobson, we venture to protest against any repetition of his dangerous gladiatorial feat of kissing 163 women in one evening. Sweetened as those chaste salutes may have been by kissing-comfits, those perfumed sugar-plums used by our giddy grandmothers to sweeten their breath, we tremble at the risk Hobson is pictured as revelling in.

What the fire of Spanish forts and the guns of Admiral Cervera's fleet failed to accomplish, may yet be achieved by measles, scarlatina, whooping-cough, or some other complaint, communicated to this Southern hero by his emotional country-women, the belles of North Carolina.

Insurance companies will have to consider this extra-hazardous risk in the case of American heroes at the close of future wars.

A Klondyke Pioneer.

A representative of THE CHRONICLE recently had the pleasure of an interview with one of the pioneers of the Yukon territory. This interesting traveller started from Montreal for Dawson City and Atlin Lake last Saturday night, and, when interrogated regarding his mid-summer return journey to the frozen North, he seemed quite confident of arriving at his destination before the end of January. The card of this hardy and successful visitor from the mining regions of the Yukon bears the plain inscription:

JOE. BARRETT
DAWSON CITY, N. W. T.
Seattle, Washington.

Mr. Barrett is a good specimen of the type of French Canadian made familiar to strangers by Gilbert Parker and Dr. Drummond. Dark-eyed, pleasant-faced, compactly built, quick in movement, alert in manner, and the picture of health and strength, this late visitor from a far-away district only now becoming known to the majority of his countrymen, proved by his appearance, and supported with testimony, that existence in the Yukon district of the North West Territory is not only possible but is conducive to health and physical strength. Mr. Joe Barrett, with a party of companions, entered the now world-famed valley, years before any general knowledge of its wealth in gold was spread abroad. It is needless to say the subject of this sketch has prospered exceedingly. But the love of adventure, the restless longing for new discoveries has full possession of him, and he speaks with confidence of fortunes yet to be unearthed in the neighbourhood of Atlin Lake. It is to hardy, hopeful pioneers of the type of Joe Barrett that the Dominion is indebted for much useful knowledge of the extent and wealth of her possessions, and no one will begrudge them anything Dame Fortune may pour into their hands.

Mr. Joe Barrett is the willing bearer of a large number of letters to Montrealeers and others in the Yukon, and the handful of citizens who assembled at Bonaventure Station to witness his departure united in saying that the life and adventures of this happy, healthy, strong and active French Canadian would make a splendid study for that gifted student of his race, Dr. Drummond.