

a case where two heads are essentially better than one, but in which three heads are of no use. Yes! like Creation, the kiss is made out of nothing—absolutely nothing—and, like Creation, it is “Very good.”

“HAS THE KISS A SOUND?”

That reminds me of a trip I took from Bath to London. There was a party of uproarious youths and maidens in the coach. Then came a long, dark, dark tunnel. My cousin, the bold, bad fellow, kissed my best Canadian hat with a sounding smack and immediately said, “Here boys, stop that!” The curtain of light rose on blushes, consternation, and eyes that shot bullets. They never suspected us.

It is hard to describe the sound of a kiss. Make the noise with your lips, and then try to compare it to any other sound you have heard. Perhaps, it is more than anything else like a knife scraping glass, or the lash of a whip. It has been described as “a report at headquarters,” and again as a telegram to the head in which the operator uses the “sounding system.” Some one else tells us that a kiss is the thunder-clap of the lips which inevitably follows the lightning glance of the eye.

The declension, origin, definition and sound of a kiss are not after all of much account. It is

ITS CONSUMMATION

with which we are chiefly concerned. Now, when we come to analyze the various motives that move people to kiss each other, we are moved to astonishment.

They that bowed to Baal, kissed the calves. This is the kiss of worship.

There is the kiss which is part of the ceremony of coronation. When Samuel anointed Saul to be King of Israel, he kissed him and said, “It is not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance.”

When presented at the British Court, each subject kisses the sovereign’s hand. This is the kiss of allegiance and fealty.

The most hideous thing in the world is the kiss of betrayal. The Roman soldier’s spear did not cut as deep as the kiss of Judas, and the kiss of betrayal has come down to us in the latest act of modern seduction.

Among the Jews, the kiss was a part of their political, domestic, and official acts. Sometimes they kissed each other’s beards. In the book of Samuel we read that “Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab’s hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground.”

There is the burning kiss of lust. It is this which spells out the lines,

“For the sin ye do by two and two,
Ye must pay for one by one.”

This is the indiscretion of “the strange woman” of whom Solomon tells us: “So she caught him and kissed him.”

There is the kiss that is given to efface a blow. One day an aide-de-camp of the late Emperor Nicholas of Russia threw himself at the monarch’s feet and begged permission to fight a duel. The Emperor, who was a staunch opponent of duelling, immediately and emphatically refused. “But, Sire, I am dishonored; I must fight,” said the disconsolate aide, “I have been struck in the face.” The Emperor took him by the arm and led him into the presence of his court, which was assembled in an adjoining saloon, and there in view of the flower of the realm, the Emperor kissed the cheek of the aide-de-camp which had received the blow. “Go now,” he exclaimed, “and be at peace: thy affront has been effaced.”

ONE OF THE SWEETEST KISSES

is that of reconciliation. I do not refer to the unwilling performance we were put