THE KISS AND ITS HISTORY

THE KISS

And its History

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LONDON

SANDS & CO.

12 BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND

1901

TO

WALTER BENSON, Esquire

I DEDICATE MY MODEST PART IN THIS BOOK
IN TOKEN OF A FRIENDSHIP WHICH
HAS GROWN STAUNCHER WITH
THE GROWTH OF
YEARS

ἦ μεγάλα χάρις
Δώρῳ ξὺν ὀλίγῳ· πάντα δὲ τιμᾶντα τὰ παὰρ φίλων.
THEOCRITUS, *Idyl* xxviii., 24, 25.

"Surely great grace goes with a little gift, and all the offerings of friends are precious."

Je célèbre des jeux paisibles,
  Qu'en vain on semble mépriser,
Les vrais biens des âmes sensibles,
  Les doux mystères du baiser.

DORAT.

To gentle sports due praise I render,
  At which some wits have vainly sneered:
The true delight of spirits tender,
  The kiss's mysteries endeared.

W. F. H.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THE following treatise, which is the work of a Romance philologist of high European reputation, has not only gone through two editions in Denmark, but has also been translated into German, Swedish, and Russian. The popularity which this learned and at the same time charming little book rapidly acquired abroad, and the favourable criticisms passed on it by Continental scholars, have encouraged me to present it to my fellow-countrymen in an English dress. With regard to the numerous poetical quotations that form so striking a feature of this book, those which I have translated myself may be distinguished from such as I have borrowed from standard versions by the appended initials, W. F. H.

INNER TEMPLE,
LONDON, *2nd August* 1901.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Wenn ich nur selber wüsste,
  Was mir in die Seele zischt!
Die Worte und die Küsse
  Sind wunderbar vermischt.

Oh, could I but decipher
  What 'tis that fills my mind.
The words are with the kisses
  So wond'rously combined.

HEINE.

DANTE, in the fifth canto of his *Hell*, has celebrated the power a kiss may have over human beings. In the course of his wanderings in the nether world, when he has reached the spot where abide those who have sinned through love, he sees two souls that "flutter so lightly in the wind." These are Francesco da Rimini and her brother-in-law Paolo. He asks Francesco to tell him:

"In the time of your sweet sighs,
By what, and how love granted, that ye knew
Your yet uncertain wishes?"

Whereto she replies:

"One day
For our delight we read of Lancelot,
How him love thrall'd. Alone we were, and no
Suspicion near us. Ofttimes by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue
Fled from our alter'd cheek. But at one point
Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,
The wished smile, so rapturously kissed
By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er
From me shall separate, at once my lips
All trembling kiss'd. The book and writer both
Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day
We read no more." *

I have had a special object in prefacing my studies on the history of kissing with these famous verses, for I regarded it in the light of a duty to caution my readers emphatically, and at the very outset, as to the danger of even reading about kisses; and I consider that, having done this, I have warned my readers against pursuing the subject, and "forewarned is forearmed," or, "*homme averti en vaut deux.*"

* H. F. Cary's translation.

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WHAT IS A KISS?

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS A KISS?

It may perhaps seem somewhat futile to begin with discussing what a kiss is: that every child of course knows. We are greeted with kisses directly we enter the world, and kisses follow us all our life long, as Hölty sings—

> Giving kisses, snatching kisses,
> Keeps the busy world employed.
>
> W. F. H.

Nevertheless the question is not altogether superfluous. It seems to me even to offer certain points of interest, inasmuch as it is by no means so easy as people may imagine to define what a kiss is. If we turn to the poets we are often put off with the answer that a kiss is something that should be merely felt, and that people would do well

to refrain from speculating as to what it actually is.

What says this glance? What meaning lurks in this
Squeezing of hands, embrace, and ling'ring kiss?
This only can your heart explain to you.
What have such matters with the brain to do?
W. F. H.

So, for instance, says Aarestrup; but he adds as a sort of explanation—

But when I see thee my fond kiss denying,
And straightway, nathless, mine embrace not spurning,
Then needs must I to tedious arts be turning,
And let crabb'd wisdom from my lips go flying.

Know then the voice alone interprets rightful
And with poetic fire from heart's depth welleth,
And yet the sweetest of them all by no means!

Whereas the bosom, arms, and lips, and eye-sheens—
How shall I call it? for the total swelleth
Unto a language wordless as delightful.
W. F. H.

which has not brought us nearer to a solution of the question. Other poets give us an allegorical transcription, couched in vague poetical terms, which rather refer to the feelings of which the kiss may be an expression than attempt to define its physiology. Thus Paul Verlaine defines a kiss as "the fiery accompaniment on the key-

board of the teeth of the lovely songs which love sings in a burning heart."

Baiser! rose trémière au jardin des caresses!
Vif accompagnement sur le clavier des dents,
Des doux refrains qu'Amour chante en les cœurs ardents
Avec sa voix d'archange aux langueurs charmeresses!

This definition, which seems to me to be as original as it is beautiful and apt, deals, however, exclusively with the kiss of love; but kisses, as we all know, are capable of expressing many other emotions, and it enlightens us not one whit as to the external side of the nature of a kiss. Let us, therefore, leave the poets, and seek refuge with the philologists.

In the *Dictionary of the Danish Philological Society* (*Videnskabernes Selskabs Ordbog*) a kiss is defined as "a pressure of the mouth against a body." As every one at once perceives, this explanation is very unsatisfactory, for, from the above statements, we could hardly accept more than one, viz., the mouth. Now, of course, it is quite clear that one of the first requisites for a kiss is a mouth. "Einen Kuss an sich, ohne Mund, kann man nicht geben," say the Germans,

and it is also remarkable that in Finnish, *antaa sunta*, "to kiss," means literally "to give mouth."

How does the mouth produce a kiss?

A kiss is produced by a kind of sucking movement of the muscles of the lips, accompanied by a weaker or louder sound. Thus, from a purely phonetic point of view, a kiss may be defined as an inspiratory bilabial sound, which English phoneticians call the lip-click, *i.e.*, the sound made by smacking the lip. This movement of the muscles, however, is not of itself sufficient to produce a kiss, it being, as you know, employed by coachmen when they want to start their horses; but it becomes a kiss only when it is used as an expression of a certain feeling, and when the lips are pressed against, or simply come into contact with, a living creature or object.

The sound which follows a kiss has been carefully investigated by the Austrian *savant*, W. von Kempelen, in his remarkable book entitled *The Mechanism of Human Speech* (Wien, 1791). He divides kisses into three sorts, according to their sound. First he treats of kisses proper, which he characterises as

a *freundschaftlich hellklatschender Herzenskuss* (an affectionate, clear-ringing kiss coming from the heart); next he defines the more discreet, or, from an acoustic point of view, weaker kiss; and, lastly, speaks contemptuously of a third kind of kiss, which is designated an *ekelhafter Schmatz* (a loathsome smack).

Many other writers have, although in a less scientific manner, sought to define and elucidate the sound that arises from a kiss. Johannes Jørgensen says very delicately in his *Stemninger* that "the plash of the waves against the pebbles of the beach is like the sound of long kisses."

It is generally, however, an exclusively humorous or satirical aspect that is most conspicuous. In the *Seducer's Diary* (*Forførerens dagbog*) of Sören Kierkegaard, Johannes speaks of the engaged couples who used to assemble in numbers at his uncle's house: "Without interruption, the whole evenings through, one hears a sound as if a person was going round with a fly-flap: that is the lovers' kisses." A still more drastic comparison is found in the German expression, "the kiss sounded just like when a cow

drags her hind hoof out of a swamp." This metaphor, which is used, you know, by Mark Twain, is as graphic as it is easy of comprehension; whereas, on the other hand, I am somewhat perplexed with regard to an old Danish expression that is to be found in the Ole Lade's Phrases (*Fraser*): "He kissed her so that it rang just as it does when one strikes the horns off felled cows." Another old author speaks of kissing that sounds as if one was pulling the horn out of an owl.

The emotions expressed by this more or less noisy lip-sound are manifold and varying: burning love and affectionate friendship, exultant joy and profound grief, etc., etc.; consequently there must be many different sorts of kisses.

The austere old Rabbis only recognised three kinds of kisses, viz.: those of greeting, farewell, and respect. The Romans had also three kinds, but their classification was essentially at variance with the Rabbis': they distinguished between *oscula*,* friendly kisses, *basia*, kisses of love, and *suavia*, passionate

* From *osculum* we get the words osculogy, the science of kissing, and osculogical, that which pertains to kissing; but the Greek derivations philematology and philematological are perhaps preferable.

kisses. The significance of these words is clearly expressed in the following lines:—

> Basia coniugibus, sed et oscula dantur amicis,
> Suavia lascivis miscantur grata labellis.

But the Romans' division is by no means exhaustive; kisses are and have been actually employed to express many other feelings than those above-mentioned.

That kisses in this book are arranged in five groups, viz., kisses of passion, love, peace, respect, and friendship, is chiefly due to practical considerations; for, to be precise, these artificially-formed groups are inadequate, and, besides, often overlap one another.

A modern French writer reckons no less than twenty sorts of kisses, but I find in German dictionaries over thirty different designations: *Abschiedskuss*, *Brautkuss*, *Bruderkuss*, *Dankkuss*, *Doppelkuss*, *Ehrenkuss*, *Erwiderungskuss*, *Feuerkuss*, *Flammenkuss*, *Frauenkuss*, *Freundschaftskuss*, *Friedenskuss*, *Gegenkuss*, *Geisterkuss*, *Handkuss*, *Honigkuss*, *Inbruntskuss*, *Judaskuss*, *Lehenskuss*, *Liebeskuss*, *Mädchenkuss*, *Minnekuss*, *Morgenkuss*, *Mutterkuss*, *Nebenkuss*, *Pantoffelkuss*, *Segenskuss*, *Söhnungskuss*, *Undschuldskuss*, *Ver-*

mählungskuss, *Versöhnungskuss*, *Wechselkuss*, *Weihekuss*, *Zuckerkuss*, etc., etc. In German the verb itself, "to kiss," is varied in many different ways, *e.g.*, in Germany one may *auküssen*, *aufküssen*, *ausküssen*, *beküssen*, *durchküssen*, *emporküssen*, *entküssen*, *erküssen*, *fortküssen*, *herküssen*, *nachküssen*, *verküssen*, *vorbeiküssen*, *wegküssen*, *widerküssen*, *zerküssen*, *zuküssen*, and *zurückküssen*.

We must give the Germans the credit of being thorough, and in the highest degree methodical and exhaustive in their nomenclature, for can we conceive a more admirable word than, for instance, *nachküssen*, which is explained as "making up for kisses that have been omitted, or supplementing kisses"? However, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that they are at the same time awkward and tasteless in their expressions; a word such as *ausküssen*, which, for instance, is used in the refrain: *Trink aus! Kuss aus!* seems to me to smack perilously of the ale-house.

We have now seen what a kiss is; but before proceeding to investigate the different kinds of kisses, their significance in the history of civilisation, and treatment in poetry, it

still remains for us to reply to some of the ordinary queries regarding the nature and characteristics of the kiss.

In the first place we must investigate the kiss in its gustative aspect. I here confine myself to what Kierkegaard calls "the perfect kiss," *i.e.*, the kiss between man and woman; kisses between men are, according to that authority, insipid.

Küssen, wo smekt dat? see de maid. Yes, its taste naturally depends entirely on the circumstances, and experience is here a teacher that sets every theory at nought; but a few leading features may, however, be indicated.

When Lars Iversen, in Schandorph's *Skovfogedbørnene*, has kissed Mette Splyd, he wipes his mouth and says, when he has got well outside the door, "That tasted like meat that has been kept too long." When the old minnesinger, King Wenceslaus of Bohemia, had kissed his sweetheart he sang: "Just as a rose that opens its calix when it drinks the sweet dew, she offered me her sugar-sweet red mouth."

> Recht als ein rôse diu sich ûz ir klôsen lât,
> Swenn si des süezen touwes gert,
> Sus bôt si mir ir zuckersüezen rôten munt.

As we perceive from both these examples, there is a great distinction between kisses in their gustative aspect, but, for obvious reasons, I shall entirely exclude the variety represented by Mette Splyd.

The most frequently employed and, at the same time undoubtedly the most fitting epithet of a kiss, is that it is sweet. The shepherd in the French pastorals is fond of asking for a sweet kiss (*un doux baiser*), and poets innumerable, like Wenceslaus, have sung about the beloved's sugar mouth. During the Renaissance such expressions as her *bouche sucrine* (sugary mouth) and *bouche pleine de sucre et d'ambregris* (mouth full of sugar and ambergris) were often employed.

We find this further borne out by two Latin epigrams. One asks:—"What is sweeter than mead?" and the answer runs: "The dew of heaven. And what is sweeter than dew?—Honey from Hybla? What is sweeter than honey?—Nectar. Than nectar?—A kiss."

Quid mulso præstat? Ros cœli. Rore quid? Hyblæ Mel. Melle hoc? Nectar. Nectare? Suaviolum.

The second epigram goes through a

similar string of comparisons, and arrives at the same result: "What is better than sugar?—Honey-cake. Than honey-cake?—The flavour of honey-combs. Than this flavour?—Dewy kisses"—

Saccharo quid superat? Libum. Quid libo? Favorum Gustus. At hunc gustum? Basia roscidula.

Kisses are sweet as woman's gentle breath, which, according to a Roumanian folk-song, smells of "delicate young wine," or, as the French poets say, of "thousands of flowers."—

Laughing mouth, mouth to caress,
Kissing ere its lips you press;
Sweet for kissing, balmy breath
Like the perfume of fresh heath.

W. F. H.

A woman's breath, which intoxicates man, is, as it were, the ethereal expression of her whole being. In the description of the youthful Blancheflor we are told that her breath is so delicious and refreshing that he who experiences it knows not pain, and needs no food for a whole week.

De sa bouche ist si douce haleine,
Vivre en peut-on une semaine;
Qui au lundi le sentiroit
En la semaine mal n'avroit.

Moreover, as the flavour of a kiss depends

on the woman's mouth, let us, therefore, investigate how a woman's mouth ought to be fashioned in order to fulfil its purpose from a philematological point of view. When the mediæval French poets describe a beautiful and desirable woman they say of her mouth that it must be "well-formed and sweet to kiss" (*bien faite et douce pour baiser*). The troubadours likewise in their love poems praise the mouth that is *ben faita ad obs de baisar.*

If more detailed explanations are wanted they can easily be given. The lips must, in the first place, be bewitchingly soft; next, they must be as red as coral:

> Los labios de la su boca
> Como un fino coral,

or else red as roses:

> La bocca piccioletta e colorita,
> Vermiglia come rosa di giardino,
> Piagente ed amorosa per baciare.*

This last simile is one of the most frequently employed. The beloved one's mouth is likened to a rose; it has the scent and colour of a rose:

---

* The tiny little mouth, red as a rose
That blossoms hidden in some garden-close,
Pleasant and amorous through being kissed. W. F. H.

Hæc dulcis in amore
Est et plena decore,
Rosa rubet rubore,
Et lilium convallium
Tota vincit odore,

sang the wandering clerks in the Middle Ages, the jolly Goliards, and they extolled the youth who was lucky enough to kiss the mouth of such a woman:

Felix est qui osculis mellifluis
Ipsius potitur.

And, they went on to say, "on every maiden's lips the kiss sits like a rose which only longs to be plucked":

Sedit in ore
Rosa cum pudore.

The old German minnesingers use the expression *Küssblümlein* (kiss-floweret), and a bard of the Netherlands sings: "My beloved is my summer, my beloved is my joy, all the roses bloom every time she gives me a kiss":

Mijn liefken is mijn somer,
Min liefken is mijn lust,
En al de rosen bloejen
So dicmael si mi cust.

But all this is only poetry, merely feeble imageries which only give an entirely weak

idea of the reality. How accurate is Thomas Moore when, in one of his poems, he declares that roses are not so warm as his beloved's mouth, nor can the dew approach it in sweetness.

Now if we turn to the other aspect of the case and see what women expect from a man's kiss, then the question becomes somewhat more difficult to treat, inasmuch as so exceedingly few women have treated of kisses in poetry—a fact which is also in itself quite natural. Runeberg, who himself has so often sung the praises of kissing without, however, being versed in their nature:

> For my part I've ne'er understood
> Of kisses what can be the good;
> But I should die if kept away
> From thy red lips one single day.
>
> W. F. H.

asks his beloved:

> Now, dearest maiden, answer me,
> What joy can kisses bring to thee?
>
> W. F. H.

But she fails to answer him:

> I ask thee now, as I asked this,
> And all thy answer's kiss on kiss.
>
> W. F. H.

Besides, it seems very evident from the last line that the situation did not admit of the

calmer and more sober observation which forms the necessary condition for a reliable answer to the question. I am, therefore, obliged to attempt to reply to the question myself; but I readily admit my deficiency in the essential qualification of being able to do so in a satisfactory manner. Moreover, the literary material at my disposal is exceedingly inadequate, and, for that reason, I cannot claim any universal application for my treatment of the subject.

In the first place it seems indisputable that a woman gives a decided preference to a man with a beard; at all events a heiduke sings in a Roumanian ballad: "I am still too young to marry; my beard has not yet sprouted. What married woman then will care about kissing me?"

Că sîmt voinic neînsorat;
Nici mustete nu m'a dat:
Cum sîmt bun de sărutat
La neveste cu bărbat?

To judge from the part the heidukes play in the ballad literature of the Roumanians and Serbs, they must be very experienced in everything that has to do with women and love, and their testimony must therefore be

accepted as being sufficiently reliable. Besides, we find the same taste among women in Northern Europe. In Germany there is said to be nothing in a kiss without a beard: *Ein Kuss ohne Bart ist eine Vesper ohne Magnificat* (a kiss without a beard is like Vespers without the Magnificat); or, still more strongly, *Ein Kuss ohne Bart ist ein Ei ohne Salz* (a kiss without a beard is like an egg without salt). The young girls in Holland also incline to this point of view: *Een kussje zonder baard, een eitje zonder zout* (an egg without salt), and they have in the Frisian Islands some who share their taste: *An Kleeb sanner Biard as äs en Brei sanner Salt* (porridge without salt). Lastly, the Jutland lassies also take the same view of the matter—in fact they are, if I may say so, even more refined in their requirements; a kiss is not only to sound, but it must have some flavour about it—it ought to be strong and luscious: *At kysse en karl uden skrû og skaeg er som at kysse en leret vaeg* (kissing a fellow without a quid of tobacco and a beard is like kissing a clay wall), say those who express themselves in the most refined manner; but there

are others who are not so particular in the choice of words, and these latter say straight out: *Å kys jen, dæ hveken røger eller skråer, de æ som mæ ku kys æ spæ kal i r.*, (kissing one who neither smokes nor chews tobacco is like kissing a new-born calf on the rump). On the other hand, a person should not be too wet about the mouth—that they do not like; *e.g.*, the scornful saying: "He is nice to kiss when one is thirsty," or, as the German girls say: *Einen Kuss mit Sauce bekommen* (to get a kiss with sauce).

It apparently follows from this that women are not so simple in their tastes as men; a kiss by itself is not sufficient, it requires some condiment or other in addition—and, for the credit of women's taste, let it be said —this need not always be tobacco. In a French folk-song the lover tells us that he has smeared his mouth with fresh butter so that it may taste better:

J'avais toujou dans ma pochette
Du bon bieur' frais,
O qué je me gressais la goule,
Quand j' l'embrassais.

I have already mentioned in my preface

how dangerous the mere reading about kisses may be; but, apart from literature, a kiss is something which has to be dealt with most cautiously. Now hear what Socrates said to Xenophon one day: "Kritobulus is the most foolhardy and rash fellow in the world; he is rasher than if he meant to dance on naked sword-points or fling himself into the fire: he has had the audacity to kiss a pretty face."—"But," asked Xenophon, "is that such a deed of daring? I am certainly no desperado, but still I think I would venture to expose myself to the same risk."—"Luckless wight," replied Socrates, "you are not thinking what would betide you. If you kissed a pretty face, would you not that very instant lose your freedom and become a slave? Would you not have to spend much money on harmful amusements, and would you not do much which you would despise, if your understanding were not clouded? Hercules forbid what dreadful effects a poor kiss can have! And dost thou marvel at it, Xenophon? You know, I take it, those tiny spiders which are not half the size of an obol, and yet they can, through merely touching a person's

mouth, cause him the keenest pains; nay, even deprive him of his understanding. But, by Jupiter, anyhow this is quite another matter; for spiders poison the wound directly they inflict a sting. O, thou simple fellow, dost thou not know that lustful kisses are poisoned, even if thou failest to perceive the poison? Dost thou not know that she to whom the name of beautiful is given is a wild beast far more dangerous than scorpions; for the latter only poison us by their touch, whereas beauty destroys us without actual contact with us, and even ejects from a long distance a venom so dangerous that people are deprived thereby of their wits. This is the reason why I advise you, O Xenophon, to run away as fast as you can the very instant you see a beautiful woman, and with regard to yourself, O Kritobulus, I deem you will act most prudently in spending a whole year abroad; for that is the least time necessary for curing thy wound."*

It may perhaps be thought that Socrates' fear of kissing is a trifle exaggerated, his idea possibly arising from a certain prejudice derived from Mistress Xantippe; anyhow,

* Translated from the Danish Version.

nowadays, we regard the matter from a far more sober point of view. We ought, nevertheless, to be well on our guard against the frivolous opinion expressed in so many modern sayings, that a kiss is a thing of no consequence whatever. The Italians bluntly assert "that a mouth is none the worse for having been kissed" (*bocca baciata non perde ventura*), and a French writer of the present day even goes so far as to compare a kiss with those usually-harmless bullets which are exchanged in modern duels. *Bah! deux baisers, qu'est que cela? On les échange comme des balles sans résultat, et l'honneur reste satisfait* (Bah! two kisses. What of that? They are exchanged like bullets that miss the mark, and honour is satisfied).

This frivolous notion must not, however, be deemed peculiar to the Latin nations: it is to be met with even in the North. In Norway there is a song:

> Jens Johannesen, the Goth so brave,
> The maid on her chops a good buss gave.
> He kissed her once, and once again,
> But each time was she likewise fain,
> But each time was she likewise fain.
>
> W. F. H.

As you see, the last line of the verse is

repeated as if for the purpose of duly impressing the moral of the song.

It is said in Als: *Et kys er et stow, den der it vil ha et, ka vask et ow* (a kiss is like a grain of dust, which any one who would be rid of it can wash away). We read as far back as Peder Syv*: *Et kys kan afviskes* (a kiss can be washed away), but he adds solemnly, and for our warning: "She who permits a kiss also permits more; and he who has access to kisses has also access to more." Even the Germans say: *Kuss kann man zwar abwischen, aber das Feuer im Herzen nich löschen* (a kiss may indeed be washed away, but the fire in the heart cannot be quenched).

Thus hardly the shadow of a doubt ought to exist as to kisses being extraordinarily dangerous--or, in any case, capable of becoming so—far more dangerous, for instance, than dynamite or gun-cotton; in the first place, at any rate, inasmuch as people are not in the habit of walking about with such explosives in their pockets, whereas every one has kisses always at hand, or, more correctly speaking,

* A Danish poet, philologist, and collector of proverbs (1631-1702).

in their mouths; secondly, we are rid of dynamite when once it has exploded, but, on the other hand, we can never actually be quit of a kiss—without at the same time returning it; for we take back the kisses we give, you know, and we give, too, those we take back—and, adds the proverb, "nobody is the loser." *Einen Kuss den man raubt giebt man wieder* (One returns a stolen kiss), say the Germans; and the Spaniards have expressed the same thought in a neat little *copla:* "Dost thy mother chide thee for having given me a kiss? Then take back, dear girl, thy kiss, and bid her hold her tongue."

¿Porque un beso me has dado
Riñe tu madre?
Toma, niña, tu beso;
Dile que calle.

Marot has treated the same subject in his epigram *Le Baiser Volé*, or the Stolen Kiss.

About my daring now you grieve,
To snatch a kiss without ado,
Nor even saying, "By your leave."
Come, I will make my peace with you,
And now I want you to believe
I'm loth your soul again to grieve
By theft of kisses, since, alack,
My kiss has wrought such dole and teen;

Yet 'tis not lost; I'll give it back,
And that right blithely, too, I ween.
W. F. H.

There is a French anecdote of the present day about a student who took the liberty of kissing a young girl. She got very angry, however, and called him an insolent puppy, whereupon he retorted with irrefutable logic: *Pour Dieu! Mademoiselle ne vous fâchez pas, si ce baiser vous gêne, rendez-le-moi* (For goodness' sake, don't be cross, young lady. If that kiss annoys you, give it back to me). It seems to have had a more amicable settlement in the case of a Danish couple who had resolved to break off their engagement: "It is best, I suppose, that we return each other's letters?" said he. "I think so too," replied she, "but shall we not at the same time give each other all our kisses back?" They did so, and thus agreed to renew their engagement.

This little story shows us that a kiss is something which cannot be so easily lost, and I hope, not least for the sake of my book, that we shall concur in the Italian proverb which says: *Bacio dato non e mai perduto* (a kiss once given is never lost).

II

LOVE KISSES

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth and love
  And beauty, all concentrating like rays
Into one focus, kindled from above;
  Such kisses as belong to early days,
Where heart, and soul, and sense, in concert move,
  And the blood's lava, and the pulse a blaze,
Each kiss a heart-quake,—for a kiss's strength
I think, it must be reckon'd by its length.

BYRON.

CHAPTER II

LOVE KISSES

"At the time of the world's creation kisses were created and cruel love." Thus begins a Cypriot folk-song, and it is assuredly without the shadow of a doubt that among all nations which on the whole know kissing, it gets its sublimest meaning as the expression of love.

In the transport of love the lovers' lips seek each other. When Byron's Don Juan wanders one evening along the shore with his Haidee, they glance at the moonlit sea which lies outspread before them, and they listen to the lapping of the waves and the whispering murmur of the breeze, but suddenly they

Saw each other's dark eyes darting light
Into each other—and, beholding this,
Their lips drew near, and clung into a kiss.

. . . . . .

They had not spoken, but they felt allured,
As if their souls and lips each other beckoned,
Which, being joined, like swarming bees they clung—
Their hearts the flowers from whence the honey sprung.

The kiss of love is the exultant message of the longing of love, love eternally young, the burning prayer of hot desire, which is born on the lovers' lips, and "rises," as Charles Fuster has said, "up to the blue sky from the green plains," like a tender, trembling thank-offering.

Que tous les cœurs soient apaisés
Et toutes les lèvres ouvertes,
Qu'un frémissement de baisers
Monte au ciel bleu des plaines vertes !

The love kiss, rich in promise, bestows an intoxicating feeling of infinite happiness, courage, and youth, and therefore surpasses all other earthly joys in sublimity—at any rate all poets say so—and no one has expressed it in more exquisite and choicer words than Alfred de Musset in his celebrated sonnet on Tizianello :

Beatrix Donato was the soft sweet name
Of her whose earthly form was shaped so fair ;
A faithful heart lay in her breast's white frame,
Her spotless body held a mind most rare.

The son of Titian, for her deathless fame,
  Painted this portrait, witness of love's care,
And from that day renounced his art's high claim,
  Loth that another dame his skill should share.

Stranger, if in your heart love doth abide,
Gaze on my lady's picture ere you chide.
  Say if perchance your lady's fair as this.
Then mark how poor a thing is fame on earth ;
Grand as this portrait is, it is not worth—
  Believe me on my oath—the model's kiss.

W. F. H.

Thus even the highest work of art, yea, the loftiest reputation, is nothing in comparison with the passionate kiss of a woman one loves. This is what life has taught Musset, and a half melancholy sigh rings through his exultation over the omnipotence of love. In turning to the more *naïve* speech of popular poetry, we find in a German *Schnaderhüpfel* (Improvisation) a corresponding homage to the kiss as the noblest thing in the world :

My sweetheart's poor,
  But fair to behold.
What use were wealth ?
  I cannot kiss gold.

W. F. H.

And we all yearn for kisses and we all seek them; it is idle to struggle against this passion. No one can evade the omnipotence of the kiss,

the best resolutions, the most solemn oaths, are of no avail. A pretty little Servian folk-song treats of a young girl who swore too hastily.

Yestreen swore a maiden fair,
Ne'er again I'll wear a garland,
Ne'er again I'll wear a garland,
Wine again I'll never drink,
Never more I'll kiss a laddie.

Yestreen swore the maiden fair,
Clean to-day her oath's regretted:
If I decked myself with flow'rets,
Then the flow'rets made me fairer;
If I quaffed the wine that's ruddy,
Then my heart grew all the blither;
If I kissed my heart's beloved,
Life to me grew doubly dearer.* W. F. H.

It is through kisses that a knowledge of life and happiness first comes to us. Runeberg says that the angels rejoice over the first kiss exchanged by lovers.

The evening star was sitting beside a silver cloud,
A maid from out a twilight grove addressed this star aloud,
"Come, tell me, star of evening, what angels think in heaven
When by a youth and maiden the first sweet kiss is given?"
And heaven's bashful daughter was heard to deign reply:
"On earth the choir of angels bright look down from out the sky,

* This and most of the following Servian ballads were translated by Prof. Nyrop into Danish from the German version of O. P. Ritto.

And see their own felicity then mirrored on the earth,
But death sheds tears, and turns his eyes away from such
blest mirth."

W. F. H.

Only death weeps over the brief duration of human happiness, weeps because the bliss of the kiss endures not for ever. And likewise, even after death, lovers kiss. Jannakos and Helena, his plighted bride, die before their wedding day. They die in a kiss and are buried together; but over their grave grew a cypress and an orange tree, and the latter stretched forth its branches on high and kissed the cypress.

The happiest man is the man who has the kiss. In the Greek romance of *Babylonika*, which was attributed to Jamblicus, who lived in the second century of the Christian era, three lovers contend for the favour of a young maid. To one she has given the cup out of which she was wont to drink; the second she has garlanded with flowers that she herself has worn; to the third she has given a kiss. Borokos is called on as judge to decide as to which has enjoyed the highest favour, and he unhesitatingly decides the dispute in favour of the last.

The same subject is often the theme of

folk-poetry, and the verdict never alters; the joy bestowed by a kiss surpasses all other joys. A Hungarian ballad runs thus:

As the hart holds dear the fountain,
And the bee the honied flow'rets,
So the noble grape I cherish;
After this songs melting, tender,
Kisses, too, of lips of crimson,
As thine own, O Cenzi mine.

But the wine's might fires my senses,
And songs wake within me blitheness,
And with love intoxicated,
With thy love, mine own belovèd.
And my heart no more is longing
After purple, after gew-gaws,
After what the others long for.

Happy am I in the clinking
Of the goblet filled with rich wine;
Happier still amidst sweet singing;
But my happiness were greatest,
Dared I press my kisses on a
Mouth, and that mouth only thine.

W. F. H.

The same idea is still more delicately expressed in the following Servian ballad:

Proudly cried a golden orange
On the breezy shore:
"Certainly nowhere happiness
Is found to equal mine."

Answered a green apple
From its apple tree:
"Fool to boast, golden orange,
On the breezy shore;
For happiness such as I've found,
Its like cannot be seen."

Then said the breezy meadow,
As yet untouched by scythe:
"Too conceited, little apple,
That speech of thine, meseems,
For happiness such as I've found,
Its like cannot be seen."

Then spake a lovely maiden,
Unsullied by a kiss:
"Thou pratest folly, grass-plot,
Instead of sooth, I ween,
For happiness such as I've found
Its like cannot be seen."

But a handsome lad made answer
To every speech they made;
"You're mad, all mad, to utter
Such words as I've just heard,
For no one in the universe
Can be so blest as I."

"Golden orange by the breezy
Shore I pluck thee now.
Apple, from thy apple tree
To-day I'll shake thee down.
Grass-plot, I'll mow thee level
With my scythe-strokes to-day.
Maiden, as yet unsullied,
To-day I'll kiss thy lips."

W. F. H.

In another Servian lay, the lover sings that he would rather kiss his sweetheart than be the Sultan's guest. In Spain the lover wishes he were the water-cooler so that he might kiss his darling's lips when she is drinking:

Arcarrasa de tu casa,
Chiquiya, quisiera ser,
Para besarte los labios
Quando fueras á beber.

The Greeks say that the kiss is "the key to Paradise"; yea, it is Paradise itself, declares Wergeland:

Nay, bride, thine embrace more than heav'n I prize;
Oh, kiss me once more that to heav'n I rise.

W. F. H.

The kiss is a preservation against every ill. "No ill-luck can betide me when she bestows on me a kiss," sings the old trouvère, Colin Muset:

Se de li ai un douz baisier
Ne me porroit nus mals venir.

It gives health and strength, adds Heine:

Yet could I kiss thee, O my soul,
Then straightway I should be made whole.

W. F. H.

It carries life with it; it even bestows the gift of eternal youth—if one can believe the words of the Duke of Anhalt the minnesinger:

Your mouth is crimson; over its sweet portal
A kindly Genius seems for ever flowing.
If on that mouth a kiss I were bestowing,
Methinks I should in sooth become immortal.
W. F. H.

The Persians, too, had the same idea. The jovial Hafiz laments that "sour wisdom added to old age and virtue" has laid waste his strength, but a remedy is to be found for these:

"Come and drink," the maiden whispered,
"Sin and sweetness, youthful folly,
Lovingly from lips of crimson,
From my bosom's lily chalice,
And live on with strength redoubled."
W. F. H.

And if a kiss is no good, then nought avails. In another passage the same bard says, that were he suddenly on some occasion to feel himself tormented by agony and unrest, no one is to give him bitter medicine—for such he detests—but:

Hand me the foaming juice of the vine,
Jest and sing from your heart to mine,

And if these prove not a remedy sure,
Then a pair of red lips you must straight procure.

But if these latter avail not to save,
May I be laid deep down in the grave.

W. F. H.

In the case of lovers a kiss is everything; that is the reason why a man stakes his all for a kiss. In *Enthousiasme* Aarestrup says:

Ha, you're blushing! What red roses
Deck your lips! A man were fain to,
If a chasm yawned before him,
Straightway peril life to gain you.

W. F. H.

And man craves for it as his noblest reward:

From beyond the high green mountains
Lamentations fraught with sadness
Issue, soft as from a girl's voice.
Then a youth the sound pursueth,
And he sees a maiden shackled
Fast in fetters thick of roses.

Then the fair maid called unto him:
"Doughty youth, come here and help me;
I'll be to you as a sister."

But the youth straightway made answer:
"In my home I have a sister."

"Doughty youth, come here and help me,
For a brother-in-law I'll choose thee."

Then the lad again made answer:
"In my home I have that title."

"Come, young hero, and assist me,
And I'll be thy heart's belovèd."

Quickly kissed he then the maiden
Ere he loosed her from her fetters,
Then went homeward with his bride.

W. F. H.

Thus runs a Servian ballad, and innumerable analogues to it are to be found in the folk-lore of other countries, in ballads as well as tales. It is, you know, for a kiss from the princess's lovely mouth that the swine-herd sells his wonderful pan.

But women are aware, too, of the witchery that dwells on their lips, and the power that lies in their kiss. According to a remarkable *saga* which forms the subject of one of Heine's poems, King Harald Hårfager sits at the bottom of the sea in captivity to a mermaid. The king's head is reposing on her bosom; but, suddenly, a violent tremor thrills him, he hears the Viking shouts which reach him from above, he starts from his dream of love and groans and sighs:

And then the King from the depth of his heart
Begins sobbing, and wailing, and sighing,
When quickly the water-fay over him bends,
With loving kisses replying.

Man is the slave of the kiss; by a kiss woman tames the fiercest man; by means of a kiss man's will becomes as wax. Our peasant girls in Denmark know this, too, right well. When they want one of the lads to do them a service they promise him "seven sweet kisses and a bit of white sugar on Whitsunday morning." "But he will get neither," they say to themselves.

Now, as we have discussed the kiss and its importance as the direct expression of love and erotic emotions, we will pass over to certain more special aspects of its nature.

In the very first place, then, we have the quantitative conditions.

It is a matter of common knowledge that lovers are liberal in the extreme in the question of kisses, which are given and taken to infinity, and these have likewise continually the same intoxicating freshness as at the first meeting. Everything in love is, you know, a reiteration, and yet love is a perpetual renewing. How inspiriting are the words of Tove to King Waldemar, as J. P. Jacobsen gives them:

> And now I say for the first time:
> "King Volmer, I love thee,"

And kiss thee now for the first time,
  And fling mine arms round thee;
But should you say I've said this before,
  And you to kisses are fain,
Then say I: "King, he's but a fool
  Who minds such trifles vain."

W. F. H.

What has a love kiss to do with the law of renewal? That one does not arrive at anything by *one* kiss is expressed with sufficient plainness in an Istro-Roumanian proverb: *Cu un trat busni nu se afla muliere* (with a single kiss no woman is caught).

This maxim holds good besides in the case of both men and women. But how many kisses are necessary then?

There is a little Greek folk-song called "All good things are three." It runs as follows:

Your first kiss brought me near to the grave,
Your second kiss came my life to save;
But if a third kiss you'll bestow,
Not even death can bring me woe.

W. F. H.

But, nevertheless, we may assume without a shadow of a doubt that he was not satisfied with these three kisses—lovers are not wont to be so easily contented. The Spaniards and many other nations besides say of lovers that "they eat each other up with kisses;"

but more than three are certainly required for that purpose:

Take this kiss and a thousand more, my darling,
W. F. H.

sings Aarestrup, but Catullus outbids him, however, in one of his songs to Lesbia:

A thousand kisses; add five score:
Another thousand kisses more;
Then best forget them all,
Lest any wight with evil eye
Our too close counting might espy,
And dire mishap befall.* W. F. H.

As we see, Catullus' love has no trifling start over Aarestrup's, and so a later poet seems likewise to think that even his demands are quite ridiculously small. "Nay," says Joachim du Bellay to his Columbelle, "give me as many kisses as there are flowers on the mead, seeds on the field, and grapes in the vineyards, and so that you shall not deem me ungrateful, I will immediately give you as many again."

Du Bellay, moreover, bitterly upbraids the poet of Verona for asking for so few kisses that they can, when taken together, be counted:

In truth Catullus' wants are small,
And little can they really mean,
Since he could even count them all.
W. F. H.

* From "Various Verses," 1893.

I must, however, take Catullus' part to a certain extent; he is not so precise in his demands of Lesbia as Du Bellay makes out; in another poem he asks her:

> Thy kisses dost thou bid me count,
> And tell thee, Lesbia, what amount
> My rage for love and thee could tire,
> And satisfy and cloy desire?

And the answer runs:

> Many as grains of Libyan sand
> Upon Cyrene's spicy land
> From prescient Ammon's sultry dome
> To sacred Battus' ancient tomb;
> Many as stars that silent ken
> At night the stolen loves of men.
> Yes, when the kisses thou shalt kiss
> Have reached a number vast as this,
> Then may desire at length be stayed,
> And e'en my madness be allayed:
> Then when infinity defies
> The calculations of the wise;
> Nor evil voice's deadly charm,
> Can work the unknown number harm.

This being the case, it is a divine blessing that, according to the Finnish saying, "the mouth is not torn by being kissed, nor the hand by being squeezed":

> Suu ei kulu suudellessa,
> Käsi kättä annellessa.

But even if the mouth is not exactly torn, yet much kissing may be almost harmful; but there is only one remedy to be found for this—"you must heal the hurts by fresh kisses."

Dorat, who may be regarded as a high authority on philematology, expressly says:

> A second kiss can physic
> The evil the first has wrought.
>
> W. F. H.

And Heine, whose authority in these questions should hardly be inferior, holds quite the same theory:

> If you have kissed my lips quite sore,
> Then kiss them whole again;
> If we till evening meet no more,
> Then hurry will be vain.
>
> You have still yet the whole, whole night,
> My dearest heart, know this:
> One can in such a long, long night,
> Kiss much and taste much bliss.

I make use of the last of the verses quoted as a transition to the next question we have to investigate, viz., the qualitative aspect of kissing, as I regard it apart from its merely gustative qualities, which have already been considered.

The love kiss gleams like a cut diamond with a thousand hues; it is eternally changing as the sun's shimmer on the waves, and expresses the most diverse states and moods, ranging from humble affection to burning desire.

The love kiss "quenches the fire of the lips," quells and stills longing and desire, but it also burns and arouses regret. Margaret sits at her spinning-wheel, and, in tremulous longing, calls to mind Faust's ardent kiss:

My peace is gone,
  My heart is sore:
'Tis gone for ever
  And evermore.

And the magic flow
  Of his talk, the bliss
In the clasp of his hand,
  And, oh, his kiss!

My bosom yearns
  For him alone;
Ah, dared I clasp him,
  And hold, and own!

And kiss his mouth,
  To heart's desire,
And on his kisses
  At last expire!

Numberless poets have varied the theme of the quenching yet burning kisses of love.

> O'er me flows in streams delicious
> Kisses' rosy and glowing rain,
>
> W. F. H.

sings Waldemar at his meeting with Tove, and Aarestrup laments:

> In vain I'm seeking
> In ev'ry land,
> Thy sweetness burning
> Of mouth and hand.
>
> W. F. H.

This "burning sweetness" seems to be an indubitable characteristic of a genuine love kiss; we even find it again in Heine:

> The world's an ass, the world can't see,
> Thy character not knowing,
> It knows not how sweet thy kisses be,
> How rapturously glowing.

The emotions consequent on the first kiss have been described in the old *naïve*, but, nevertheless, exceedingly delicate love-story, of Daphnis and Chloe. As a reward Chloe has bestowed a kiss on Daphnis—an innocent young-maid's kiss, but it has on him the effect of an electrical shock:

"Ye gods, what are my feelings. Her lips are softer than the rose's leaf, her mouth is sweet as honey, and her kiss inflicts on me more pain than a bee's sting. I have often kissed my kids, I have often kissed my lambs, but never have I known aught like this. My pulse is beating fast, my heart throbs, it is as if I were about to suffocate, yet, nevertheless, I want to have another kiss. Strange, never-suspected pain! Has Chloe, I wonder, drunk some poisonous draught ere she kissed me? How comes it that she herself has not died of it?"

Impelled, as it were, by some irresistible force, Daphnis wanders back to Chloe; he finds her asleep, but dares not awake her: "See how her eyes slumber and her mouth breathes. The scent of apple-blossoms is not so delicious as her breath. But I dare not kiss her. Her kiss stings me to the heart, and drives me as mad as if I had eaten fresh honey." Daphnis' fear of kisses disappears, however, later on, directly his simplicity has made room for greater self-consciousness. That a kiss is like the sting of a bee, or pains like a wound, is a metaphor which many poets have used, and

the metaphor comes undoubtedly near the truth. With growing passion, kisses become mad and violent:

Thy ruby lips, they kissed so wild,
So madly, so soul-disturbing;
W. F. H.

and such kisses leave marks behind them. Aarestrup's mistress has beautiful plump shoulders:

They curve, as of a goddess,
So naked and so bold.

I'll brand your comely shoulders,
Such guerdon have they earned!
Look where my lips enfevered
Have scars of crimson burned.
W. F. H.

Hafiz' mistress is afraid that "his too hot kisses will char her delicate lips." With continually increasing desire kisses grow more and more voluptuous, and assume forms which have been celebrated by poets of antiquity and the Renaissance. Many burning, erotic verses have been composed on the subject *columbatim labra conserere*, or kissing as doves kiss.

Kisses at last grow into bites. Mirabeau, in a love-letter to Sophie, writes: "I am kissing you and biting you all over, *et jaloux de ta blancheur je te couvre de suçons*"; and the classic poets often speak of the tiny red marks on cheeks or lips, neck or shoulders, which the lovers' *morsiunculæ* have left behind.

Arethusa writes to Lycas: "What keeps you till now so long away from me? Oh, suffer no young girl to print the mark of her teeth on your neck." The Italians use the expression *baciare co' denti* (kiss with the teeth) to signify "to love." We can only treat these kisses as a sort of transitional link, of shorter or longer duration, according to circumstances. They are, as it were, "a sea fraught with perils," which in Mlle. de Scudéry's celebrated letter (*la carte de tendre*), carries one to strange countries (*les terres inconnues*); but, as these countries lie outside the regions of pure philematology, I shall not pursue my investigations further. I will, however, first quote what old Ovid has written, although I am not at all prepared to assert that his opinion is entitled to have any special weight, more especially as it is

far from being unimpeachable from a moral point of view:

Oscula qui sumpsit, si non et cetera sumet,
Hæc quoque quæ data sunt perdere dignus erit.
Quantum defuerat pleno post oscula voto?
Heu mihi rusticitas, non pudor ille fuit.*

After the foregoing it would seem superfluous to enter into a closer investigation of—if the term be allowed—the topographical aspects of kissing. The love kiss is, as you are aware, properly directed towards the mouth—a fact sufficiently known, and in testimony of which I have, moreover, brought forward a number of passages from respectable and trustworthy writers. I shall only add a German "Sinngedicht" of Friedrich von Logau:

If you will kiss, then kiss the mouth,
All other sorts are but half blisses,
The face—ah, no—nor hand, neck, breast,
The mouth alone can give back kisses.
W. F. H.

Von Logau's vindication of the mouth as the only place that ought to be kissed is

* He who a kiss has snatched and takes naught more,
Deserves to lose the kiss he has in store,
How much was lacking to my perfect bliss?
Not modesty but clownishness was this.
W. F. H.

extremely logical, and, I take it, from a purely theoretical point of view, unobjectionable; but, practically, the case is quite the contrary. The royal *trouvère*, Thibaut de Champagne, treats in a lengthy poem—one of the so-called *jeux-partis*—the question whether one should kiss one's mistress's mouth or feet. Baudouin's opinion is in favour of kissing her on the mouth, and he gives his reasons for it at some length; but Thibaut replies, that he who kisses his darling on the mouth has no love for her, because that is the way one kisses any little shepherdess one comes across; it is only by kissing her feet that a lover shows his affection, and it is by such means alone that her favour is to be won.

The question of feet or mouth is threshed out minutely by the two contending parties, who at last agree in the opinion that one ought to kiss both parts, beginning with the feet and ending with the mouth.

It cannot be denied that Thibaut de Champagne has a far better insight into the matter than Von Logau, and yet even the old French poet's point of view must be characterised as being somewhat narrow.

All the other poets, you must know, teach us that not only the mouth, but every part of our sweetheart's body says, "Kiss me."

Friends, if it only were my fate!
If fate would will it so,
I'd kiss her beauties small and great
From bosom down to toe.

W. F. H.

So sings Aarestrup, and he returns again and again to the same idea in his *ritorneller:*

When scarce the mouth can longer feel such fooling,
Because thy lips are all too hotly burning,
Press them to bosom's Alpine snows for cooling.

The arms so white and tender woo caresses;
A lovely pleasance, too, those plump white shoulders!
But through the soul a bosom-kiss straight presses.

Her snow-white shoulders! All what may be said on
Such beauty I have uttered. For my guerdon
Grant me one now to rest my weary head on.

At kisses pressed upon your neck's fair closes
You thrilled and threw your head back, and I straightway
Planted upon your throat my kisses' roses.

About my darling I am wheeling, flying,
Like to a gadfly round a lily's chalice,
Buzzing until in nectar-cup mute dying.

W. F. H.

Allow me also to call your attention to a pretty little myth which Dorat composed

about a "kiss in the bosom's Alpine snow." The kiss is a fair rose, and roses bloom everywhere in these tracks; through witchcraft two vigorous rosebuds sprouted forth on woman's white bosom:

> Le bouton d'un beau sein est éclos du baiser;
> Une rose y fleurit pour y marquer sa trace;
> Fier de l'avoir fait naître, il aime à s'y fixer.

But if the object of one's affection is not within reach, and *oscula corporalia* are, for that reason, practically impossible, her image may be kissed, as a French song naïvely says:

> I will make a portrait gay,
> Like to thee, set in a locket;
> Kiss it five score times a day
> Guard it safely in my pocket.
>
> W. F. H.

But if one is not fortunate enough to possess an image of the object of one's affection, then anything that has in any way been associated with, or is reminiscent of, him or her may be kissed. Tovelille exults to King Volmer:

> For all my roses I've kissed to death
> Whilst thinking, dear love, of thee.
>
> W. F. H.

But F. Rückert sings with pain and mockery:

With fervour the hard stone I'm kissing,
For your heart is as hard as a stone.
W. F. H.

Such *oscula impropria* are often mentioned by ancient as well as modern poets. *Propertius* (I. 16) says:

Ah, oft I've hither sped with verse to greet
Thee, leaning on thy steps with kisses pressed.
How often, traitress, turning towards the street,
I've laid in secret garlands on thy crest.
W. F. H.

Eighteen hundred years afterwards Dorat writes:

I kiss the kindly blades of grass
Because they have approached your charms:
The sands o'er which your footsteps pass,
And leafy boughs that stretched their arms
To hide our happiness, dear lass.
W. F. H.

Lovers often send each other kisses through the air, as in Béranger's well-known song on the detestable Spring:

We loved before we ever met;
Our kisses crossed athwart the air.
W. F. H.

But should the distance be too great for such a platonic interchange of kisses, certain

small, obliging *postillons d'amour* are employed. Heine uses his poems for that purpose:

O would that all my verses
Were kisses light and sweet:
I'd send them all in secret
My sweetheart's cheeks to greet.

While the young girl in Runeberg has recourse to a rose that has just blossomed:

Through the grove amidst the blooming flow'rets
Walked the bonnie maiden unattended,
And she plucked a new-born rose, exclaiming:
'Lovely flow'ret, if you'd only wings on,
I would send you to my well-beloved
When I'd fastened just two tiny greetings
Lightly on your right wing and your left wing;
One should bid him cover you with kisses,
And the other send you back to me soon.'

W. F. H.

But however much poets may clothe with grace such kisses sent and received by post—and it cannot be denied that many of them are extraordinarily charming from a poetical point of view—they are, and must be, nevertheless, in reality only certain mean substitutes with which lovers in the long run cannot feel fully satisfied. "The kiss," says the practical Frenchmen, "is a fruit which one ought to pluck from the tree itself" (*Le baiser est un*

fruit qu'il faut cueiller sur l'arbre). Kisses ought to be given, as they should be taken, in secret; only in such case have they their full freshness, their intoxicating power. Heine says of such:

> Kisses that one steals in darkness,
> And in darkness then returns—
> How such kisses fire the spirit,
> If with ardent love it burns!

No profane eyes should see them: they only concern the pair of lovers—none other in the whole world. Secrecy and silence must rest over these kisses, as over all else that regards the soul of love, so that the butterfly's wings may not lose their delicate down.

The strait-laced Cato degraded a senator of the name of Manilius for having kissed his wife in broad daylight and in his daughter's presence. Plutarch, however, considers the punishment excessive, but adds: "How disgusting it is in any case to kiss in the presence of third parties." Clement of Alexandria, one of the Fathers of the Church, endorses this opinion, and exhorts all married people to refrain from kissing one another before their servants.

All delicate-minded persons must un-

doubtedly sympathise with the ancient ascetic conception in proportion as they unconsciously follow it in practice. A kiss to or from a woman we love is a far too delicate pledge of affection to bear the gaze of strangers.

How many engaged couples would, do you suppose, find favour in Cato's eyes? How often do they not by their behaviour offend the commonest notions of decency? Their kisses and caresses, which ought to be their secret possession, they expose quite unconcernedly to the sight of all. One evening at a large party I saw a young girl ostentatiously kiss on the mouth the gentleman to whom she was engaged. Cato would certainly turn in his grave if he knew that such immodest behaviour was actually tolerated by people of refinement and position; and how disgusted and indignant he would be—unless, indeed, he preferred to smile—at the sight of the duty-kisses after dinner, which are often exchanged between man and wife at dinner-parties. Ah, yes, when the belly's full. . . . ! How warranted is Kierkegaard's satire on the conjugal domestic kiss with which husband and wife, in lack of a napkin, wipe each other's mouth

after meals. On the lips of youth alone you reap the sweetest harvests :

> Sur les lèvres de la jeunesse
> Tu fais les plus douces moissons.
>
> (DORAT).

The young maiden will only give her love-kiss to her sweetheart, the stalwart swain ; an old suitor is spurned with scorn. The lovely Mara, white and red, walked by the spring and tended her sheep :

See an old, old suitor comes riding up on horseback,
Shouting : "God's peace be thine, fair Mara, white and red.
Tell me, canst thou offer me a draught of cold clear water ;
Tell me, can the basil ever verdant here be gathered,
And may I snatch a kiss from thee, fair Mara, white and red ? "
W. F. H.

But straightway comes the answer from fair Mara, white and red :

"I charge thee, old, old suitor, to horse and ride hence quickly,
No drink is here thy portion from the fountain cold and clear,
And the ever-verdant basil by thee shall not be gathered,
Nor durst thou snatch a kiss from me, fair Mara, white and red."
W. F. H.

Again, fair Mara, white and red, walked by the spring and tended her sheep:

See a young and handsome suitor comes riding up on horseback,
Shouting: "God's peace be thine, fair Mara, white and red.
Tell me, canst thou offer me a draught of cold clear water;
Tell me, can the basil ever verdant here be gathered,
And may I snatch a kiss from thee, fair Mara, white and red?"
W. F. H.

But straightway comes the answer from fair Mara, white and red:

"I charge thee, handsome laddie, to horse and ride hence quickly,
Wouldst thou drink of this cool fountain, thou must hither come some morning,
For cold and clear's the water in the hours of early dawn.
Wouldst thou gather from the bushes, thou must hither come at mid-day,
For the flower-trees smell the sweetest about the noon-tide hour.
Wouldst thou kiss the beauteous Mara, then hither come at evening,
At evening sighs each maiden who finds herself alone."
W. F. H.

In another Servian ballad we find the same glorification of the stalwart young lover, the same contempt for, and detestation of, old men who go a-wooing.

High upon a mountain's slope once stood a maiden,
Mirroring her lovely image in the stream,

And her image in these words addressing :
'Image fraught to me with so much sadness
Had I known a time was ever coming
When thou shouldst be kissed by agèd lover,
Then amidst the green hills I had wandered,
Gath'ring with my hands their bitter herbage,
Squeezing out of it its acrid juices,
Washed thee then therewith that thou should'st savour
Bitterly wheresoe'r the old man kissed thee.'

'O my lovely image, had I known that
Thou wert fated for a young man's kisses,
I had hurried to the verdant meadows,
Gathered all the roses in the meadows,
Squeezing from the roses their sweet juices,
Laved thee with them, O mine image, that thou
Savoured of fragrance wheresoe'r he kissed thee.'

W. F. H.

A kiss must be given and taken in frank, joyous affection. To have recourse to violence is unknightly, unlovely, and despicable in the highest degree. This is a sphere wherein the brutal axiom regarding the right of the stronger can never hold good. An Albanian folk-song tells us of a young man who is in search of a young maiden with whom he is in love; he finds her at a brook, and, against her will, kisses her mouth and cheeks. Filled with shame, the young maiden tries to wash away the kisses in the brook, but its water is dyed red, and "when the women in the

neighbouring village come thither to wash their clothes, the latter turn red instead of white. And, in the gardens watered with water from the brook, scarlet flowers sprout up; and the birds which drank of the water thereof lost their power of song."

This ballad shows us, in burning words, how deeply a man outrages a woman when he kisses her against the dictates of her heart. A Southern imagination alone can find an expression so sublime and poetical: in French it runs simply and frankly: *Un baiser n'est rien, quand le cœur est muet.* In Teutonic countries it is expressed somewhat more awkwardly. In Denmark people say: *Kys med gevalt er æg uden salt* (a kiss snatched by force is as an egg without salt); and in Germany still less elegantly: *Ein aufgezwungener Kuss ist wie ein Hühneraug' am Fuss* (like a corn on one's foot).

The question of kissing by main force can be treated not only from an ethical, but also from a juristic point of view. Holberg relates that in Naples the individual who kissed in the street a woman against her will was punished by not being allowed to approach within thirty miles distance of the spot where

the outrage had taken place; and a German jurist wrote in the end of the eighteenth century, a minute and extremely solid treatise on the remedy that a woman has against a man who kisses her against her will (*Von dem Rechte des Frauenzimmers gegen eine Mannperson, die es wider seinen Willen küsset*). The author begins by classifying kisses; he distinguishes between lawful and unlawful kisses, and frames the following classification :—

Kisses are either

I.—LAWFUL,

A. As spiritual kisses.

B. As kisses of reconciliation and kisses of peace.

C. As customary kisses; partly,

a. By way of salutation.

1. At meeting.
2. On arrival.
3. At departure; partly,

b. As mark of courtesy.

c. In jest.

D. As kisses of respect.

E. As kisses on festive occasions.

F. As kisses of love:

α. Between married people.

β. Between such as are engaged to be married.
γ. Between parents and children.
δ. Between relations.
ε. Between intimate friends; or,

II.—UNLAWFUL, when they are given—

A. Out of treachery or malice.
B. Out of lust.

After this particularly happy attempt to reduce kissing to a system, our jurist maintains the view that all depends on the person who kisses and the person who is kissed.

If, for instance, a peasant or a vulgar citizen takes such a liberty as to kiss a noble and high-born lady against her will, her claim against the aggressor ought to be far greater than it would be in the case of one of less ignoble descent; but, on the other hand, if Hans steals from his Greta "an informal, hearty, rustic kiss," and she complains to the authorities about it, there will scarcely be any grounds for litigation.

On the whole, says he, a kiss between individuals of the same position in society is not to be regarded as a tort, and he more closely

defines how he arrives at this conception. It can only be actionable in the case of a party having some consciously unchaste intention when he kissed, or in the case of an *osculum luxuriosum* or *libidinosum*—in such cases only can a verdict be brought in of what, according to Roman law, is termed *crimen osculationis*, and in no other case can the wrong-doer be punished by fine or imprisonment, *propter voluntatem perniciosæ libidinis.* The punishment, however, should be proportioned in severity according to the rank of the injured party. In the case of a nun or a married woman it ought to be most severe; less severe if the lady be unmarried but betrothed, and mildest when she is neither married nor betrothed.

But if the unchaste intention cannot be distinctly proved, the woman has no grounds for complaining of any sort, and, in accordance with the procedure of the German courts, the kiss is to be considered innocent till the contrary is proved.

Our jurist thus takes a really liberal view in the case of a "kiss taken by force"; he may almost be said to regard it as *eine grosse Kleinigheit* (an unimportant trifle).

With regard to the question of a woman's

right to defend herself in such cases, he is of opinion that she is justified in repulsing the insulter by a box on the ears, but only if the offence amounts to *crimen osculationis*, and this box on the ears may not be inflicted with "the fist of an Amazon," as, by such requital, she easily loses her right to take legal action in the matter. She must, above all, be careful that the box on the ears be not excessive (*die Ohrfeige proportionirlich einzukleiden*), as otherwise the man can bring an action against her; consequently the woman ought to use her right of self-defence with great caution.

Our jurist concludes with considerations of cases when the woman who has been kissed forfeits all claims, viz., when, for instance, by look or gestures she says, "I should like to see the man who would dare to kiss me," and, by such conduct, obviously exposes herself to the danger.

Holberg has also occupied himself with this question, and tells the following story in one of his epistles (No. 199):—

"Last week I was at a party where a curious incident happened. A person stole up to a lady and gave her a kiss unexpectedly. The

Vestal virgin took this *douceur* in such ill part that, in her wrath, she gave him a sound box on the ears. He gave a start, and every one expected he was going to pay her back in the same coin; but, to show his respect for the fair sex, he made a low bow, and kissed the very hand that had but lately struck him. All present praised this act of courtesy, on his part." Holberg, on the contrary, does not commend the man's politeness; like the German jurist, he sees nothing wrong about a kiss—indeed, he even goes so far as to say that the young man ought to have given the maiden a box on the ears in return. This coarse way of looking at the subject from a bachelor's point of view is wittily defended in the following rather startling way:

"I candidly confess that if anything of the kind had happened to me I should have returned the good lady's salutation in the same way, and that not out of anger or desire of being revenged, but for the purpose of showing the courtesy with which one ought to treat a woman; for kissing the lady on the hand which has boxed his ears is equivalent to saying: 'As you are a feeble creature of no importance, and cannot hurt me,

your act deserves ridicule rather than revenge or rage.' No sensible woman can be pleased with such a compliment, as there is nothing worse than being treated like a puppet; and I hope no maid or matron will take this opinion of mine in ill part, but will rather regard it as a proof of the justice I have always shown to women by always taking them seriously. A kiss is nothing but a salutation, and cannot be looked on as anything else. We are no longer living in the golden age, when a young lady almost fainted at hearing the word pronounced."

English ladies regard the matter from quite another point of view. In 1837 Mr Thomas Saverland brought an action against Miss Caroline Newton, who had bitten a piece out of his nose for his having tried to kiss her by way of a joke. The defendant was acquitted, and the judge laid it down that "when a man kisses a woman against her will she is fully entitled to bite his nose, if she so pleases."—"And eat it up, if she has a fancy that way," added a jocular barrister half aloud.

Let us next consider how the thing stands when it is apparently only a question of a kiss snatched by force—for it is, you know,

a matter of general knowledge that a woman's "No" is not always to be taken seriously. The refusal may, you know, be merely feigned. The maiden's "No" is the swain's "Yes," Peder Syv teaches us, and Runeberg, who also understood women, says :—

> Ev'ry girl is fond of kisses,
> Though she may pretend to scorn them.
>
> W. F. H.

If one is now convinced that the German proverb which says : *Auf ein Weibes Zunge ist Nein nicht Nein* (On a woman's tongue "no" is not "no"), what then? Well, but how the point is to be finally settled is not satisfactorily explained by the authorities within my reach ; and this is the reason why I dare not pronounce an opinion on the question at issue. But I am convinced that the momentary difficulty will afford the man the necessary diplomatic qualities as well as the requisite tact. There is only one thing I can lay down for certain, viz., that if a man follows his natural simplicity and reserve, and takes the girl's feigned "No" seriously, she will only laugh at him afterwards—such, again, is woman's nature.

A well-known French *chanson* deals with

a hunter who meets a young girl out in the forest. Struck by her beauty, he wants to kiss her:

> And takes her by her white hand,
> Intending to caress her;
>
> W. F. H.

but she begins to cry, and, moved by her tears, he releases her; but he has hardly got clear of the wood before she begins to laugh at him heartily, and in derision shouts after him: "When you've got hold of a quail you ought to pluck it, and when you've got hold of a girl you ought to embrace her":

> Quand vous teniez la caille,
> Il fallait la plumer.
> Quand vous teniez la fillette,
> Il fallait l'embrasser.

I quote these verses, for they may possibly afford inexperienced young men some matter for reflection.

Besides, a woman's "No" has often a piquancy about it which lovers of a somewhat more refined class set great store by. Even Martial (v. 46) has expressed himself in favour of this in a little epigram which begins thus:

> While ev'ry joy I scorn, but that I snatch;
> And me thy furies more than features catch.

And Marot, who was likewise much skilled in "*ars amandi*," even begs his mistress not to give him her kisses readily:

> Mouth of coral, rare and bright,
> That in kissing seems to bite;
> Longed-for mouth, I pray you this:
> Feign deny me when you kiss.
>
> W. F. H.

Dorat has also expressed himself in favour of such. "Promise me nine kisses," says he to his Thais, "give me eight, and let me struggle for the ninth."

> The first eight kisses you accord
> Will crown my love's felicity;
> But I shall die in joy's reward
> If for the ninth a struggle be.
>
> W. F. H.

Even if the answer is not a decided negative, yet it can, you know, be couched in such equivocal words as to be tantamount to neither a permission nor a refusal. Many girls agree with the Swedish song:

> But "yes" 's a word I will not say,
> Nor will I either answer "nay."
>
> W. F. H.

There is a saying in Jutland that runs thus: "Maren, may I kiss you?—Guess. You won't then, I suppose?—Guess once more?

You will? — But how could you guess it then?" This tallies capitally with the following German saying: "*Zwinge mich, so thu' ich keine Sünde,*" *sagte das Mädchen* ("Constrain me, so that I shall not commit sin," said the maiden). Naturally in this case, there can be no question of any *crimen osculationis*, for, as the jurists have it, *volenti non fit injuria.*

Let us finally examine all these kisses from an ethical standpoint. We have all of us, you know, learnt from our earliest childhood that—

> He who kisses maidens hath
> A very naughty habit;
>
> W. F. H.

and popular belief adds, by way of warning, that it causes sores on the mouth. Ah, yes, that is certainly very true, but what becomes of our childish lore in the main when we attain to somewhat riper age? Now, only listen to the ballad about what happened in the case of the young Serb, in spite of all he had learnt:

> Here, so people told us,
> Dwells a youth industrious,
> Who from ancient volumes
> Late and early studies.

As for books they tell us:
Don't vault on the saddle,
Buckle not thy sword on,
Drink no wine that fuddles,
Never kiss a maiden.

But the young man harkens
Not to what they tell him:
Keenest sword he seizes,
Hottest wine he drinketh,
Fairest maids he kisses.

W. F. H.

When so learned a man as our Serb succumbs to the tempting kiss, what is to be said then about all the rest who are less instructed? And let us remember ere we sit in judgment on any one—and it ought to be regarded as peculiarly extenuating circumstances—that a woman's mouth is a direct incentive to kissing, that it is formed, as you know, for that purpose, asserts an old troubadour, and created to kiss and smile:—

And when I gazed upon her red mouth sweet,
To match whose charms not Jove himself were meet,
That mouth for laughter and for kisses framed,
I fell thereof so amorous straightway
That I lacked power to do aught or to say.

W. F. H.

The roguish mouth with the white teeth and the moist red, delicately-shaped lips say to

every man who is not made of marble, "Kiss me, kiss me":

Her fresh mouth's playing
Seems ever saying
To kiss I am fain
Again, again.

W. F. H.

How human is Byron's wish that all women had but one mouth so that he might kiss them all at the same time:

That womankind had but one rosy mouth,
To kiss them all at once from north to south.

Runeberg has uttered a similar wish, and with a minute account of his reasons:

I gaze on a bevy of damsels,
I'm gazing and gazing incessant,
The fairest of all I'll be choosing,
And yet as to choice I'm uncertain;
For one has the brightest of bright eyes,
Another girl's cheeks are more rosy,
A third one's lips are the riper,
The fourth has a heart far more tender.
There isn't a single maid lacking
A something that captures my senses.
There isn't one there I'd say "no" to,
Oh, would I might kiss the whole bevy!

W. F. H.

Even an ecclesiastic such as Æneas Silvius Piccolomini, when wishing to describe how beautiful and fascinating a young girl was,

writes that "no one could see her without being seized at once with a desire to kiss her." So as not to shock my readers, I may mention that he wrote this before he was made Pope and assumed the name of Pius II.

It ought now to be taken as proved that women—beautiful women—and kisses are of a piece. It is at the same time nature's ordinance, and we find it verified in all countries and in all ages. Odin himself says, you know, in Hávamál, where he instructs mortals in the wisdom of life:

> Ships are for voyages,
> And shields for ward,
> Sword-blades to smite,
> And maids to kiss.
>
> W. F. H.

And the Greeks sing: "Wine belongs to chestnuts, honey to nuts, and kisses morning and night to young maids."

I am inclined to assume that women also agree with this view; certainly I have no positive enunciation to support my assumption, but I am able to quote a German proverb which most assuredly points in this direction: "*Ich kann das Küssen nicht leiden*," *sagte das Mädchen*, "*wenn ich nicht dabei bin*" ("I can-

not bear kissing," said the maiden, "when I am not taking any part in it.")

Now if, in spite of all I have quoted, some rigid moralist or other will persist that kissing young maids is always a "bad" habit, and if, peradventure, a still sterner moralist will maintain it is a sin into the bargain, I should reply that, in any case, it is one of those sorts of sin that are venial. The Pope himself will not refuse his absolution, say the Italians, and they certainly ought to understand things in Rome. "Kiss me," runs an Italian folk-song, "the Pope will forgive you; kiss me and I will kiss you, and the Pope will forgive us both."

O bella figlia, o bella garzona,
Baciate me, chè il Papa vi perdona;
Baciate me, chè io bacerò vui,
Chè il Papa ci perdona tutti e dui.

If the Pope is so complaisant then, to be sure, a subordinate servant of the Church such as Aarestrup's Father Hugo may well say:

Child, a kiss is but a trifle,
If it's only long and sweet.

W. F. H.

III

AFFECTIONATE KISSES

Seigneur, tu m'as donné les baisers de ma mère,
Je te bénis, Seigneur !

F. E ADAM.

I bless thee, O Lord, for having given me my mother's kisses.

CHAPTER III

AFFECTIONATE KISSES

A KISS can also express feelings from which the erotic element is excluded—feelings that are consequently less ardent and longing, but, most frequently, far deeper and more lasting.

A kiss is expressive of love in the widest and most comprehensive meaning of the word, bringing a message of loyal affection, gratitude, compassion, sympathy, intense joy, and profound sorrow. In the first place a kiss is the expression of the deep and intense feeling which knits parents to their offspring. At its entrance into the world the little helpless infant is received by its father's and mother's warm kiss. In the Middle Ages they kissed the new-born baby thrice in the name of the Holy Trinity. And the parent's kiss follows the child through life.

When Hector takes leave of his wife Andromache he lifts his little son up into his arms, but the child is afraid of his father's helmet, "of the gleam of the copper and the nodding crest of horse-hair."

> And from his brow
> Hector the casque removed, and set it down,
> All glittering, on the ground; then kissed his child,
> And danced him in his arms.*

The Evangelist Luke tells the story of the Prodigal Son's return home. "But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

The parent's kiss is like the good angel which shields the child from all evil. When Johannes in Sören Kierkegaard's *Forførerens dagbog* would describe the impression made on him by Cordelia he says, "She looked so young and fresh, as if nature like a tender and opulent mother had that very instant released her from her hand," and he goes on to say: "It seemed to me as if I had been witness to this farewell scene; I marked how the loving mother once again embraced her and bade her farewell; I heard her say:

* Translated by Edward, Earl of Derby.

'Go out into the world now, my child; I have done all for you. Now take this kiss as a seal upon your lips; 'tis a seal the sanctuary preserves; no one can break it against your own will, but when the right man comes, you shall understand him.' And she presses a kiss on her lips—a kiss which, not like a human kiss, takes aught, but a divine kiss that gives all." The chaste purity, which is Cordelia's halo and protection, is, as it were, the reflection of a mother's kiss.

It is for this reason also that in the *sagas* a quite irresistible power is attributed to the parent's kiss. When Vildering, the king's son, quits Maid Miseri and journeys alone to his parents to tell them what has befallen him, she implores him to be especially careful not to let his parents kiss him, "for should that happen, you will forget me utterly." In spite of his caution his mother kisses him, and oblivion covers the past; he forgets his betrothed, who is sitting and waiting for him in the depths of the forest.

Kisses of affection are exchanged not only between parents and children, but between all the members of the same family; we find them even outside the more narrow

family circle, everywhere where deep affec tion unites people.

When Naomi bade her son's wife farewell, "they lifted up their voice and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her." When Moses went to meet his father-in-law, "he did obeisance and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare; and they came into the tent;" and when Jacob had wrestled with the Lord he met Esau, ran towards him, fell on his neck and kissed him.

The family kiss was also much in vogue with the Romans. Propertius, in one of his elegies, chides his mistress for inventing quite *ad libitum* a whole crowd of relations so as always to have at hand some one to kiss her. This is how that came to pass: In ancient times there was a so-called *jus osculi*, which allowed all a woman's relations to kiss her. There are several curious stories about this peculiar privilege. The old traditions, which have been solemnly discussed by several writers, relate that once upon a time women were forbidden to drink wine; the above-mentioned law must have been instituted so that the parties

concerned should, in a pleasant and practical way, be able to satisfy themselves about observing the prohibition. This highly improbable explanation has been defended in a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy even in the eighteenth century.

The kiss of affection is often mentioned by the early Greeks. Odysseus, on reaching his home, meets his faithful shepherds, discloses his identity to them, and shows them, as a certain proof, the cicatrix of a wound that he had on one occasion received when out hunting:

"But come, another token most manifest will I show,
That the truth in your souls may be strengthened, and my very self ye may know.
Lo the scar of the hurt, which the wood-boar with his white tooth drave on a tide,
When with Autolycus' children I sought Parnassus' side!"*

So saying, the rags about him from the mighty weal he drew,
And they twain looked upon it, and all the tale they knew;
And they wept, and o'er wise Odysseus they cast their hands, they twain,
And kissed his head and his shoulders, and loved him and were fain.*

* William Morris' Translation.

In the same hearty manner the shepherd Eumæus received Odysseus' son on the latter's return from his journey, and lucky escape from the treacherous plot of the suitors:

And on the head he kissed him, and both his eyes so fair,
And both his hands, moreover, and he shed a mighty tear;
And e'en as a loving father makes much of his dear son,
Who has come from an alien country where the tenth long year is done,
His only son and darling for whom he hath travailed sore,
E'en so the goodly swineherd now kisseth him o'er and o'er
Telemachus the godlike, as one escaped from death.*

He gets the same reception from his old nurse and his mother:

But the nurse, e'en Euryclea, beheld him first of all
As the fleecy fells she was spreading o'er the painted seats of the hall,
And, weeping, went straight toward him; and the other maids thereto
Of Odysseus hardy-hearted, all round about him drew,
And they kissed him and caressed him, his shoulders and his head.*

. . . . . .

* William Morris' Translation.

Then Penelope the wise-heart from her chamber forth she sped,
Like to golden Aphrodite or Artemis the fair,
And she cast her arms amidst weeping round her son beloved and dear;
And therewithal she kissed him, his head and his lovely eyes.*

We have another famous scene of recognition, but of far later date, in the old French epic of Girart de Roussillon. Girart, after many years' absence, returns in poverty and sickness to France. He presents himself to the queen, who recognises him by means of a ring, and, "although it was Good Friday, she fell on Girart's neck and kissed him seven times."

It would perhaps be superfluous to quote more instances of the kisses of affection. We meet with it in all ages in grave and solemn moments, not only among those who love each other, but also as an expression of profound gratitude. When the Apostle Paul took leave of the elders of the congregation at Ephesus, "they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him" (Acts xx. 37).

When De Malesherbes had solicited for himself the perilous honour of undertaking

* William Morris' Translation.

the defence of Louis XVI., that monarch got up and, in order to show his gratitude, kissed him publicly.

Even among persons who are utter strangers to each other, kisses such as these may be exchanged. The profoundest sympathy with, the warmest interest in, another's weal or woe can be instantly created.

The story of Ingeborg Vinding and Poul Vendelbo Løvenørn is well known. H. P. Giessing relates it, just as he heard it, in the following form: Poul Vendelbo, the poor student, went one day on the ramparts round Copenhagen, and walked with two rich noblemen who, like himself, had matriculated at the university from Horsen's School. They happened to notice a singularly beautiful woman sitting at the window of one of the adjacent houses. One of the noblemen then said half-mockingly to Vendelbo, "Now, if you could get a kiss from that lady, Poul, we would defray the expenses of that tour abroad which you are so anxious to make." Vendelbo took him at his word, went up to the beautiful lady, and told her how his whole future possibly depended on her. She then drew him towards the window, and, in

the view of the nobleman, gave him the kiss he craved. He went abroad, and, returning at last as Adjutant-General Løvenørn, paid the fair lady a visit. She was none other than Ingeborg Vinding.

This is the anecdote, equally characteristic of both parties, that Carl Ploug has so prettily treated in his poem *Et Kys* (A Kiss).

The professor's daughter is sitting alone in the sitting-room, and "humming a song she has learnt by heart." Then some one knocks at the door, and in steps young Poul with his audacious request; first she will refuse him indignantly:

Ere yet a word she uttered
  She raised her eyes again.
Their angry flash should wither
  That overbold young swain.

But, ah, he stood so quiet,
  With such a modest grace,
With features stamped with honour,
  And such a noble face.

Once more the maiden's glances
  Looked down, their anger dead,
And with a blush delicious
  She spoke him fair instead,

"'Twas wrong indeed, I take it,
That you should boldly dare
Address a well-born maiden
By stealth with such a prayer.

"But if your looks belie not,
You good and noble are,
And so your path to fortune
I should be loth to mar."

Then by the hand she leads him
To where the window is,
She blushes and she trembles;
They interchange a kiss.

W. F. H.

It would be superfluous to say more about this poem, which I suppose is the most popular of Ploug's essays in epic narrative. How far the anecdote is historical is uncertain; but with the knowledge we have of his and her character it cannot, in any case, be regarded as improbable. Ploug may thus be right when he says:

A kiss has with its gentle flame
Once kindled honour's beacon high;
A kiss has given Denmark's fame
A hero's name that shall not die.

W. F. H.

In early French literature there is a story somewhat akin to this; it occurs in the old

miracle play of "*La Marquise de la Gaudine.*" In her husband's absence she has been falsely accused of adultery and thrown into prison. Nobody dares to undertake her defence when, suddenly, a knight named Anthenor steps up and offers, with sword in hand, to undertake the defence of her innocence, having a long time back owed her a deep debt of gratitude for having, on one occasion, saved his life by a kiss. He himself tells us naïvely and ingenuously how it happened: "Once upon a time I found myself, as you are aware, in peril of death; the king suspected me and believed I aspired to his wife's favour. Ah, this was not the case at all, you know. But one day he said he would believe me if I divulged to him who my sweetheart was. I did not know what to do, and to save my life I said that the *marquise* was my *amie.* He was not, however, content with this, but, as a proof, demanded that I should take her by the waist in his presence and ask her for a kiss. She gave it me and thus saved me from the snare the king had laid. I shall never be able to repay her for what she has done for me."

The kiss of affection is also bestowed on

some person or thing that excites detestation and abhorrence.

The legends of St Martin tell us how, on coming one day to Lutetia, followed by a great crowd of people, he caught sight of a leper at the gate of the city, who was so terrible an object to look at that everybody turned away from him with loathing. To give those who followed him a lesson in Christian charity, he went up to the poor sick man, kissed and blessed him, and on the following morning the latter was cured as by a miracle.

It is just through overcoming oneself in respect to that which is intrinsically foul and repugnant that this kiss gets its high significance and dignity. St Francis of Assisi had bidden farewell to an existence of luxury, bestowed his wealth on the necessitous, and lived the life of a beggar, but his conversion was still incomplete; he did not become ripe for his great work of charity until he had overcome his repugnance to the leprous. One day, when out riding, he met one of these wretched sufferers, whose whole body was like a great open wound, and he reined his horse aside in disgust; but

shame overtook him at once, he leapt off his horse, spoke kindly to the sick man, gave him what money he had, and kissed both his hands. Such is the account given by the historical chronicles, but the legend goes on to say that the leper immediately afterwards vanished: it was Christ Himself who wished, in this wise, to bestow His benediction on the noble and beautiful life's work of the saint.

The kiss of affection also plays an important part in folk-poetry; that alone has power to cast off spells, that alone breaks all the bonds of witchcraft and sorcery, and is able to restore man to his original shape.

In the Scotch ballad of Kempion we are told how the Earl of Estmereland's daughter is persecuted by her wicked stepmother, who at last by magic arts changes her into a snake:

Cum heir, cum heir, ye freely feed
And lay your head low on my knee;
The heaviest weird I will you read,
That ever was read to gay ladye.

O meikle dolour sall ye dree,
And aye the salt seas o'er ye'se swim;
And far mair dolour sall ye dree,
On Estmere crags, when ye them climb.

"I weired ye to a fiery beast,
And relieved sall ye never be,
Till Kempion, the king's son,
Cum to the crag, and thrice kiss thee."

O meikle dolour did she dree,
And aye the salt seas o'er she swam;
And far mair dolour did she dree
On Estmere crags, when she them clamb.

And aye she cried for Kempion,
Gin he would but come to her hand.

At last Kempion hears her voice, and straightway rows towards the foot of the mountain:

Out of my stythe I winna rise,
. . . . . .
Till Kempion, the king's son,
Cum to the crag, and thrice kiss me;

implores the snake; but Kempion dares not. The snake coils in and out, and the mountain is aflame; at last Kempion summons all his courage:

He's louted him o'er the lofty crag,
And he has given her kisses three;
Awa she gaed, and again she cam,
The loveliest ladye e'er could be!

The same subject is found in the ballads of other countries. In the Danish *Jomfruen i ormeham* the young maiden has been changed into a little snake, compelled to

wriggle in the grass. However, the knight Jennus comes:

It was the brave knight Jennus;
  Forth to the greenwood he hies.
As o'er the grass he rideth,
  A little snake he espies.

It was the brave knight Jennus;
  Over his saddle he lay.
He kissed the little serpent;
  A maiden it turned straightway.

It was the brave knight Jennus;
  Troth to the maid he did plight.
He bade them keep his wedding
  For both with much delight.

W. F. H.

In another ballad the maiden has been turned by her stepmother into a lime-tree, and makes her moan:

She changed me into a lime-tree, and
She bade me e'en in the greenwood stand.

She bade me stand and hope for no bote,
Until a king's son should kiss my root.

Here have I tarried for years full five,
Nor kissed me has any king's son alive.

Here have I tarried for years now ten,
Nor has a king's son kissed me since then.

W. F. H.

But at last the hour of her freedom arrives;

the king's daughter has heard the lime-tree's lamentation, and she sends a message to her brother, who comes at once:

He hoisted his silken sail of red,
And o'er the salt sea on he sped.

The knight on his back a red cloak threw,
And fared to the lime-tree without ado.

He kissed himself the lime-tree's feet,
Which straight became a maiden sweet.

W. F. H.

Corresponding poetical stories of the redeeming power of the kiss are to be found in the literature of many countries, especially, for example, in the Old French Arthurian romances (*Lancelot, Guiglain, Tirant le blanc*) in which the princess is changed by evil arts into a dreadful dragon, and can only resume her human shape in the case of a knight being brave enough to kiss her. This kiss is called *le fier baiser.* From French the subject migrated to Italian literature, in which it was taken up and made use of first in *Carduino,* later on in Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato.* The hero, after many perilous adventures, reaches an enchanted castle where a young and beautiful maiden is sitting

by a tomb. She tells him she can be released if he will venture to lift the stone from the tomb and kiss what then appears. Without giving it a second thought, the knight opens the tomb, and a horrible serpent with hissing tongue and venomous breath darts forth. Trembling with fear, he fulfils his promise, and that very instant the monster is transformed into a lovely fairy who overwhelms her benefactor with recompenses. This *motif* formed the subject of a drama in the last century by Gozzi in *La donna serpente: fiaba teatrale tragicomica.*

Finally many folk-stories on this subject may be quoted. In the tale of "Beauty and the Beast," the transformed prince begged the young maiden he had carried off on his back for a kiss. "No," answered she, "how could I kiss you who are so ugly and have seven horns on your forehead?" Then the beast went its way, and she saw it no more till one day she found it lying dead under a bush in the garden, whereupon she wept as she had never wept before, and cast herself down on the beast and kissed it. Then it returned to life, and the ugly beast became the handsomest prince her eyes could see.

He then told her that he had been bewitched by a wicked fairy, and could not be delivered unless a maid fell in love with him and kissed him, despite his ugliness.

In this case the kiss redeems from death, and likewise death itself is nothing more than a great kiss of affection. When a human being quits this earthly life it is God who takes His child in His arms, kisses it, and carries it away from earth to brighter and more blissful spheres.

This highly poetical and beautiful conception of death has found expression in Italian, where, instead of the word "die," one can say, "fall asleep in the Lord's kiss" (*addormentarsi nel bacio del Signore*). And this has got flesh and blood in an old legend of the saints, where it is told of St Monica that, as she lay dying on her couch, a little child whom nobody knew came and kissed her on her breast, and straightway, as if the child had called her, she bowed her head and breathed forth her last sigh.

The kiss of affection follows man even after death; with a kiss one takes leave of the lifeless body.

In Genesis we read that when Jacob was

dead, "Joseph fell upon his father's face and wept upon him and kissed him"; and it is told of Abu Bekr, Mahomet's first disciple, father-in-law, and successor, that, when the prophet was dead, he went into the latter's tent, uncovered his face, and kissed him.

In the curious poem of *Ebbe Tygesøns dödsridt*, when the knight's horse carries his corpse back to his betrothed, it is said:

> She lifted up his gory head,
> And raised it to her lips to kiss;
> She swooned away, and fell back dead,
> In very sooth, as she did this.
>
> W. F. H.

In ancient times lovers always demanded of each other this act of love. "When the alabaster box, filled with Syrian perfume, has been poured out over my dead body, then do thou, O Cynthia, press thy last kisses on my cold lips," sings Propertius in one of his elegies:

> Osculaque in gelidis pones suprema labellis,
> Cum dabitur Syrio munere plenus onyx.
>
> *Propertius* iii. 4, 29, 30.

And the same wish is expressed by Tibullus (I., i. 61, 62):

> Flebis et arsuro positum me, Delia, lecto,
> Tristibus et lacrymis oscula mixta dabis.

"You'll weep for me, dear Delia, ere flames have caught my bier,
And mingle with your kisses full many a bitter tear."
W. F. H.

The death-kiss is something so natural that it is superfluous to point out its existence amongst different nations. It was not only a mark of love, but it was also an article of belief that the soul might be detained for a brief while by such a kiss. Ovid, in his *Tristia*, laments over his joyless existence in Tomis, whither Augustus had banished him, and is in despair because, when the hour of death approaches, he will not have his beloved wife by his side to detain his fleeting spirit by her kisses mingled with tears.

The kiss is the last tender proof of love bestowed on one we have loved, and was believed, in ancient times, to follow mankind to the nether world. Even in our own days, popular belief in many places demands that the nearest relative shall kiss the corpse's forehead ere the coffin lid is screwed down; in certain parts, indeed, it is incumbent on every one who sees a dead body to kiss it, otherwise he will get no peace for the dead.

IV

THE KISS OF PEACE

Salute invicem in osculo sancto.

Pauli Epist. ad Romanos, xvi. 16.

Salute one another with an holy kiss.

CHAPTER IV

THE KISS OF PEACE

THE kiss, as expressive of deep, spiritual love, also came to figure in the primitive Christian Church.

Christ has said: "Peace be with you, my peace I give you," and the members of Christ's Church gave each other peace symbolically through a kiss. St Paul repeatedly speaks of the "holy kiss" (φίλημα ἅγιον), and, in his Epistle to the Romans, writes: "Salute one another with an holy kiss"; and he reiterates this exhortation in both his Epistles to the Corinthians (1, xvi. 20, and 2, xiii. 12), and his first Epistle to the Thessalonians (v. 26), wherein he says: "Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss."

The holy kiss has gradually found admission into the ritual of the Church, and was imparted on occasions of particular solemnity, such as baptism, marriage, confession, ordina-

tion, obsequies, etc., etc. At a wedding the ceremony was as follows: On the conclusion of High Mass and after the *Agnus Dei* had been chanted, the bridegroom went up to the altar and received the kiss of peace from the priest. After this he returned to his wife, and gave her the priest's kiss of peace at the foot of the crucifix. Reminiscences of this rite still survive in several churches in England.

The holy kiss played an important part even at the Mass; in the Greek Church it was imparted before, in the Roman Catholic Church after, the consecration of the elements. The priest kissed the penitent, and through this kiss gave him peace; this was the true kiss of peace (*osculum pacis*). We have a peculiar memorial of this in Old Irish, where the word *pōc*, which is derived from the Latin *pax*, means "kiss," — not "peace." This change of meaning must, I suppose, be attributed partly to a misunderstanding of the priest's words when he kissed the penitent: *Pacem do tibi* (Peace I give unto thee), *i.e.*, people understood the kiss as the chief thing, and thought *pacem* referred to that. The same peculiarity is again to be

met with in mediæval Spanish, where *paz* has also the meaning of "kiss." In an ancient romance which relates how Fernando dubbed the Cid a knight, it says at the end, "He buckled a sword on his waist, and gave him 'peace' (*i.e.*, a kiss) on the mouth":

El rey le ciñó la espada
Paz en la boca le ha dado.

The holy kiss occurs even in the early Christian love-feasts, the so-called *ἀγαπαί*, and indeed was often exchanged in the church itself by all the faithful without regard to sex, which gave the heathen cause for scandal, and its use was restricted so that only men kissed men, and women, women.

The kiss of peace was in vogue in France down to the thirteenth century. We find it in the story about a very unpleasant incident to which Queen Margaret, the wife of St Louis, was exposed. One day when she was in church and the kiss of peace was to be imparted, she saw close beside her a woman in splendid apparel, and taking the latter to be a lady of rank, she gave her the kiss of peace. It turned out, however, that the queen had made a mistake; she had kissed

one of the common courtesans who always swarmed about the Court. She then complained to the king, the consequence of which was that certain ordinances were drawn up with respect to the dress of women of that class, in order to render all confusion with respectable women henceforward impossible.

The kiss of peace in the churches seems to have been abolished in the latter part of the Middle Ages, at different times in different countries.

In the middle of the thirteenth century a special instrument for conveying the kiss was introduced into England—the so-called *osculatorium* or *tabella pacis*, which was composed of a metal disc with a holy picture, and was passed round the church to be kissed.

From the English Church the osculatory was gradually introduced into other churches, but nowhere does it appear to have contrived to rejoice in any particularly long stay. In various ways it gave occasion to scandal.

It was provocative of contention and strife in the church itself, when people of position quarrelled violently as to whom the honour belonged of kissing it first. Contentions as

to precedence at church are, as we see, of long standing.

It seems also to have served as a sort of profane intermediary between lovers. When a young and beautiful girl kissed it she had close beside her a fine young fellow who waited impatiently to take it directly from her hand and lips. We read in one of Marot's poems:

> I told the maid that she was fair;
> I've kissed the Pax just after her.
>
> W. F. H.

Through the use of the osculatory, the well-known custom of gallants such as, from the Greek romances and Ovid, existed in ancient times, was revived—Huet calls it *elegans urbanitatis genus* — when the lover drank out of the goblet from the very place which the beloved one's lips had touched. Formerly a sort of *pax* was employed even in Danish churches. The Catholic priests showed the people "a picture in a book" (of course the picture of some saint), and this picture was kissed by the congregation; for which purpose a small fee termed "kiss-money" or "book-money" was handed to the parish clerk.

Even after the use of the *pax* had been abolished by the Reformation, the "book-money," as a customary due to the clerk, was retained. But at a congress at Roskilde in 1565, parish clerks were forbidden to demand this fee.

The holy kiss is still imparted in the Greek Church on Easter Sunday; all the faithful greet each other in church with kisses, and the words, "Christ is risen," the reply to which being, "Verily, He hath risen." In the Roman Catholic liturgy this usage has been confined to certain masses, and the holy kiss is only exchanged among the clergy, not among the members of the congregation. First, the bishop and archdeacon kiss the altar, then the archdeacon kneels down and the bishop gives him the kiss of peace with the words: *Pax tibi, frater, et ecclesiæ sanctæ Dei* (Peace be with thee, brother, and with God's Holy Church). The archdeacon answers: *Et cum spiritu tuo* (And with thy spirit), after which he gets up, genuflects towards the altar, and carries the kiss of peace to the chief canon, whom he kisses on the left cheek with the words *pax tibi*, and thus it is sent round to

all the officiating clergy with many different ceremonies.

The holy kiss soon spread beyond the walls of the church, and came into usage even in secular festivities. Thus, during the Middle Ages, it was the custom to seal the reconciliation and pacification of enemies by a kiss. The old German poets mention such a kiss under the name of "Vredekuss," and so widespread was the custom of the kiss of reconciliation, that the verb *at sone*, or *udsone*, got the meaning of "to kiss." *Sônen* has still this meaning in Frisian.

In an old French miracle-play St Bernard of Clairvaux says to Count William and the Bishop of Poitiers, who had had a long-standing feud with each other, and between whom he had managed to make peace: "In order to show that your friendship is true and sincere, you must kiss each other." Count William then goes up to the bishop, saying: "My lord, I crave your forgiveness for the wrong I have inflicted on you; I have erred greatly towards you. Kiss me now to seal our peace, and I will kiss you with loyal heart."

Even knights gave each other the kiss of

peace before proceeding to the combat, and forgave one another all real or imaginary wrongs.

In *Covenant Vivien*, Vivien exchanges the kiss of peace with Girart and six other illustrious warriors before the great fight with King Desramé begins.

Manzoni has made use of the kiss of peace in the pathetic scene in *I promessi Sposi* (The Betrothed), when Fra Cristoforo obtains forgiveness from the nobleman whose son he has slain. The nobleman receives the monk in his palace. Surrounded by all his relations, he stands in the middle of his great hall, with left hand on his sword-hilt, whilst with his right he holds a flap of his cloak pressed against his chest. Cold and stern, he gazes contemptuously and with suppressed wrath at the novice as he enters, but the latter exhibits such touching remorse and noble humility that the nobleman, there and then, abandons his stiffness. He raises up the kneeling brother himself, grants him his forgiveness, and, finally, "carried away by the emotion that prevailed, he threw his arms round the latter's neck, and gave and received the kiss of peace."

After the Middle Ages the kiss of peace

disappears altogether as the official token of reconciliation; solitary instances, indeed, can certainly be quoted from Catherine of Medici's Court, but they are rather to be regarded as studied efforts to re-introduce an old and abandoned usage. After the murder of Francis de Guise in 1563, his widow and brother meet Admiral de Coligny; the latter swore that he had not the least suspicion of the assassin's plot, whereupon they kiss each other, and mutually promise to forget all enmities, and henceforward to live in peace and harmony. This kiss of peace was as powerless to revive the old custom as Lamourette's memorable attempt at the time of the Revolution. On the 7th July 1792, when the quarrel amongst the members of the Legislative Assembly had reached a terrible height, at the time when the Austrian and Prussian armies were marching on Paris, Lamourette got up and made a fervent patriotic speech, in which, in the most moving terms, he exhorted all the members of the Assembly to sink their differences. He finished by saying: "Let us forget all dissension and swear everlasting fraternity"—*et jurons-nous fraternité éternelle*, and the deputies at once

fell into each other's arms, and in a universal kiss of reconciliation every one forgave each other's wrongs. But this unity did not last long. The quarrels began again the following day, and two years afterwards Lamourette himself died by the guillotine; but the expression, a kiss of Lamourette—*un baiser de Lamourette* — still survives in the French language as a half ironical term for a short-lived reconciliation.

V

THE KISS OF RESPECT

Les rois des nations, devant toi prosternés,
De tes pieds baisent la poussière.

RACINE—*Athalie.*

The kings of the Gentiles, prostrate before thee, kiss the dust of thy feet.

CHAPTER V

THE KISS OF RESPECT

MARGARET OF SCOTLAND, who was betrothed to Charles the Seventh's son, the Dauphin Louis (afterwards Louis XI.), one day walked through a hall where Alain Chartier was sitting asleep in a chair. On perceiving the sleeping poet, she went up to him and kissed him on the lips. Many of her suite were astonished at this, "for nature had, so far as Chartier was concerned, suffered a beautiful and rich mind to take up its abode in an ugly body." The princess replied that they were not to marvel at what she had done, for it was not the man she had kissed, but the mouth from which so many golden words had proceeded. Margaret's kiss was therefore an expression of the respect she had for the poet, and the admiration and regard inspired by his poetical genius. A little further back in the Middle Ages we meet with another

striking instance of a kiss as expressive of veneration; but this kiss is of a more humble nature. We are told that, when the Emperor Otto I. had taken leave of his pious mother in the church attached to a monastery, the latter followed him with her eyes as long as she could, and then returned to the church and kissed the place whereon his feet had stood.

The kiss of veneration is of ancient origin; from the remotest times we find it applied to all that is holy, noble, and worshipful—to the gods, their statues, temples, and altars, as well as to kings and emperors; out of reverence, people even kissed the ground, and both sun and moon were greeted with kisses.

In the first book of Kings God says to Elijah: "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (xix. 18).

In the thirty-first chapter of Job, Job extols his own piety: "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand" (26, 27). Here, undoubtedly, allusion is made to the kissing of

hands whereby the heathen were wont to salute the heavenly bodies.

When the prophet Hosea laments over the idolatry of the children of Israel, he says that they make molten images of calves and kiss them.

Even in remote classical times a similar homage was paid to the gods; people kissed the hands, knees, and feet, even the mouths, of their idols. Cicero informs us, in one of his speeches against Verres, that the lips and beard of the famous statue of Hercules at Agrigentum were worn away by the kisses of devotees.

Bayle tells us, in reference to this passage, that a physician was asked one day why it was that a bronze face could, in this manner, be worn away through being kissed, whereas, on the other hand, kisses did not leave the slightest trace on the countenance of the most fashionable courtesan. His answer was that the reason, he supposed, was that statues were kissed for centuries, but that the woman in question was only kissed for a very few years, viz., so long as her beauty lasted. This explanation was, however, considered unsatisfactory, and the physician's attention was

called to the fact that soft flesh must be far sooner worn away than hard bronze; besides, lover's kisses being considerably more violent than those of mere respect. The physician then urged another reason, viz., that which kisses wear away from bronze lips is lost for ever, but that which is worn away from living lips is immediately replaced by renewal of tissue in the body.

The kiss of veneration came to play a very important part in Christian society. St Luke the Evangelist tells us that when Christ sat at meat in the Pharisee's house there came a woman who had been a great sinner, bringing with her a vase of ointment. "And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment" (vii. 38). When the Pharisee wondered at His having allowed such a woman to touch Him, He rebuked him by the parable of the two debtors, and added, "Thou gavest me no kiss, but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."

Again in the Psalms, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

C. H. Spurgeon used these lines as the text of a sermon he preached in the "Music Hall," London, on the 3rd of July 1859, in which he did his utmost to make his congregation understand what is meant by saying we are to "kiss Christ." "The kiss," says he, "is a mark of worship; to kiss Christ is at the same time to recognise Him as God, and to pay Him divine worship. The kiss is a mark of homage and subjection; we ought likewise to acknowledge Christ as our King, and promise to follow blindly His behests. The kiss is a sign of reconciliation; we ought to show that we are reconciled with God. Lastly, the kiss is the greatest of all tokens of love; to kiss Christ is therefore only a figurative way of expressing to love Him with deep and fervent love."*

As the woman that was a sinner showed her reverence for Christ by kissing His feet, so all saintly men and women henceforward were honoured in a like manner. They were saluted humbly by kisses on their hands or

* Retranslated from the Danish of the Text.

feet, and the legend goes that he who kissed the hand of St Dominic never afterwards committed sin. In many countries, more especially in Southern Italy, kissing the hands of the priest is still customary.

The kiss reverential was extended to everything that was holy, or had been consecrated to sacred purposes.

People kissed the Cross with the image of the Crucified, and such kissing of the Cross is always regarded as a particularly holy act. In many countries it is required, on taking an oath, as the highest asseveration that the witness is speaking the truth, and as a last act of charity, the image of the Redeemer is handed to the dying or death-condemned to be kissed. Kissing the Cross brings blessing and happiness. In the south of France people used formerly, in moments of difficulty or danger, when no Cross was at hand, to kiss their thumbs laid in the form of a cross. When devout Catholics salute the Pope by humbly kissing his slipper, they are fond of explaining away this greeting. They say that it is not to be taken as any personal homage paid to the Pope; the kiss having nothing to do with his slipper, but the cross

which is embroidered on it. Therefore Christ it is to whom they are prostrating themselves. This idea, however, is undoubtedly a later fancy; the kiss on the slipper ought, I take it, more correctly to be considered as humble homage to the Pope as primate of the Church, and such, therefore, must be the view the Pope himself holds, since he has, times without number, exempted cardinals and other persons of high rank from kissing his slipper. The number of kings and ambassadors who, in the course of time, have refused to submit to this ceremony, have undoubtedly regarded it as a humiliation; and popular conception bears this out thoroughly. To "kiss the slipper" has become in many languages synonymous with a low and unworthy cringing. In the old German war-song against Charles V., we find:

> Ah, think the whole imperial race
> Through Popery fell in sore disgrace
> And German might was riven.
> Will you for all their knavery
> To slipper-kiss be given?
>
> W. F. H.

People kiss the image of Our Lady. The legend tells us that John of Antioch even dared to kiss Mary's mouth, and this kiss

gave him wisdom and great eloquence, and spread a golden glory round his mouth, hence his surname Chrysostom (golden mouth).*

People kiss the pictures and statues of saints. Down in St Peter's church in Rome there is a remarkable old bronze figure of St Peter, which is said to date from the fifth century, and the faithful have, in all ages, shown the highest veneration to this image, in consequence of which a great part of the right foot has been gradually kissed away.

Even nowadays the kiss bestowed on the pictures of the saints plays an enormous part in the Roman Catholic, but more particularly in the Greek Church. Not only their pictures, but even their relics are kissed; they make both soul and body whole. St Balbina obtained forgiveness for her sins by kissing St Peter's chains, and Pascal's niece was cured of a disease in her eyes by kissing one of the thorns of Christ's Crown. This cure, the historical authenticity of which is, however, somewhat doubtful, made a great

* We have here a striking example of how legends arise. John, the Father of the Church, got the epithet "golden-mouth" on account of his great eloquence; but the people sought another more concrete explanation, if I may use the term, of that name, the metaphorical use of which they failed to comprehend.

sensation, and provoked a violent controversy between the Jansenists and Jesuits.

Besides, there are legends innumerable of sick people regaining their health by kissing relics; innumerable, too, are the satires which arose by reason of abuses in respect to cures which were achieved with relics genuine and false. One of the best known is perhaps the mediæval story of *The Monk's Breeches.*

A Franciscan friar was a very intimate friend of a merchant in Orleans and his wife —especially of the latter. One evening the merchant returned home unexpectedly from a journey, and the friar, who had tried to the best of his ability to entertain the wife in the husband's absence, for certain circumstances which were capable of being misunderstood, thought it wisest to disappear as quick as possible; but in his haste he forgot his breeches. The merchant, however, did not notice anything; the night was dark, and next morning he even put on the friar's breeches instead of his own. On coming back home from his office in the afternoon —he had long discovered his mistake—he demanded, with violent and hasty words, an explanation from his wife; but the latter,

who had discovered at once in the morning what had happened, hurriedly sent a messenger to the friar to consult with him as to what was to be done. According to their arrangement she answered her husband very calmly:

"My dear friend, don't fly into a passion; you ought to thank me instead of quarrelling with me. You know we have no children, and we have tried everything—but all in vain. Now I heard that St Francis' breeches could work miracles, even of that sort, and that is why I had them fetched for you. Take them off now, for I expect some one from the monastery will be coming for them directly." The poor man in his delight quickly got out of his breeches, and directly he had done so there came a knocking at the door. It was the friar, followed by a choir boy carrying holy-water and a censer. He had come to fetch the precious relic of the monastery, and inquisitive neighbours flocked in from all quarters. He wrapped the breeches reverently up in a white hand-cloth, and sprinkled them with holy-water while the boy incensed them, after which he lifted up the sacred bundle. Meanwhile all fell

on their knees, and after pronouncing a panegyric on St Francis, he himself carried round the breeches so that the people who had assembled might kiss them. This they did with deep piety and emotion, more especially the honest and grateful merchant.

This little story afforded much merriment in the Middle Ages. People found much enjoyment in its burlesque humour, and never got tired of hearing it. It occurs as a *fabliau*, a *farce*, and a story, and belongs to the *facetiæ* with which the Pope's Secretary, Poggio, amused his friends in *Il Bugiale* (The Lie Manufactory).

Even as regards the great ones of this world the kiss used to serve in various ways as a mark of humility and reverence. Its use in ancient times was remarkably widespread; people threw themselves down on the ground before their rulers, kissed their footprints, literally "licked the dust," as it is termed. In the Psalms, Solomon sings of the promised King: "They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust"; and the prophet Isaiah says: "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers:

they shall bow down to thee with their face before the earth and lick up the dust of thy feet" (xlix. 23).

They kissed not only the ground under the powerful, but also their feet, knees, hands, or the hem of their garments.

Certain Roman Emperors adopted these oriental usages. Thus Caligula ordered people to kiss his hands and feet, and even in the Middle Ages the custom of kissing the feet of kings was in vogue.

Nearly everywhere, wheresoever an inferior meets a superior, we observe the kiss of respect. The Roman slaves kissed the hands of their masters; pupils and soldiers those of their teachers and captains respectively.

During the Middle Ages the vassal paid homage to his feudal lord by a kiss on the hand or foot, hence the expression *devoir la bouche et les mains.* It is well-known what befell Charles the Simple when Rollo, the Norman chieftain, had to pay him feudal homage. The proud Viking would not bow down to the king, but laid hold of the latter's feet and lifted them up to his mouth, whereat the king, amidst the laughter of the spectators, tumbled down. Thus the scene is depicted

briefly and graphically in the *Roman de Rou*:—

> Quant baisier dut le pie, baisier ne le deigna,
> La main tendi aual, le pie al rei leua,
> A sa bouche le traist e le rei enuersa;
> Asez s'en ristrent tuit, e li reis se dreça.*

They also kissed their liege lords on the thigh, and this method of kissing can be traced down to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; but the kiss on the hand was undoubtedly most frequently in use; and it was the general custom for the vassal at the same time to hand his lord a present, which is the reason why the word *baise-main* (hand-kiss) gradually got this meaning.

If the lord was absent when the vassal waited on him, the latter had to kiss the door, the lock or bolt, which was regarded as a valid substitution for kissing the hand. From this arose the expressions, *baiser l'huis*, (the door), *baiser le verrouil*, (the bolt), which were used partly as an expression of slavish

* And when he had to kiss Charles' foot—such kissing Rollo spurned—
He thrust his hand forth downward, and to the monarch turned.
He raised the king's foot to his lips, and overturned the king,
Who quickly rose upon his feet whilst mirth around did ring.
W. F. H.

subserviency, and partly in an ironical sense of lovers who have been rejected by their mistresses, and thus constrained to

> Kiss the door, and kiss its chains
> For ladies' sake who are within. W. F. H.

As expressive not only of respect, but also of repentance, children in former days were made to kiss the rod by which they had been chastised. Geiler von Keiserberg writes in the sixteenth century: "When children are thrashed they kiss the rods and say:

> Liebe ruot, trute ruot
> werestu, ich tet niemer guot.*

"They kiss the rods and jump over them, yea they leap over them." We have a memorial of this custom in the phrase, "kissing the rod."

There is still one great power that we have not mentioned, and one who demands, too, homage by kisses, *i.e.*, the devil; but, in order that the humility shown to him may be as great as possible, he must be kissed on his behind, *i.e.*, on the place where the back ceases to be called the back. Old pictures of the Sabbath on

* Which may be freely translated:

> Dear, kind rod that's trusty stood,
> Without thee ne'er should I do good.

Blocksberg exhibit to us his Satanic majesty, in the guise of a goat or cat, sitting on a high seat, while his worshippers reverently approach and kiss him under his tail. In several confessions of witches we find this kiss still more closely described: "The devil has a big tail, and under it a sort of face, but with this face he never speaks, as the only use he makes of it is to let his most devoted followers kiss the same; for kissing this face is regarded as an especially great honour." This somewhat awkward kiss occurs, moreover, in several sagas. In *Harehyrden* the Jeppe gives up his magic flute to the king on condition that the latter kisses his ass under its tail. It can also be shown in actual life, and we have some anecdotes from the Middle Ages which seem to prove that the *podex*-kiss was used as a derisory punishment. There is also a story told of a merry knight, once upon a time, compelling a party of monks to pay their respects to their abbot in the aforesaid less dignified way.

Kisses *in ano* seem also to have been required of neophytes on their reception into certain secret societies.

The part this kiss plays in insulting speech

ought to be sufficiently well known. The Romans ere now spoke about *lingere culum* or *lambere nates;* the Germans more decently say: *Küss mich da ich sitz'* (Kiss me where I sit), or *Er kan mich küssen da wo ich keine Nase habe* (He can kiss me where I have no nose). Frenchmen even use the last mentioned paraphrastic expression. It is told in an old poem about Theodore de Beza, whose youth was, as you are aware, a very dissipated one, that, on one occasion, he said of a lady that he would like to kiss her, but he did not know how he could manage to do so as her nose was far too long. When the lady learnt this she wittily replied:

. . . Pour si peu ne tenez,
Car si cela seulement vous en garde !
J'ai bien pour vous un visage sans nez.*

We have no knowledge if this offer tempted the rigid Calvinist that was to be; but the lady was undoubtedly young, and even if he had not found her face so remarkably beautiful, yet it would have been very different had the invitation come from an old

* . . . Well, if you chose
With less to be content, don't stick at this.
I have for you a face without a nose.

W. F. H.

crone, as the well-known saying, "*baiser le cul de la vieille*," implies the deepest ignominy that can befall a man, at any rate a gambler —viz., to lose without scoring a point.

There is a Jutland variant of the story about Theodore de Beza: "I was driving one day with Niels Hundepenge, and we saw at a distance a woman walking on in front. Says Niels, 'Peter, there goes a pretty girl; just see what a figure, and how she steps out.' When we got up to her we found she was pock-marked and hideous. Then says Niels, 'Now, my girl, if you were only as good-looking in front as you are behind, I should want to kiss you.' 'Well, if you think so,' replied she, 'you can kiss me, you know, where you fancy I am best looking.'"

Allow me, in connection with this, to call your attention to a peculiarity about the Latin word *osculum*. The first syllable *os* of course signifies "mouth," the two last, on the other hand, mean the correlative part on the reverse side of the body. This circumstance has been made use of in a Latin anecdote about a married lady. An importunate suitor asked her for a kiss,

whereupon she replied that this could not be granted, inasmuch as the first of what he asked absolutely belonged to her husband, but, as she did not wish to be too hard on him, he was welcome to have the last:

> Syllaba prima meo debetur tota marito,
> Sume tibi reliquas, non ero dura, duas.*

In modern times the ceremonious kiss of respect has gone clean out of fashion in the most civilised countries; it is only retained in the Church, but in all other domains it is practically unknown—so unknown, indeed, that in many cases the practice would be offensive or ridiculous.

Kissing the earth is another instance of such kisses that I shall quote. It plays a part in the old stories about Junius Brutus. Together with King Tarquin's sons he journeyed to Delphi to consult the oracle. The answer they received was that the supreme power would fall to the lot of him who first kissed his mother. Brutus then made a pretence of stumbling, and as he fell he kissed the earth, our common mother. A

* My first is for my husband, not for you;
But you're right welcome to the other two.
W. F. H.

few years after this, the royal family were expelled from Rome, and Brutus and Lucius Turquinius were elected consuls.

People also kissed the earth for joy on returning to their native land after a lengthened absence. When Agamemnon returned from the Trojan War:

Stepped he forth inwardly glad to the shore of his well-loved country,
Kissing and kissing again his mother earth while the scalding
Tears down his cheeks were coursing, though his heart was brimming with blitheness.

Even nowadays people feel glad at seeing their native country again after long absence, but they have another way of expressing their joy, and, without exaggeration, it would be safe to assert that if any one returning from a journey wished to emulate Agamemnon, that person would undoubtedly be put down as mad.

We find in Holberg ("Ulysses of Ithaca," or "A German Comedy") a parody of the old usage, where Ulysses says: "Let us fall down, after the old hero's fashion, and kiss our mother earth." They fall down and kiss the ground, but Chilian gets up hurriedly

and says: "The deuce! I don't really understand the use of these ceremonies. Eugh, somebody has been here before—that I can plainly perceive."

The old custom now only survives in certain sayings. Frenchmen use the expression *baiser la terre* (to kiss the earth), jeeringly, of a person falling; and the German, *die Erde küssen* (to kiss the earth), is a euphemistic way of saying "die." I may add, for the sake of completeness, that kissing the earth still occurs sporadically nowadays in the sense of the profoundest humility mingled with regret. When Raskolnikow, in Dostojewski's novel of that name, has confided to Sonja how he murdered the old usurer's wife, he exclaims in his despair: "And what shall I do now?"—"What shall you do now," exclaims Sonja, and her eyes flash: "Get up, go hence at once; station yourself at a crossway, kneel down and kiss the earth you have defiled, bow down thus before all the people, and say to them: 'I have committed murder.' Then God shall give you new life." And, finally, when Raskolnikow has determined publicly to acknowledge his crime and denounce himself as a murderer, he falls pros-

trate on his knees in the middle of the market-place, bows down, and, amidst the laughter and derision of the bystanders, kisses the dirty ground with ecstasy and delight.

In Europe, at least, we no longer kiss the ground before the feet of the mighty, any more than we salute them by kissing their hands or feet; a bow more or less gracious, according to circumstances, serves the same purpose generally. Nevertheless, at certain courts, such as the Spanish, English, and Russian, kissing the hand is still customary as a sort of ceremonial salutation; but its practice is usually confined to certain solemn occasions.

Individuals of princely rank excepted, the kiss of respect to superiors is to be regarded as all but extinct; but even in the eighteenth century, kissing the hem of their garments is mentioned as a salutation befitting ladies of exalted rank, and in Holberg's *Politiske Kandestøber* (the Political Pewterer), we see how Madame Abrahamsen and Madame Sanderus even kissed Gedske on the apron.

Kissing, as expressive of admiration, still undoubtedly occurs, but can scarcely be said

to be particularly general; it becomes less and less common as we approach our own time.

A half-ironical instance occurs in Molière; in *Les Femmes Savantes* Armande and Philaminte fall into raptures over Vadius' great learning. *Du grec! O ciel! du grec! Il sait du grec, ma sœur!* (Greek! good heavens! Greek! He knows Greek, sister), says the one, and the other answers: *Du grec! quelle douceur!* (Greek! how sweet!). In their boundless enthusiasm they ask Vadius to let them kiss him as a mark of their admiration. He accepts this salutation very politely, if not with any particularly great joy; but when he turns to young Henriette, from whose lips he is especially desirous of receiving so tender an expression of admiration, she rejects him quite abruptly with the remark: *Excusez-moi, monsieur, je n'entends pas le Grec* (Excuse me, sir, I don't understand Greek).

The pedantic Vadius got just what he deserved — a kiss as dry as dust from two middle-aged, sexless blue-stockings, which nobody begrudges him. On the other hand, many, perhaps, will read with envy of the

homage received by Benjamin Franklin at the French Court. Mme. de Campan, in her *Mémoires*, says: "At one of the splendid entertainments given in Franklin's honour, I saw how the most beautiful of the three hundred ladies present was chosen to place a laurel crown on the white locks of the American philosopher and imprint a kiss on each of the old man's cheeks."

The kiss of admiration and respect has, I suppose, been the longest to survive in the form of kissing ladies' hands. Formerly, in many countries, it constituted a friendly greeting on meeting a lady or saying good-bye to her; but nowadays this custom has grown obsolete in most places; nevertheless we have certain literary reminiscences of it. In Austria people say *Küss die Hand, gnädige Frau*, and *Sârut mâna* in Roumania, but still it is comparatively rare that this expression is followed by actual kisses, as was formerly the case. *Je vous baise les mains* is now only used in an ironical sense in France. Ceremonial kisses, however, still flourish in Spain to a marked degree, not only in the language of the Court, but also in general conversation. When I was first presented

to a Spanish lady I expressed my gladness at making her acquaintance by kissing her hand—only, however, by figure of speech—but her husband at once pointed out to me in a laughing way, that I had failed to show her proper respect. One can only kiss a Spanish lady's feet: *Beso à usted los pies* or *à los pies de usted* (I kiss your feet), as they say.

Before leaving the subject of the kiss reverential I will mention two different ways in which it has been used. Formerly it was the custom, at least at the French Court, for pages to first kiss the articles they were to hand to distinguished personages. Henri Estienne tells an anecdote about a page who had to carry a letter to the Princess of Naples. It was expressly enjoined on him to kiss it (*baisez-la*), but the page pretended he had misunderstood the words, so when he had to leave the letter he first kissed the unsuspecting princess.

We find another peculiar form of the kiss reverential in the cases when a person kisses his own hand before offering it to the guest he would especially honour, or before accepting a present for which he wishes to show

his gratitude in an extraordinarily polite manner.*

In an old comedy of Marivaux, "*Harlequin poli par l'Amour*," a fairy falls in love with a rustic lout. She carries him off, entertains him in her castle, and tries in every possible way to gain his love; but he remains utterly callous to all her blandishments, and behaves all the time in a most foolish manner. He takes a fancy to a valuable ring the fairy is wearing; she removes it from her finger and gives it to him, but when he scarcely says "Thank you" for it, she says to chide him: *Mon cher Arlequin, un beau garçon comme vous, quand une dame lui presente quelque chose, doit baiser la main en la reçevant.** Arlequin takes hold of the fairy's hand and kisses it; but she corrects him again, and says: "He does not understand me once, but I like his mistake. It is your own hand, you know, that you should kiss."†

This usage still prevails amongst old peasants in Jutland, and is termed receiving something with "kissed hand," or "kiss

* My dear Arlequin, a handsome lad like you, when a lady offers him anything, ought to kiss the hand when he receives it.

† Omitted in the last edition.

hand." The expression *Kusshand* is also employed in German, and is explained thus: "Gruss, wobei man die eigne Hand küsst und dann nach der zu grüssenden Person hin bewegt oder sie reicht." The same sort of greeting is found both in England and France. Voltaire tells us that children in certain countries are taught to kiss their right hand when anybody gives them something good. Even at the present day, in certain places on the Alps, peasants express their thanks by kissing their hand before taking what is given to them.

VI

THE KISS OF FRIENDSHIP

Par amistiet l'en baisat en la buche.
Chanson de Roland.

For friendship pressed a kiss upon his mouth.
W. F. H.

CHAPTER VI

THE KISS OF FRIENDSHIP

THE kiss is also employed as a conventional salutation between persons who only stand on a footing of friendship or acquaintance with each other. In our northern countries the friendly kiss usually occurs only between ladies, but in this instance its usage is very widely extended. With men and women it is properly only allowable when there is a marked difference in age between both parties, but, on the other hand, it seldom or never takes place between men, with the exception, however, of royal personages who, on solemn occasions, are wont to greet and take leave of each other with more or less sincere kisses of greeting and farewell. Here we find ourselves again in a sphere in which, alas, we have sadly fallen away from the good old ways. In former times, to wit, the friendly kiss was very

common with us between man and man as well as between persons of opposite sexes. In guilds it was customary for the members to greet each other "with hearty handshakes and smacking kisses," and, on the conclusion of a meal, people thanked and kissed both their hosts and hostesses. In a description of a wedding in the olden time in the district of Voer in Denmark we read:

"When they had eaten, the parish clerk got up first, put his arms round the parson's neck, and kissed him on the mouth, saying: *Tak for mad, hr. pastor* (Thanks for your hospitality, sir priest). Then the parson planted himself against a chest of drawers, and all the women, old and young, went up to him, one after the other, and kissed him on the mouth. Some of the old goodies could not quite reach him, for the priest was a big, tall man, and they had actually to climb on to his boots, though he stooped down to them slightly." Peder Havgård said that he would not have cared much to be in the parson's place, for it was a mean and poor country thereabouts, and some of the women were very shabbily-dressed and dirty-looking.

If we glance outside Denmark it appears

that the kiss of friendship is considerably in vogue. In Iceland it is still a general form of salutation, although of late years there is said to be a certain falling off in its use; and every one who travels in South Germany and Austria can study at the very first railway station the different forms of that kind of kiss which in those countries is specially used by way of leave-taking; officers and students, farmers and merchants, all treat each other to sounding kisses, usually on the cheek. One can observe the same sort of thing in France, but more especially in Italy. I can attest from personal experience that it is looked upon as the most natural thing in the world for people to kiss their intimate friends when saying good-bye, a shake of the hand being far too cold a leave-taking beneath the warm sky of Italy.

It is, however, undoubted that, speaking generally, the custom of kissing, as an ordinary greeting, has immensely declined; in ancient times and in the Middle Ages it was much more frequent than nowadays.

It was the common practice with the Hebrews for acquaintances, when they met, to kiss each other on the head, hands, and

shoulders; and it was assuredly with a kiss of pretended friendship that Judas betrayed his Master.

Even the Greeks in former times used kissing as a common salutation; not only friends and acquaintances kissed each other, but also persons who quite accidentally met when they were travelling.

The custom of kissing, however, became less general later on. In a discourse of Dion Chrysostomus, called *From Eubœa*, or "The Hunter," is a story of a rustic coming to the city and meeting two acquaintances in the assembly, whom he goes up to and kisses. "But," says the rustic, "people laughed prodigiously at my kissing them, and, on that occasion, I learnt that it is not customary for people of the city to kiss each other." *

Kissing seems to have been much more in vogue with the Romans, amongst whom it was the usual custom for people to salute each other with a kiss on the hand, the cheek, or the mouth. Many even scented their mouths in order to render their kisses more pleasing—or less unpleasant. Martial laments

* Omitted in the last edition.

over this usage in a little epigram to Posthumus:

What's this that myrrh doth still smell in thy kiss,
And that with thee no other odour is?
'Tis doubt, my Posthumus, he that doth smell
So sweetly always, smells not very well.

This kissing of friends gradually became a veritable nuisance to the country. Fashion ordained that every one should give and receive such kisses, but, in reality, every one preferred evading them. Martial, in another epigram to this same Posthumus, exclaims:

Posthumus late was wont to kiss
With one lip, which I loth;
But now my plague redoubled is,—
He kisses me with both.

and

Posthumus' kisses some must have,
And some salute his fist;
Thy hand, good Posthumus, I crave,
If I may choose my list.

Under such frightful circumstances people had recourse to shifts which seem almost as unsavoury as the kisses they would escape:

Why on my chin a plaster clapped;
Besalved my lips, that are not chapped;
Philænis, why? The cause is this:
Philænis, thee I will not kiss.

But such artifices, however, are of very little use; no one escapes the *basiatores* (kissers). They prowl about the streets and market-places; not even the walls of the home, nor even the enforced solitariness of the most hidden-places served as a protection against them:

> There are no means the kissing tribe to shun,
> They meet you, stop you, after you they run,
> Press you before, behind, to each side cleave,
> No place, no time, no men, exempted leave;
> A dropping nose, salved lips, can none reprieve,
> Gangrenes, foul running sores, no one relieve;
> They kiss you in a sweat, or starved with cold,
> Lovers' their mistress' kisses cannot hold;
> A chair is no defence, with curtains guarded,
> With door and windows shut, and closely warded,
> The kissers, through a chink will find a way,
> Presume the tribune, consul's self, to stay;
> Nor can the awful rods, or Lictor's mace,
> His stounding voice away these kissers chase,
> But they'll ascend the Rostra, curule chair,
> The judges kiss while they give sentence there.
> Those laugh they kiss, and those that sigh and weep;
> 'Tis all the same whether you laugh or weep;
> Those who do bathe, or recreate in pool,
> Who are withdrawn to ease themselves at stool.
> Against this plague I know no fence but this:
> Make him thy friend whom thou abhorr'st to kiss.

All greet one another with kisses; every condition of life, every handicraft, found a repre-

sentative amongst the *basiatores*. When a man, in ancient times, was afraid of meeting his tailor, it was not so much on account of the latter's bill as by reason of his kisses.

"Rome," says Martial, "gives, on one's return after fifteen years' absence, such a number of kisses as exceeds those given by Lesbia to Catullus. Every neighbour, every hairy-faced farmer, presses on you with a strongly-scented kiss. Here the weaver assails you, there the fuller and cobbler, who has just been kissing leather; here the owner of a filthy beard, and a one-eyed gentleman; there one with bleared eyes, and fellows whose mouths are defiled with all manner of abominations. It was hardly worth while to return."

People kissed whenever they met: morning and evening, at all seasons of the year: spring and autumn, summer and winter. The winter kisses seem to have been especially unpleasant, and Martial censures them, in the strongest terms, in his epigram to Linus:

'Tis winter, and December's horrid cold
Makes all things stark; yet, Linus, thou lay'st hold
On all thou meet'st; none can thy clutches miss;
But with thy frozen mouth all Rome dost kiss.

What could'st more spiteful do, or more severe,
Had'st thou a blow o' th' face, or box o' th' ear?
My wife, this time, to kiss me does forbear,
My daughter, too, however debonaire.
But thou more trim and sweeter art. No doubt
Th' icicles, hanging at thy dog-like snout,
The congealed snivel dangling on thy beard,
Ranker than th' oldest goat of all the herd.
The nastiest mouth i' th' town I'd rather greet,
Than with thy flowing frozen nostrils meet.
If therefore thou hast either shame or sense,
Till April comes no kisses more dispense.

That Martial's epigrams depict the actual state of the case without any particular exaggeration it may, among other things, be inferred from the fact that the Emperor Tiberius, according to Suetonius, issued an edict against these *cotidiana oscula* (daily kisses).

The friendly kiss was likewise much in vogue in the Middle Ages.

In *La Chanson de Roland* the Saracen king receives Ganelon with a kiss on the neck, and then displayed to him his treasures:

Quant l'ot Marsilies, si l'ad baisiet el' col;
Pois, si cumencet à uvrir ses trésors.

(603).

And Ganelon salutes the Saracen chiefs in

the same way, and "they kissed each other on face and chin":

> "Bien serat fait"—li quens Guenes respunt;
> Pois, se baisièrent es vis e es mentuns.
> (625, 628).

The friendly kiss is, on the whole, pretty often mentioned in the Old French epics. "Out of friendship he kissed him on the mouth" is a verse that frequently recurs:

Par l'amistiet l'en baisat en la buche.

The kiss of friendship was also exchanged between the opposite sexes. It was the general custom for ladies to salute with a kiss any stranger whether he came as an ambassador, expected guest, or a chance passer-by. In the old French mystery-play of St Bernard de Menton, the Lord of Miolan is sitting one day with his wife and daughters in the hall of his castle, when a squire steps in and announces that some strangers have arrived. The lord of the castle receives them courteously, bids them welcome in God's name, and at once orders his wife do her duty to them. She, too, bids them welcome, and kisses them; at last it comes to the turn of the little girls, who assure their

father that they know their duty right well, and are even willing to perform it:

A vostre bon commandement
Les bayserons et festoyrons,
Trestons le myeulx que nous pourrons,
Mon seigneur, à vostre talent.

Which may be rendered thus:

As it is your orders dear,
We will kiss and make good cheer,
All, so far as in us lies,
Since your wishes that comprise.

W. F. H.

Whereupon they kiss the strange gentlemen. In the poem of "Huon de Bordeaux" we are told how Huon's mother, the Duchess of Bordeaux, receives the French king's embassy with kisses. The queen, in Marie de France's *Lai de Graelan*, sends an ambassador after Graelan to make his acquaintance, and, when he arrives, goes to meet him, and kisses him on the mouth.

In other Romance countries, too, kissing serves as a common mode of greeting, which fact can be incidentally substantiated by means of philology, inasmuch as the Latin verb *salutare* ('to greet') both in Spanish and Roumanian, and partially in French, has acquired the meaning of 'to kiss.'

When Abengalvon, in the old *Pöema del Cid*, meets Minaya Alvar Fañez, he advances smilingly towards him in order to kiss him, and he "greets" him on the shoulder, "for such was his wont":

> Sonrisando de la boca, ibalo abrazar,
> En el ombro lo saluda, ca tal es su usaje.

The expression "to greet on the mouth" likewise occurs many times; but also the verb *saludar* ('to hail') is also used alone, as in the Roumanian *sârута*, to express 'to kiss.'

Even in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the friendly kiss flourished in France. When Leo Rozmital, the Bohemian nobleman, paid his respects to Louis XI. at Meung-sur-Loire, the king led him to the queen, and both she and all the ladies of her court kissed him on the mouth.

We get further information in a letter from Annibale Caro dated 29th October, 1544. It is addressed to the Duke of Palma, and describes the visit of the French Queen Eléonore to the Emperor Charles V. in Brussels. "When we met," says he, "the ceremony of reception with kissing of the

ladies was, in the highest degree, interesting; it seemed as if I had been present at the Rape of the Sabines. Not only the higher nobility, but even all the rest took each his lady, and the Spaniards and Neapolitans were the most eager. It gave rise to much merriment when the Countess of Vertus, Charlotte de Pisseleu, was observed to lean over her saddle to such an extent, in order to kiss the Emperor, that she slid off her horse, and kissed the earth instead of His Majesty's mouth. The Emperor hurried up to her assistance, and with a smile kissed her heartily (*e ridendo la baciò saporitamente*). Directly afterwards Duke Ottavio rode up, jumped quickly off his horse, and the Emperor himself conducted him to the Queen's carriage, and there he was presented to the distinguished ladies. The Duke kissed the Queen's hand and was about to remount his charger, but the Emperor called him back, and told him that he ought also to kiss Mdme. d'Etampes, who was sitting right opposite to the Queen in the carriage. Like a good Frenchman, he exceeded the Emperor's order and kissed her on the mouth."

A vast quantity of other evidence goes to

show how general was the friendly
salutation even during the Ren
especially among the upper classes
Estienne satirises it in his *Apolo*
Hérodote. "Kisses are allowed," w
"in France between noblemen an
whether they do or do not belong
same family. If a high-born dam
church, and any fop of her acqu
comes, she must, in conformity with t
prevailing in good society, get up,
she be absorbed in the deepest devo
kiss him on the mouth."

Even Montaigne expresses his di
of such a state of things. "It is,"
"a highly reprehensible custom th
should be obliged to offer their
every one who has a couple of lacke
heels, however undesirable he may
we men are no gainers thereby, for
to kiss fifty ugly women to thre
ones."

None the less, the friendly kiss
ground right through the seventee
even a part of the eighteenth
Molière's marquesses kiss each oth
ever they meet; for instance, in th

eleventh scene in *Les Précieuses ridicules*, when Mascarille and Jodelet fall into each other's arms with many warm kisses. In *Le Misanthrope* Alceste reproaches Philinte with embracing and kissing every one, and "when I ask you who it is, you scarcely know his name!"

Vous chargez la fureur de vos embrassements ;
Et quand je vous demande après, quel est cet homme,
À peine pouvez-vous dire comme il se nomme.

La Bruyère has, time after time, satirised this foolish custom, which, especially at Court, seems to have assumed colossal dimensions; but even in middle-class circles etiquette required men to salute ladies with a kiss.

In an old comedy entitled *Le Gentilhomme guespin* a father presents his son, who is extraordinarily awkward and clumsy. The latter does not know how he ought to behave to the ladies of the house, so the father in despair gives him a dig in the ribs, and whispers in his ear: "He's bashful. Kiss the lady. One always greets a lady with a kiss."

. . . Il est honteux. Là, baisez donc Madame ;
C'est toujours en baisant qu'on salue une femme,

Molière has made use of this scene in *Le Malade imaginaire*, where Thomas Diafoirus pedanticly asks when he is introduced to Angélique: *Baiserai-je ?* (Am I to kiss?).

In England we come across pretty nearly the same state of thing. Erasmus of Rotterdam, in one of his *Epistolæ familiares*, expresses his great satisfaction with English customs: "When you arrive every one kisses you; at your departure they bid you good-bye and kiss you; you come back, then fresh kisses. You are kissed when you meet any one, and so, too, when you separate. Wheresoever you go everything is filled with kisses, and if you have only once tasted how delicate these kisses are, and the deliciousness of their savour, you would want, my dear Faustus, to be banished to England for time and eternity." In another passage, where Erasmus is speaking of the state of the inns in England, which he mentions in terms of unqualified praise, he winds up as follows: "Everywhere at the inns one meets with pretty, smiling girls: they come and ask for one's soiled clothes; they wash them and soon bring them back again. When the travellers are about to resume their

journey these girls kiss them, and take as affectionate a farewell of them as if the latter were their brothers or near relations."

And Holberg in his letter writes: "In England it is considered uncourteous to enter a house without saluting one's hostess with a kiss."

Even in the Low Countries the friendly kiss was much in vogue. Adrianus Höreboord, a professor at the University of Leyden, has, in a Latin treatise, investigated the question as to whether the custom of allowing strangers to kiss young girls, widows, and other persons' wives, on paying a visit, can be said to be in conformity with the laws of chastity. Höreboord's opinion is that such practice is in no way objectionable: as a kiss can be given without any *arrière pensée*, the kisses demanded by politeness may be quite chaste.

Erycius Puteanus, the learned Dutch philosopher, on the contrary, holds that the aforesaid custom is not without danger—at any rate to more sensually-disposed temperaments. In a letter on the education of a young Italian girl he writes that he would never suffer any one to kiss his pupil, adding: "Our

Flemish girls never do so; they are not so ardent. They do not comprehend the language of love in glances and kisses. In the matter of Italian girls on the other hand, things are quite different, and I teach my pupil the speech of our country and our customs, kissing excepted."

The kiss of friendship was so general in Germany, even in the eighteenth century, that Klopstock could write to a friend in 1750: *Vergessen sie nicht zu mir auf einen Kaffee und auf einen Kuss zu kommen.* It seems, however, soon to have fallen into disuse.

As far back as 1747, Lessing had ridiculed it in a poem:

> The kiss with which my friend will greet me
> Is not what's rightly termed a kiss,
> But only formal salutation
> Because cold fashion bids him this.
>
> W. F. H.

VII

VARIOUS KINDS OF KISSES

Einen Kuss in Ehren
Darf niemand wehren.

German Proverb.

No one should take amiss
An honest-hearted kiss.

W. F. H.

CHAPTER VII

VARIOUS KINDS OF KISSES

It has been previously shown by numerou examples that kissing occupies a prominen place in certain ceremonies. It would b easy to multiply instances of this.

We know from Roman law that the so-calle *osculum interveniens*, which concerned gift was exchanged between engaged couple The law enacts that, in the event of one the contracting parties dying before th marriage, only a moiety of the presents a to be returned, provided a kiss was exchange at the betrothal, but, if no kiss had been e changed, all the presents were to be returned.*

* *Si ab sponso rebus sponsæ donatis, interveniente osculo, a nuptias hunc vel illam mori contigerit, dimidiam partem reru donatarum ad superstitem pertinere præcipimus, dimidiam defuncti vel defunctæ heredes cuiuslibet gradus sint et quocunq iure successerint, ut donatio stare pro parte media et solvi p parte media videatur: osculo vero non interveniente, sive spons sive sponsa obierit, totam infirmari donationem et donatori spon sive heredibus eius restitui.*

The kiss was regarded as the introduction, as it were, to matrimonial cohabitation—*initium consummationis nuptiarum;* it was symbolical of marriage—*viri et mulieris conjunctio.* Certain ancient jurists have even discussed the question whether a married woman who has suffered herself to be kissed by a stranger has not thereby rendered herself guilty of adultery.

The decree of the Roman law which, so far as I know, still partly holds good in Greece, is met with again in the Latin countries during the Middle Ages. It was incorporated in the law of the Visigoths (*Lex Romana Visigothorum*), and migrated thence to the different old Spanish *fueros* and the old French law, in which the word *osculum* was also used in the learned form *oscle.* It was likewise admitted into the law of the Lombards, and Italy is most probably the West European country where *donatio propter osculum* has been longest retained. We find, even down to our own times, traces of the same in customary laws.

This is probably the only ceremonial kiss that has received legal sanction; but wherever elsewhere we may turn our eyes and investigate old ceremonies, we constantly find the kiss a necessary and important part.

Its usage was, for instance, general at weddings. Thomas Platter, who studied at the University of Montpellier at the end of the sixteenth century, tells us, in his "Diary," that the majority of marriages took place in private, without witnesses, through fear of witchcraft; though the wedding feast, on the contrary, was celebrated in public with a vast concourse of guests, and with many merry episodes. At the conclusion of the feast the bride was divested of her bridal array, amidst jokes and raillery, smart young bachelors having to take off her garters; and when at last she sat up in bed, clad only in linen, then all the guests, male and female, came and kissed her on the mouth, and the kisses were followed by facetious compliments and good wishes.

Moreover, at the later ceremony of dubbing a knight, the newly-made knight of the Golden Fleece was kissed by the master of the ceremonies, and had afterwards to kiss all the senior knights present.

At certain academical functions the kiss also formed part of the festal ceremony; in the seventeenth century the Dean, when degrees were conferred, kissed all the new doctors and masters.

Even in the guilds we meet with the kiss, though in a somewhat peculiar form. Hübertz tells us that at the ceremony of admitting a member into the Guild of Tanners, the candidate chose for his "Kränzjungfer" a girl who had to be "fairly a maiden." She painted black moustaches on his upper lip, and the senior member placed a crown on his head. This done, he kissed the latter, removed the crown, and decorated him instead with a "Jungferkranz." Finally, the senior member made a speech to the new member, and gave him three boxes on the ears, on which the girl kissed him, and washed off his moustaches, whilst "Vater" hung a sword to his waist.

The ceremony of reception into the Guild of Carpenters was followed by a feast, at which the members, as a sign that they were now grown-up, were allowed, on the payment of a mark, to kiss the barmaid, who was usually the innkeeper's daughter.

It is easily understood that the kiss likewise came to play a prominent part in many different dances and games.

Kiss-dances were very common during the Middle Ages and even later. Montaigne describes one that he witnessed at Augsburg

in 1580. "The ladies," said he, "sit in two rows along the walls of the room. The gentlemen go away and bow to them; they kiss the latter's hands, and the ladies get up, but without kissing them on the hand. Then each gentleman puts his arm round the lady's waist, right beneath her shoulder, kisses her, and lays his cheek to hers."* Whether it is the lady's cheek or mouth that is kissed, he omits to state; but it is certain that kisses on the mouth were not uncommon.

A Swiss traveller who stayed for some time in France in the middle of the sixteenth century relates that, when he was in Montpellier, he was invited to a ball, and there met a very beautiful young lady; but, he adds, her nose was a trifle too long, and so her partner had great difficulty in kissing her mouth, "as is the general custom."

The kiss-dance has not yet died out in Germany; but it appears no longer to have the graceful forms of the Renaissance period, if we can trust Fritz Reuter's description in his *Journey to Belgium.* At a wedding when the kiss-dance is to be held, the parish clerk cautiously inquires of the clergyman whether

* Retranslated from the Danish Text.

kissing is regarded as unbefitting his priestly dignity, but when the answer comes short and shrewd, "Kiss away," he bows to Mrs Black and—smack!—gives her a couple of hearty kisses right on her mouth. Madame was thoroughly frightened, but that did not avail, but every time he swang round with her, she got a proper, smacking kiss.

But it is evident from *Romeo and Juliet* that even in England there were dances in which a gentleman was allowed to kiss his partner. All know the beautiful words with which Romeo claims his right:

If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this:
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss. (I. 5.)

One can still take the same liberty at Christmastide under the mistletoe. I know a young English lady who was offended with an American gentleman who did not dare to avail himself of his privilege, because he thought that this custom was obsolete in Europe.

Kissing in our time still plays an important part in France in the refrains of dance songs. *Le Bouquet de ma Mie* ends with:

Bell' bergère, embrasse-moi,
Embrasse, embrasse, embrasse!

And in *Ramenez vos Moutons, Bergère,* is sung by way of conclusion:

Tombez à genoux,
Jurez devant tous.
D'être un jour époux
Et embrassez-vous.*

There is, I suppose, no doubt that in these games the kiss is given and taken, as the *dramatis personæ* are generally children, but what takes place when adults amuse themselves with these *rondes,* I do not know; but I consider it probable that the gentleman will demand as his due a kiss, at any rate on the cheek. There also exists an old *ronde à baisers,* which is very characteristic and merry. In this it is the lady who has to take the first step:

Madame, entrez dans la danse,
Regardez-en la cadence,
Et puis vous embrasserez
Celui que vous aimerez.†

---

* Now down on your knees fall,
And promise straightway
To be wife and husband,
And then kiss away. W. F. H.

† Madame, join the dancing throng,
Listen to their measured song;
But remember, for the rest,
You shall kiss whom you love best. W. F. H.

As the living expression of the warmest and sincerest human feelings kissing has been credited, in the world of fairy tales and superstition, with a considerable curative and prophylactical power.

We have seen, in the old sagas and ballads, how enchantments are broken by means of a kiss; we have seen how holy men in the legends restore the sick to health by means of a kiss, etc. Kissing has, on the whole, influenced popular credulity to a large extent, and of the numerous superstitious notions concerning it I only quote some few:

If you would protect yourself against lightning you should make three crosses before you, and kiss the ground three times. (Germany.)

If you want to have luck in gambling you must kiss the cards before the game begins. (France.)

If you have the toothache you should kiss a donkey on his chops. (Germany.) This very efficacious advice is found as far back as Pliny.

If you drop a bit of bread on the floor you must kiss it when you pick it up. The same respect is also to be shown to books you have dropped. (Denmark, Germany.)

According to Danish superstition, it is a bad omen when the first person you meet of a morning is an old woman; nevertheless, you can ward off all evil consequences by giving her a kiss. Evil must be expelled by evil.

People kiss little children when they have knocked themselves, in order to take away the pain; they must "kiss them well again," as it is termed, or, as Englishmen say, "kiss the place and make it well."

The Greenland mother, who does not understand kissing as expressive of love, kisses her sick child on the breast, shoulders, hips, and navel to restore it to health.

As the loving kiss of a living human creature brings life, health, and happiness, so it is thought, on the other hand, that kisses of a supernatural being bring destruction.

In Lucian's *True History* there is a description of a perilous journey to the realms of fancy. In one of these the travellers came upon a remarkable vineyard wherein all the vines at the bottom were green and luxuriant, but those above had the shape of women. "They greeted us, as we

drew nigh, and bade us halt. Some of us kissed them on the mouth, and those who were kissed lost their understanding and reeled about like drunken men. But worse befell those who had suffered themselves to be embraced by these women; they were powerless to extricate themselves from the latter's arms, and we beheld their fingers changed into boughs and twigs."*

I will here call your attention to the Roumanian song about cholera, which comes in the shape of an ugly old woman to Vîlcu, and Vîlcu entreats it thus: "Take my horse, take my weapons, but give me still some days so I may once more see my children, which are as dear to me as the light of the sun." But the old woman stretches forth her bony arms, folds Vîlcu to her bosom, presses her pallid lips to his, and, in a death-dealing kiss, takes his life, whereupon she departs with a mocking laugh. The Roumanian text is here very strong:

Gură pe gură punea,
Buze pe buze lipĭa,
Zilele i le sorbĭa.

---

* Retranslated from the Danish of the Text.

Apoĭ cloanza ear ridea,
Cu zilele purcedea,
Si voĭnicul mort cădea.

Even a spectre's kiss brings death. In an English variant of the ballad of Leonora, Margaret says to her dead bridegroom, who is knocking at her door at night: "Come and kiss me on the cheek and chin."—"Perhaps I shall come to thee," he replies, but:

If I shou'd come within thy bower,
I am no mortal man;
And shou'd I kiss thy rosy lips,
Thy days will not be long.

I shall also call your attention, in connection with the foregoing, to a curious old story of the venomous girl.

A young maiden had from her tenderest years been reared on all the most deadly poisons. Her beauty was marvellous, but her breath was so poisonous that it killed everybody who came near her. She was sent to the palace of Alexander the Great, as the king's enemies reckoned on his falling in love with her and dying in her arms. When the king saw her he at once wanted to make

her his mistress; but the shrewd Aristotle suspected treachery. He restrained the king, and had a criminal who had been sentenced to death sent for. The criminal was made to kiss the girl in presence of the king, and he fell prone on the ground, poisoned by her breath, like one struck by lightning.

This story can be traced to India. It found its way into several mediæval story-books and attained great popularity. The monks made use of it in their sermons, and gave it an allegorical interpretation: Alexander was the good, trustful Christian; Aristotle was the conscience; the venomous girl, incontinence, which comprehends everything that is poisonous to the soul; and the criminal is the wicked man who pursues the lusts of the flesh and suffers his punishment. "Let us, therefore, abstain from all such things if we wish to reach Paradise," is the moral that the monk draws from it at the close of his sermon.

In conclusion I will quote several expressions to which kissing has given rise:

A lady's hat which was fashionable in England in 1850, and which had no brim to it, got the name of *Kiss-me-quick.* In con-

tradistinction to this, the old-fashioned Danish hats with prominent brims were called *Kiss-me-if-you-can.* We have a modern variant in the Salvation lasses' *Stop-kissing-me* hat.

In France, during the last century, there was a colour of the name of *Baise-moi ma mignonne,* called in England "heart's-ease": *Look-up-and-kiss-me, Kiss-me-at-the-garden-gate, Kiss-me-ere-I-rise* or *Jump-up-and-kiss-me.*

The verb "to kiss" is often used in a figurative sense, *e.g.*, the Italians say of one who likes drinking, "He kisses the flask" (*Bacia il fiasco*); the Germans say of mean people, "They kiss the farthing" (*Den Pfennig küssen*); the English too speak of a *penny-kisser.*

This figurative meaning is not, however, confined to jocose expressions and phrases; on the contrary, it occurs perhaps more frequently in serious prose.

Our whole life, lived in love to our neighbour and nature, is nothing more than one long kiss.

Kaalund somewhere says:

> A babe was I not long ere this,
> But time too swiftly slips;
> And that is why I press a kiss
> So warmly on life's lips.

W. F. H.

A similar figurative use is extraordinarily common with the poets. H. C. Andersen, in *Goose-grass*, says of the lark that it flies past the tulip and other aristocratic flowers only to light on the sward by the humble goose-grass, which it kisses with its beak, and for which it sings its joyous song. The other poets represent the waves as kissing the white beach, the bees, the scented flowers; and the ears of corn in the fields as heaving beneath the warm kisses of the sun's golden rays. The sun's kisses are *oscula sancta;* every creature shares in them, for they are the most beautiful expression of God's love. Ingemann sings in a morning hymn:

> The sun looks down on hut and hall,
> On haughty king and beggar weeping,
> Beholds the great ones and the small,
> And kisses babes in cradles sleeping.

W. F. H.

VIII

THE ORIGIN OF KISSING

Les coutumes, quelque étranges qu'elles deviennent parfois à la longue, ont généralement des commencements très simples.

MAX MÜLLER.

Usages, however strange they may sometimes become in the long run, have generally very simple beginnings.—*Translated from the above.*

CHAPTER VIII

THE ORIGIN OF KISSING

WITH most civilised and many uncivilised nations kissing is the natural expression of love and its kindred emotions.

How can it be explained that a kiss has succeeded in getting so deep and comprehensive a significance? How can a trivial movement of the lips interpret our innermost feelings in so eloquent a way that there is not a language which has at its command words approaching to it in argumentative power?

Are we face to face with something primitive, or something conventional and derivative? Is it as natural to kiss when we are transported with love as it is to smile when we are mirthful, or weep when we are sad? In other words, is Steele right when he says, in strict conformity with a Cypriot folk-song previously quoted, that "nature was its author, and it began with the first courtship?"

I shall try to answer this question in the following pages, but, nevertheless, I wish at once to state most expressly that we are now approaching ground where we know nothing, and where no one can with certainty know anything. We can only advance more or less likely hypotheses.

In the first place, it is important to bear in mind that there are many races of people who are quite ignorant of kissing as it is generally understood. Thus it is unknown in a great part of Polynesia, in Madagascar, and among many tribes of negroes in Africa, more particularly among those which mutilate their lips. W. Reade, in one of his books of travel, tells us of the horror which seized a young African negress when he kissed her. Kissing is likewise unknown amongst the Esquimaux and the people of Tierra del Fuego. Certain Finnish tribes appear, from what B. Taylor tells us, not to practise it much. In his *Northern Travel* he relates that "while both sexes bathe together in a state of complete nudity, a kiss is regarded as something indecent." A Finnish married woman, on being told by him that it was the usual custom for husband and wife to kiss each other, angrily exclaimed, "If my

husband were to attempt such a thing, faith, I would warm his ears in such a way that he would feel it for a whole week."

If the question arises as to what these people substitute for kissing, the fact is well-known that, amongst uncivilised races, there is an endless number of different ways of salutation; some smack each other on the arms or stomach, others blow on each other's hands, others again rub their right ear and put out their tongue, etc., etc. Here, however, we must confine ourselves to the salutations which are suggestive of kissing.

In many places people are in the habit of saluting with their noses. This is the so-called Malay kiss, which consists in rubbing or merely pressing one's nose against another person's nose. This nose-salute is found among the Polynesians, Malays, Esquimaux, certain negro tribes in Africa—in short, just among the majority of races which are ignorant of kissing as we understand it.

Darwin thus describes the Malay kiss: "The women squatted with their faces upturned; my attendants stood leaning over them, laid the bridge of their noses at right angles over theirs, and commenced rubbing. It lasted some-

what longer than a hearty hand-shake with us. During this process they uttered a grunt of satisfaction."* The French *savant* Gaidoz, who has also described this custom, remarks, "I have many times observed that cats which are fond of one another greet each other in this way; and I myself once had a cat which always tried to squeeze its nose against mine as a mark of affection."*

Everything is in favour of this nose-salute being a very primitive custom, and its origin may be sought beyond the sense of touch; no doubt, in the sense of smell.

Spencer has arrived at the following conclusions: The sheep bleats after her little lamb which has run away. It sniffs at several lambs that are skipping about near her, and at last recognises her own by means of the sense of smell, and undoubtedly feels great delight at recognising it. In consequence of assiduous repetitions of this a certain relation is developed between the two factors, so that the smell of the lamb excites joy in the sheep.

As every animal has its peculiar smell, so, too, has every human being. When the patriarch Isaac grew old his eyes began to

* Retranslated from the Danish Version in the Text.

get dim, and he could not see. He wished to bless his eldest son, Esau, but Jacob deceived him by clothing himself in his brother's garments, and giving himself out as the latter. Isaac then said to him: "Come near now and kiss me, my son." And he came near and kissed him, and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said: "See the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed."

The sense of the smell peculiar to some one we are fond of is capable of exciting pleasure. Timkowski writes of a Mongol father that the latter time after time smelt his youngest son's head. This mark of paternal tenderness serves with the Mongols instead of kisses. In the Philippine Islands, the sense of smell is so developed that the inhabitants, by simply sniffing at a pocket-handkerchief, can tell to whom it belongs; lovers who are separated send one another presents of bits of their linen, and, in their absence, keep each other in mind by often inhaling each other's scent.

That the delicate perfume that exhales from a woman's body plays an important part in love affairs even with modern civilised nations

is too well-known to require more than a passing mention on my part.

Certain races of mankind now actually salute each other by smelling; they apply their mouth and nose to a person's cheek, and draw a long breath. In their language they do not say "Give me a kiss," but "Smell me." The same sort of kiss is also met with among the Burmese; and with many Malay tribes the words "smell" and "salute" are synonymous. Other races do not confine themselves to smelling each other's faces, but sniff their hands at every salutation.

Alfred Grandidier, a French traveller, says of the nose-kiss in Madagascar: "It always excites the merriment of Europeans, and yet it has its origin in an extremely refined idea. The invisible air which is continually being breathed through the lips is to savages, not only, as with us, a sign of life, but it is also an emanation of the soul—its perfume, as they themselves say—and, when they mingle and suck in each other's breath and odour, they think they are actually mingling their souls."*

Then the origin of the nose-kiss, it seems, undoubtedly ought to be sought—at any rate

* Retranslated from the Danish Version in the Text.

partly—in the sense of smell. The love of another human being involves, as a consequence, one's loving everything belonging to this other being; and this love is shown *in casu* by drinking in his or her breath, whereby, little by little, a peculiar nose-salutation is very ingeniously developed, which, naturally, is capable of gradually assuming various conventional forms.

Now we will proceed to the kiss proper—that on the mouth. How can its origin be explained?*

It does not seem very rational to assume that the motion of the muscles in breathing should of itself be the natural, purely physical reflex of a feeling of love in the same way as, for instance, certain half-spasmodic contractions of several muscles in the upper part of the face can be the immediate expression of wrath.

I do not believe either that the mere contact of the lips with another person's face was originally sufficient to express "I love you."

* Naturally, I am not concerned here with the various explanations given by the poets as to the origin of the kiss. Gressner, in an idyll of Daphnis and Chloe, has told us how both the lovers observed the sport of the doves in the grove and then tried to imitate it by pressing their mouths together as the doves do their beaks.

Naturally, the longing to touch the beloved one's body, to approach it as closely as possible, is a very essential manifestation of erotic emotion; but so far as the contact of the lips is concerned, there is reason for assuming that, originally, without its being the direct object, it had been, moreover, and perhaps in an equally high degree, a means of attaining a definite sensual gratification—a gratification that can be realised by the co-operation of the lips and mouth.

As the nose-salutation partly originates in smell, so the mouth salutation may, to a certain extent* at least, have its origin

* Besides the passive or receptive element of the kiss, which is essentially the object of my investigation, there is also, as we have previously noticed, an active element which must not be overlooked, viz., the contact and muscular sensation at the pressure. During the erotic transport, which excites the desire for something further of a brutal and violent nature, the body trembles with powerful muscular tension, and a pressure or bite of the mouth is one of the forms by which the passion of love finds expression. It is difficult, in these pages, to go further into this aspect of the kiss, which is regarded by certain philosophers as the main one, which it really is in respect to certain kisses under certain circumstances; but there are other kisses which are equally so originally, and in which the passive element seems to me the most essential. The origin of the love-kiss ought scarcely to be sought in any single source, whether in the sense of touch or in that of taste and smell combined. Unquestionably both these elements co-operate in its production, but under constantly varying conditions, just

in taste, or—which is even more probable—in both smell and taste? These latter, as you know, are very closely related to each other.

The dog shows his joy at his master's presence by licking the latter's hand. Why is this? It would not, I suppose, be too rash to assume that he as good as "tastes" him; loving his master, he therefore loves the taste and smell peculiar to him.

The cow licks her calf, and in this one may presumably see the expression of a feeling which is to some extent satisfied by this action. And why so? Undoubtedly by recognising by the tongue (and nose) the taste (and smell) peculiar to the calf.

Now, is it not exceedingly probable that the human kiss, in its original form, can, as to its passive element, be accounted for in an identical way, viz., as a purely sensual assimilation, by means of the nerves of taste and smell, of another person's peculiar qualities with respect to *gustus* and *odor?* These qualities have probably been much more conspicuous in primitive mankind than nowadays, just as

as the active or the passive element predominates, the kiss accompanies and interprets according to the erotic phase. In what follows I shall confine myself exclusively to the receptive element in the kiss.

it is quite certain that its faculty of taste and smell were far more developed than ours.

And have we not still, especially in the love-kiss, but also in kisses between women, very numerous representatives of the primitive kiss, which I should like to term the "taste-kiss." I have many times pointed out, in the preceding pages, the part which taste plays in kissing; and I shall now add what I have often heard young girls say to a lady they had kissed amorously: "Your kisses taste so nice."

From being a natural expression for love the sucking, tasting kiss has, in course of time, become reduced to nothing more than a simple inspiratory movement of the lips, which, by analogy, has come to express many other feelings, such as gratitude, admiration, compassion, tenderness, etc. It has become at length so degraded as to be used as a purely conventional salutation.

If this reasoning be correct, then the mouth-kiss, in the course of its development, presents a perfect parallel with the nose-kiss. Both these forms of greeting were originally closely allied, but the mouth-kiss had better conditions for development than the nose-kiss. It has become a salutation of a considerably higher

sort, and whenever savage tribes come into contact with civilised nations the nose-kiss is gradually discarded. Such, for instance, was the case in Madagascar. There is no doubt that savages can express very deep emotions by the nose-kiss. A French missionary tells the story of how he was received when he went back to the island of Pomotu: "When we approached the country all the population assembled on the beach. They had harpoons in their hands, for they imagined we were enemies; but, as soon as they saw my cassock, they shouted, 'That's the Father, away with the harpoons,' and when we reached the shore they all rushed forward to kiss me by rubbing their noses against mine, according to the custom of that country. The ceremony was not very agreeable to me, and I was not altogether pleased at having to take part in it."* Civilised people, on the other hand, regard the nose-kiss as something highly ludicrous, and I doubt if any poet has the power of casting a halo of romance over it.

The mouth-kiss, on the contrary, is redolent of the purest and most delicate poesy. A German minnesinger rhapsodises

* Retranslated from the Danish Version in the Text.

thus: "The radiant sun is darkened before mine eyes when I behold the roses that bloom on my darling's mouth."

"He who can pluck these roses may rejoice in the depth of his heart. Many are the roses I have beheld, but never have I looked on any so splendid."

"How beauteous are the roses one gathers in the valley; nathless her delicate, ruddy lips conjure up thousands that are lovelier still."

L'ENVOI

Wherefore, methinks, let ev'ry man
Kiss as he knows best, will, should, can ;
But I and my beloved know this :—
How we ought properly to kiss.—PAUL FLEMING.

W. F. H.

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Oliver & Boyd
Edinburgh.

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