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### A STAGE KISS.

From an Actor's Point of View.

Amy (wildly)—I love you! I love you!  
Sir Athol (crossing to her quickly)—I know it! My own!

[They embrace passionately.]

So runs the manuscript, and Sir Athol presses his lips to hers for several seconds, and Edwin and Angelina in the pit—for it is Early Closing Day in Brixton—squeeze each other's hands and look into each other's eyes and yearn.

"You bet he's pretty sweet on her in reel life," observes the sapient Edwin on the way home, "or he'd never kiss her like that!"

"Oh, do 'ush!" replies his divinity coyly. "Not but what I thought so too."

And the ardent young stockbroker's clerk, who has a reputation in his home circle as a "regular flirt," feels that he is being wasted in mere business; that, loving the stage, he would make a splendid "stage lover," and, with no other qualification than that of suburban Don-Juanism, he forthwith joins Mr. Squeeger's X Company—"fit-up" towns—and starts on his theatrical career at Salisbury Town Hall.

In reality, a stage kiss is a thing of little ecstasy to the parties concerned. It is, as a rule, dreaded by both. Where the artists are of a nervous temperament, the thought of the stage kiss keeps them awake at night. Never since the days of Judas has anything in kisses been invented so completely giving the lie to the real article. In the first place, however it may seem from the front, it is not easy to put much "soul" into the affair under the eyes of several hundred spectators. It would not be easy, I imagine, in actual life; it is doubly difficult when all these hundreds of spectators—many of them themselves experienced in the art of oculation—have nothing else to attract their attention, and, having paid their money, mean to see the thing properly done. The audience forgets that, which is probably the case, these ardent lovers are the merest acquaintances, possibly even not on speaking terms outside the theatre, especially if there be a great discrepancy in their respective salaries. No, the dress circle sees nothing but a sweet, pretty girl clinging to her lover, her blue eyes wet with tears, her sunny ringlets falling on his manly bosom.

But what does he see, poor fellow? He is the earnest lover. He has exchanged vows with her, three inches from her nose, bellowing into her face in order that the "gods" may hear and understand. She has assured him, in the same bellow, that his love is not in vain; she has loved him, oh! ever since before she saw him. He "thrills"—a stage thrill is comparatively easy—and starts on the kiss. He looks her full in the face (for now he is bound to), and what does he see?

Glaring into his, two unearthly looking eyes, the lids painted dark blue, with a touch of red body-color in each of the inside corners. The lashes are thickly coated with a black substance not unlike burnt cork. On her brow he can discern the line of the wig with the sunny ringlets attached. He knows the sickly taste of the ultra-sanguine, rosebud lips. But, loyal to his author, he plays the man. He strains the yielding form to his heart; he "kisses" her; the curtain falls on a picture of unexampled love, and, as the lights in the auditorium are switched on, Edwin and Angelina yearn again. And lo! Angelina's soft eyes are filled with tears, she is that happy!

Who, who can question the stage-lover's right to a bottle of stout, or any other refreshment he may require, after this? And surely the ghastly business is no less disagreeable to the poor feminine victim, fresh, very likely, from all the comforts of a refined home, with

flowers and things. If only in a stage kiss each wasn't so near to the other! If only each could not see the other! But, by Jove! he can, and that is where the trouble of stage kisses comes in.

The crowning torture of a stage kiss may be—and, where possible, is—avoided by the "kiss implied" method. Here the author's victims shoot their heads over each other's shoulder, and, by their ecstatic thrills, give the audience to understand that a kiss is going on somewhere in the region of the ear. But the "kiss implied" must be done very adroitly, or the implication will be missing; and he must carefully guard the lapel of his dress-coat from contact with her cheek, for both their sakes. But it is a cowardly subterfuge at best. Or it may be that a mere planting of the lips on her brow, just near the wig, will suffice; but the "kiss paternal" denotes a flabby, degenerate sort of lover. Again, if matters have not gone to extremes, the young man may get off with kissing the lady's hand; the "kiss reverential" is a good way out of the difficulty when practicable. But the best way of all, from the actor's point of view, is to cut out the objectionable lines and episode, or to re-write the play.—From The Sketch.

### A Famous Newspaper Correspondent.

There are few if any newspaper men in the United States with a more brilliant record than that achieved by Mr. William E. Curtis, the famous Washington correspondent of the Chicago Record-Herald. Among newspaper men as well as among the careful readers of newspapers, it is generally conceded that Mr. Curtis is the dean of the large colony of trained journalists at the national capital. His relations with the eminent men in Washington are so intimate and so personal, that he has an immense advantage over the ordinary correspondent. They give to him their confidence, knowing that he will properly discriminate what should be said and what should not.

The newspaper career of Mr. Curtis began in Chicago in 1872. Starting as a reporter, he worked his way upward rapidly to the position of managing editor, which he resigned to become the secretary of the South American Commission—a government appointment. While in this position, Mr. Curtis traveled extensively in Central and South America, producing several popular volumes as the literary result of his labors. Later on, in co-operation with Secretary of State James G. Blaine, Mr. Curtis organized the work of the Bureau of American Republics, and was placed in charge of that organization; and at the World's Columbian Exposition he distinguished himself by his labors as the executive head of the Latin-American departments. As correspondent of the Chicago Record, Mr. Curtis' travels carried him not only into all quarters of the United States, but almost everywhere abroad. His letters to the Record from Japan and China were published in book form; likewise his letters from England, Germany and France, and also those resulting from his travels in Mexico and in South America. A letter from Mr. Curtis is published in every issue of The Chicago Record-Herald, daily and Sunday.

"I cannot sing the old songs."  
Her promise sweet and terse,  
She kept. But then she went and sang  
The new ones—which was worse.

—Town Topics.

Wife—Isn't fifty dollars a month a good deal to spend at your club, considering it takes you away from home so much?

Husband—Yes. But it's worth it.—Town Topics.