

Are You In Love? (I)

They said they were in love, but were they?...When boy meets girl, the senses, naturally, come into play. God made you so that knowledge begins in the senses. But it only begins there. So you look at each other: the sense of sight.

If what you see is good, you are attracted by the body with all its ornaments, natural and artificial. You look into each other's eyes and try to make out what you see there, but you will perhaps see, at first, only that they are blue, brown, maybe green; that they are lively, sparkling, large or small, inviting, or perhaps not.

Then you listen: the sense of hearing. But again, at first, you may hear no more than tones and inflections, pleasing or unpleasant, the ring in her laughter, or a silly giggle. But if what you see and hear is good you are attracted, however superficially. Are you in love? Impossible!

Love at first sight is a romantic nothing. No such thing ever existed. Attraction at first sight is attraction of the lowest human order, almost entirely physical. It is akin to the attraction of masses in physics--the law of gravity on a sensitive plane. Just the same, it is good. You are not in love, but you may well be on the way to love; for love, like knowledge, begins in the senses. The mistake is to think that it ends there.

This first attraction, according to its intensity, will make you come back, or not. If you are but slightly attracted you may forget it before the week is out. If you are overwhelmingly attracted, I suggest you cross to the other side of the room or even leave the party early. Too much physical attraction is worse than too little. It can be disastrous because you may never go beyond it. And if you marry the girl, or the man, on that alone you will not stay together long. As soon as the china doll has lost some of her paint and she has chipped in a few places, you are through. It is surprising, too, how the strong arms of a dashing young fellow can weaken when there is nothing in them but muscular flexibility.

There are psychological differences between the human male and female. A girl's love ordinarily begins with an attraction of mind that only later becomes attraction of body. She may begin to like the boy because he is clever, a good conversationalist, or just an outright extrovert. Homely but cute, is the way she is likely to put it. But with men, invariably, love begins in the body and ascends to the soul. There is good reason for this: it is the man who has to come back, a necessity which the Creator pretty well cared for when He made woman (and not as in the animal kingdom, the male) the more attractive. For the same reason woman has become adept at making up with cosmetics and dress for what nature may not have given her. There is no reason to quarrel about this unless it is overdone.

(This is an excerpt from the article "Lesson for Lovers" in the February issue of the Catholic Digest. Another excerpt follows tomorrow and another Thursday.)

PRAYERS: (deceased) father of D. Leo Sullivan, '37 (1st Anniv); John Melley, friend of Bill Longhi (Ly); mother of John Tierney (OC); Aaron Mason, '29; Mrs. Catherine Conlon, aunt of John Collins (OC); Mrs. Walter J. Cummings; Mrs. John Weber, mother of Harold '22; father of Chuck Bourret, '48; Dennis Desmond, uncle of George Frazier (Dil); Sister John Marie, IHM; Charles Smith, uncle of Roy and John O'Neil (Al); Michael King, friend of Jim Manning (Wal); John Robich, friend of Steve Valetich, '47; Edward P. Brogan, uncle of Frank Brogan (Wal) and Tom Feeley (Zahm). (Ill) grandmother of John Halden (Bad); Philip Murray (CIO); baby of Prof. and John Nims. Eight Special Intentions.