



A Love-Song.

O, mistress mine! Where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear; your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low,
Trip no further, pretty sweetening;
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure;
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come, kiss me, sweet-and-twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.
—Shakespeare, "Twelfth Night."

St. Valentine's Day and Its Superstitions.

A mystery that is not likely to be solved, is just how any one of the several Saint Valentines became regarded as the patron-saint of lovers. It appears, indeed, that an old heathen festival in which young men and maidens took part, was held in the early ages on the 14th of February. Later, this day was set apart as the festival of the two most celebrated Saint Valentines, the one a priest, the other Bishop of Terni, both martyred on the same day during the reign of Claudius, and it is possible that the association originated in this coincidence, but nothing definite is known.

At all events, St. Valentine's Day soon became popular, and, whatever his connection, good St. Valentine himself, it is to be feared, was, ere long, not even an echo at the feast.

Chaucer and Shakespeare, both allude to the day, and delightful Samuel Pepys, who wrote his famous "Diary" in the reign of Charles II, speaks of it more than once. In his time, it seems, it was customary for married folk also to be "valentines," for he tells with his usual detail of how one "little Will Mercer" came up to be his (Pepys') wife's valentine, "and brought her name written upon blue paper in gold letters, very pretty, and we were both well pleased with it." "I am also my wife's valentine this year," he adds ruefully, "and it will cost me five pounds, but"—with resignation—"that I must have laid out if we had not been valentines."

Scarcely so generous was he as the Duke of York, who, he tells us, gave his valentine a jewel worth £800.

During the centuries, many pretty superstitions have become clustered about St. Valentine's Day, and among them all, none is prettier than the idea prevalent in parts of rural England, that all birds choose their mates at that time. How old this belief is, is not known, but it is at least as old as the days of Shakespeare, for he makes one of his characters say,

"Saint Valentine is past,
Begin, then, wood birds but to couple now?"

With the superstition, naturally, have become interwoven many love tests and "spells," which last, for nonsense' sake, even to this day. "It is customary in the Peak district," says a writer in T. P.'s Weekly, "for unmarried girls to peep through the keyhole of the house early on St. Valentine's morning before anyone else in the house is astir. They believe that if this is done fasting, omens of the year to come will be seen. For instance, should a cock and hen pass together, the girl may be sure that she will be married ere the year is out; if she sees a robin alone, it is a sign that she will have a fortune left her; if a sparrow fly up to the door and peck about as though for crumbs, she may take it as a warning to be careful, and

that her good name will be in danger unless she take heed; whilst if a hen stroll by, it is a sign that she will be an old maid.

"The Icelanders are very superstitious concerning the raven, and many quaint legends are associated with St. Valentine's Day and the doleful bird. In many parts of the British Isles, too, we find that the bird is believed to have a knowledge of the future. Old folk tales tell us that Odin, the great god, had two ravens, which were let loose every morning to roam all over the world, and to collect intelligence of what was going on. In the evening they returned, and would then perch on Odin's shoulder and relate to him all the news they had gleaned. As a reward, they were allowed one day in the year free, when they might, if they chose, vent their spite on any who had offended them in their wanderings. Folklore tales tell us that the ravens selected St. Valentine's Day as their annual holiday, on which they would play pranks with mortals—hence the belief in them as birds of ill omen on this particular day. An Oxfordshire tradition has it that the first person seen on St. Valentine's Day is the luck of the year. A dark man is supposed to bring much good fortune; but a dark woman means that there will be jealousy and strife. A red-haired man means that one's friends will be true; but a red-haired woman denotes that one will be unfortunate in business dealings. To put on any article of apparel wrong side outwards on this day is, by many people, considered a fortunate omen—particularly so with stockings; but in Scotland it is said that she who hooks in a wrong hole or buttons her clothes awry on St. Valentine's Day, will meet with some misfortune before the day is ended. A new dress, or even some trifling article of clothing, worn new on this day, is said to bring luck.

"Formerly, every swain sent his Phyllis a dainty Valentine epistle, she shyly tendering him her offering in return. The custom is still observed in rural districts, and much attention is paid to the color of the missive. Blue is said to be the luckiest color in the Midlands, and happy indeed is the lass who gets a filigree satchel with a wreath of forget-me-nots, or some other blue flower. A green valentine denotes that the lover is tiring of his flame, a yellow one that he is jealous, and an old saying runs:—

Blue is true, yellow is jealous,
Green forsaken, Red's brazen,
White is Love, and Black is Death.

Another rhyme of the Southern Counties runs:—

If you love me, Valentine true,
Send me a ribbon, a ribbon of blue,
If you hate me let it be seen,
Send me a ribbon, a ribbon of green.

"Charms and spells as a means of inspiring love potions have always been famous on this day. In the Middle Ages, such love medicines were advertised for sale, and it is well known that the ancients believed in their uses. Lucretius, the Roman poet, took his life in an amorous fit caused by a love potion, and Lucullus lost his reason in a similar way. Italian girls practice the following charm on the Eve of St. Valentine: A lizard is caught, drowned in wine, then dried in the sun, and its body reduced to powder. A little of this, sprinkled on the back of the man she wishes to marry, will cause him to turn to her, and she will wed him ere the year is out; but the charm must be worked on the Eve of St. Valentine. The Slavs say that to cause a man's heart to turn with passionate adoration

to a maiden, all she has to do is to cut, or prick, her finger, the ring finger being chosen, letting five drops of blood fall into a glass of wine, which she must afterwards give to the man of her choice to drink on St. Valentine's Day. He will then be madly in love with her."



Robert Cavalier, Sieur de la Salle.

Little Trips Among the Eminent.

THE HERO OF THE MISSISSIPPI.
(Continued.)

In 1678, the first step towards the accomplishment of La Salle's great dream of the expansion of the power of France to the westward seemed achieved. He had gone to France, and after a series of urgings upon those in authority—a publicity that was ever gall and wormwood to his shy and sensitive soul—had obtained a commission for the exploration of the far west, with authority to erect forts and to hold a monopoly of the trade in buffalo skins. It does not appear, however, that means to cover expenses were forthcoming, for it is known that La Salle, having exhausted his own money, raised extensive loans among his friends, loans to be repaid from the lucrative fur trade which was to be established.

These arrangements completed, he at last set sail for Canada with thirty followers, including the valiant Tontli, later known among the Indians as the "big one-armed chief of the French." (He had lost an arm in a former siege in Europe.)

On the 18th of November, the first division of the expedition for the west left Fort Frontenac—La Motte, the Recollet friar Hennepin, and sixteen others, in a vessel of ten tons. Following the north shore of Lake Ontario, in ten days the little barque reached an Indian town on the site of the present city of Toronto. At the mouth of the Humber it was frozen in, but the mariners cut a way out of the ice, and the vessel crossed without further event, to the mouth of the Niagara River, and thence up as far as the foot of the rapids.

Here a landing was made, and the party proceeded along the top of the cliff above the gorge to the Falls. One can imagine the breathless wonder with which the Frenchmen gazed upon the great cataract, then in all its pristine majesty, with the great, deep forest, for its setting,—the falls, "the like whereof is not in the whole world!" exclaims Father Hennepin in his journal. Here, it may be of interest to note that Father Hennepin's account of the now famous spot, is the earliest known. Also, there is still in existence a curious old draw-

ing made by him, amusingly guileless of perspective and faithful in detail,—the earliest picture made of the famous cataract.

Retracing their steps, the little party began to erect a fort at the mouth of the river, a process of no little difficulty, for the weather had become intensely cold, and it was found necessary to thaw the ground with hot water when putting up the palisades.

THE FIRST VESSEL ON LAKE ERIE.

In the meantime, evil fortune had fallen upon La Salle, who, in a second vessel, had also set out for the mouth of the Niagara. Thirty miles west from that point the little ship had been wrecked, and practically all of the provisions lost. The ropes and rigging of the wreck were, however, carried above the Falls to a point at which it was proposed to build a vessel to be launched on Lake Erie, and after marking out the foundations for two block houses on the high point where Fort Niagara now stands, La Salle set out on foot for Fort Frontenac with two men, and a dog that dragged the baggage on a sled. Nothing but a bag of parched corn was taken for food, and for two days the little party, struggling through the woods and over the ice, had no food at all.

Tontli, in the meantime, was left in charge of the ship-building, and the Indians gazed with amazement as the little vessel took form.

In the spring, fully equipped and rigged, and with five small cannons aboard, she was launched, and, with much ceremony and chanting of the Te Deum, was called the "Griffin." As the Indians had at times shown signs of becoming hostile, she was anchored a little way out in the stream, and here, at night, the Frenchmen slept in comparative security.

At last, about the first of August, La Salle returned, and on the 7th of that month the "Griffin" floated out upon Lake Erie, her sails the first to shine upon that expanse of broad, blue water.

MICHIILLIMACKINAC.

In three weeks, having passed the long chain of waterway via Lakes St. Clair and Huron, the Griffin reached the mission of St. Ignace of Michillimackinac, where were already the house and chapel of the Jesuit missionaries, and the houses of some French traders, in addition to the cabins and wigwams of the Huron and Ottawa villages. There seems to have been, however, but little welcome for La Salle at this point. All were alike, jealous of him, and somewhat suspicious of his designs, and even the pilot of his vessel appears to have been among the disaffected. Indeed, at a later day, La Salle blamed this pilot bitterly for the loss of the Griffin, which, sent back from this point with a rich cargo of furs, and commissioned to pay some of La Salle's creditors and bring back supplies, was never heard of again. La Salle always believed that she was purposely wrecked, and some point seemed to be lent to the suspicion by the report of some Indians that some men, ostensibly her crew, had been seized, while making way with canoes filled with furs, and had probably been killed by their dusky captors.

BUILDING OF FORT CREVECOEUR.

In the meantime La Salle, with Tontli and Hennepin, sailed down Lake Michigan with four canoes. The trip was by no means a pleasant one. There were storms, and wet, cold weather, game was scarce, and the food supply ran short, so that had it not been for the finding of plenty of wild grapes, and a deer killed by wolves, sustenance itself might have been a problem. Moreover, there was the constant tension of watching for hostile Indians, and the worry of the