

(Written for the "Canadian Illustrated News.")

MY VALENTINE.

O lady dear, with eyes so clear,  
Thou must not droop thus, nor repine,  
The air is soft, o'er field and croft,  
And wafts to thee my Valentine.

It is a dove, with wings of love,  
Trained wanderer o'er the welkin free,  
He bears the note, around his throat,  
Sweet-scented with a kiss for thee.

O pigeon, fly, across the sky,  
Nor steer a line from out thy way,  
One motion crossed, one moment lost,  
Were shadows on the light of day.

O Angelina, my love, my queen,  
Receive him on thy finger tip,  
And on his plume, of azure bloom,  
Imprint the rainbow of thy lip.

Look in his eyes and breathe replies,  
Pin to his ring a leaf of green,  
Then heaven will open and dreams of hope  
Will wrap us in their holy shoen.

The bird is gone—his goal is won.  
He nestles on those lips of thine,  
He comes to me—the green I see,  
Ah! Sweet, thou art my Valentine.

X. Y. Z.

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ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

"When they ask you what it means,"

Ophelia says:

"Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day  
All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window,  
To be your Valentine."

In the spring-time, in warm latitudes, when, as Thomson says, ethereal mildness comes, and birds are said to choose their mates, probably the custom of young persons choosing valentines or special loving friends on the fourteenth of February arose. There is a rural tradition that on this day every bird chooses its mate. In Chaucer, the morning star of English song, who is said to have distilled and rained gold dewdrops of speech and eloquence, we find the following allusion to the tradition:

"Nature,  
In easie voice, began to speak and say,  
Fowles take heede of my sentence I pray.  
Ye know well, how on St. Valentine's day  
By my statute, and through my governaunce,  
Ye do chuse your mates, and after fly away  
With hem, as I prikke you with pleasaunce."

Gay has left us a poetical description of some rural ceremonies used on the morning of this day:

"Last Valentine, the day when birds of kind  
Their paramours with mutual chirpings find;  
I early rose, just at the break of day,  
Before the sun had chas'd the stars away:  
A-field I went, amid the morning dew,  
To milk my kine (for so should housewives do):  
There first I spied, and the first evening see  
In spite of fortune shall our true love be."

Pennant, in his "Tour in Scotland," tells us that in February young persons draw valentines, and from thence collect their future fortune in the nuptial state.

The learned Moresin tells us that at the festival of Saint Valentine the men used to make the women presents, as upon another occasion the women used to do to the men, but that in Scotland on this day presents were made reciprocally.

Goldsmith, in that most delightful story, "The Vicar of Wakefield," describing the manner of some rustics, tells us "they kept up the Christmas carol, sent true-love knots on Valentine morning, eat pancakes on Shrove-tide, showed their wit on the first of April, and religiously cracked nuts on All-hallow Eve."

In that curious record of domestic life in England in the reign of Charles II., "Pepys's Diary," we find an entry dated, Valentine's Day, 1667: "This morning came up to my wife's bedside (I being up dressing myself) little Will Mercer to be her valentine, and brought her name written on blue paper in gold letters, done by himself, very pretty; and we were both pleased with it." From Pepys we learn that presents were invariably and necessarily given to the choosing party. An entry in his diary, February, 1663, records the following: "This evening my wife did, with great pleasure, shew me her stock of jewels, increased by the ring she hath made lately, as my valentine's gift this year, a Turkey stone set with diamonds."

True-love knots and betrothal rings are, in our opinion, more appropriate things for the day than the ridiculous caricatures with burlesque verses, or the sentimental prints, with a pair of lovers, in gorgeous array, undergoing initiation into wedded bliss before Hymen's altar, with cupids fluttering about like so many quiring cherubim.

Some of these "valentine rings" had love mottoes engraved thereon. Chaucer, in his "Troilus and Cressida," describes the heroine giving her lover a ring upon which a love motto was engraved, and receiving one from him in return. Shakespeare has more than one allusion to the custom which is absolutely enacted in his "Two Gentlemen of Verona," when Julia gives Proteus a ring, saying, "Keep you this remembrance for thy Julia's sake"; and he replies, "Why, then, we'll make exchange; here, take you this."

Within the hoops of the rings it was customary, from the middle of the sixteenth to the close of the seventeenth century, to inscribe mottoes or posies, such as

"IN THEE, MY CHOICE,  
I DO REJOICE"

"JOY BE WITH YOU."

"GOD ABOVE  
INCREASE OUR LOVE"

Some of these mottoes, though brief, are very expressive, and would, when accompanied by the gold ring, be more acceptable to the fair valentine than fulsome poetry, honeyed with a few compliments to her various charms and perfections, and expressive of the hope that the giver's love might be returned; or pages filled with bad poetry about Venuses and Cupids, love-sick shepherds, and cruel nymphs.

The nightingale, the thrush, and the burk enliven the woods with their melodious songs, and with their superb crescendos, and dying cadences and rapid succession of brilliant sounds, and, if we could understand the sense of their *trios, couplets, quips, quipios, &c.*, we should doubtless discover the expression of the sensations of these delightful songsters. In their brilliant bursts, lively delicate thrills, impassioned tones, we may imagine them saying to their valentines, in the language of Marlow:

"Come, live with me, and be my love,  
And we will all the pleasures prove  
That hills and valleys, dale and field,  
And all the craggy mountains yield."

Or again, in the language of Herrick:

"Live, live with me, and thou shalt see  
The pleasures I'll prepare for thee.  
The soft, sweet moss shall be thy bed  
With crawling woodbine overspread;  
By which the silver-shedding streams  
Shall gently melt thee into dreams.  
Thy feasting tables shall be bills,  
With daisies spread and daffodils.  
These, nay, and more, thine own shall be  
If thou wilt love and live with me."

But, to return to Saint Valentine, we know but little about him. The Calendar says he was a "Presbyter of the Church and was beheaded by Claudius the Emperor"; therefore we may presume he was a good Christian, and worthy the prefix of Saint. Wheatley, in his illustration of the "Book of

Common Prayer," tells us that Saint Valentine was a man of most admirable parts, and so famous for his love and charity that the custom of choosing valentines upon his festival, which is still practised, took its rise from thence. Surely the learned Divine does not mean to imply the word *galantry*, and that in that sense we should understand the word *love*. Be it as it may, the origin of the choosing of valentines has not been clearly developed. Mr. Douce, a learned commentator on Shakespeare, traces it to a Pagan custom of the same kind, during the Lupercalia feasts, celebrated by the Romans, in the month of February, in honour of Pan and Juno. The anniversary of the good bishop, or Saint Valentine, happening in this month, the pious and early promoters of Christianity placed this popular custom under the patronage of the Saint to eradicate the notion of its pagan origin.

The discoveries of antiquaries have rendered the recesses of Romish and Heathen antiquities easy of access, and that respectable body of "Dryasdusts" have come to the conclusion that Christian Rome has borrowed many of her rites, notions and ceremonies in the most luxurious abundance from ancient and heathen Rome. The feathers adorning the tiara having been handed down as a legacy from the Imperial Eagle.

In conclusion, let us return to "Pretty Ophelia," "The fair Ophelia," "Rose of May, dear maid, sweet Ophelia." And were we a valentine to any one of our fair readers we should most heartily pray that she may not be "divided from herself and her fair judgment," and in the absence of "a hoop of gold, a paltry ring, whose posy was *Love me and leave me not*," we should, after the fashion of Perdita and Ophelia, present her with a posy of rosemary, and violets, and pansies, giving to each its emblematic meaning, and make them as expressive as written language in their hieroglyphical sense.

"Rosemary is for remembrance  
Betwene us day and night;  
Wishing that we might always have  
You present in our sight."

Rosemary had this attribute because it was said to strengthen the memory, and was therefore used as a token of remembrance and affection between lovers; the violets, "sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes or Cytherea's breath," for *faithfulness*; the pansies for *thoughts*.

Home Items.

The opening of the Air Line of the G. W. R. was to have taken place on Monday.

Mr. Robitaille, of Bonaventure, has succeeded Hon. Mr. Chapais as Receiver General.

A valuable iron mine has been discovered in Charlotte County, N. B., near the famous red granite quarries.

It is said that Lieut.-Governor Trutch, of British Columbia, will resign at the close of the present session of the Legislature. It is added that he is an applicant for a position on the railway as Engineer or Director.

Mr. Justice Caron has been appointed Lieut.-Governor of the Province of Quebec. He will be succeeded in the Court of Queen's Bench by Mr. Justice Taschereau, whose place will be taken by Mr. Justice Casault, of the Superior Court of Kamouraska.

The late surveys have developed the fact that the summit of the Rocky Mountains, at Yellow Head Pass—where the Canadian Pacific Railway will come through—is only 3,502 feet above the level of the sea—or some 8,500 feet lower than the summit of the Rocky Mountains at the point where the Central Pacific road crosses.

The Perth Courier says that two gentlemen of that town have purchased works at Nananee for manufacturing dye-stuff from logwood, fustic, and other raw materials from which dyes are made. The home market for the manufactured article is very large, and fully warrants us in predicting the ready sale of all that can be turned out of this factory, it being the only one of the kind now in Canada.

Application is to be made to Parliament to incorporate a company to construct a railway from the Niagara River, at or near the proposed Queenston and Lewiston Suspension Bridge, to some point on the Great Western Railway, at or near the town of St. Catharines, with powers to make connections with the Queenston and Lewiston Suspension Bridge Companies in Canada and the United States, and with railways in the United States, and to provide facilities at stations and otherwise in the United States, for the promotion of its traffic.

The Provisional Directors for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway have been appointed; they are 13 in number, 5 for Ontario, 4 for Quebec, and one for each of the other Provinces. The Directors for Ontario are: Walter Shanly, Prescott; Major Walker, London; Col. Cumberland, Toronto; D. McInnes, Hamilton, and Mr. Sandford, Ottawa. For Quebec, Sir Hugh Allan, Montreal; Hon. Dr. Beaubien, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Quebec; J. B. Beaudry, Montreal, and R. N. Hall, Sherbrooke. For Nova Scotia, Hon. A. G. Archibald, C.M.G., Halifax; for New Brunswick, E. R. Burpee, C. E., St. John; for Manitoba, Andrew McDermott, Winnipeg; for British Columbia, Hon. Dr. Helmcken, Victoria. Sir Hugh Allan is President of the Provisional Board, and Major Walker Vice-President. The Pacific R. R. charter was signed on Saturday last.

WEALTH OF SILVER ISLET.—An official pamphlet bearing on the mineral lands of Ontario, published in Toronto and New York, is a rather curious and instructive document. The proprietors of Silver Islet tell us what they have done since it passed into their hands. For an outlay of \$73,000 they have acquired more than 107,000 acres of land; out of the proceeds of the land itself they have paid for the purchase of the property about \$200,000; for smelting and freight about \$100,000; for labour and construction about \$260,000; for sundry miscellaneous expenses about \$50,000. They have paid all these expenses, have divided among their shareholders over \$260,000 in cash, and have now on hand about \$75,000, or an amount equal to that with which they went into business. Most of the precious metal which has yielded this munificent return has been taken from Silver Islet, at the time it was taken into possession, measuring not more than eighty by one hundred feet, but which has since been enlarged by bulkheads and the rock extracted from it to over two acres. The company have nearly 100,000 acres of mineral lands left that, as yet, have hardly been touched.

Mr. Paul Bert, a French physiologist, has succeeded in making an artificial pair of Siamese twins by joining two young white rats. He cut away a strip of skin from each, sewed the two together by the edges of the wounds, and nature united them by the healing process. They were not amiable toward each other, therefore he killed both by poisoning one.

Our Illustrations.

THE SKATING TOURNAMENT AT THE MONTREAL RINK.

On Tuesday week a large crowd assembled at the Victoria Skating Rink, in this city, to witness the tournament for the prizes presented by Their Excellencies the Governor-General and the Countess of Dufferin. The programme contained a variety of figures, many of them exceedingly complicated, which were executed with much grace by the competitors. Of these there were four sets, viz: ladies, little girls, boys, and gentlemen. The ladies' prize was a beautiful locket set with turquoises and diamonds, which was won on a tie by two of the fair competitors. In awarding the prize, His Excellency announced his intention of duplicating it, so that each lady should have one. The girls' prize was a pendant with a centre of turquoises, presented by Lady Dufferin. The boys' prize, also given by her ladyship, was a gold medal; but as this was not ready, Lord Dufferin presented the successful candidate with a fine gold breast-pin as an earnest of the recompense. The gentlemen's tournament was a failure, owing to the absence of several of the competitors, who declined to appear owing to the alleged incompetency of three of the judges. The prize was finally awarded to the only one who put in an appearance. Our illustration shows two of the lady contestants performing the backward roll.

THE MARMORA MINES.

We give this week two sketches illustrative of mining operations in the township of Marmora. The first of these shows the quartz-crushing mill attached to the Williams mine, on the River Moira. It is in full operation, and the results have been attended with wonderful success, the yield being equal to \$15 and \$20 per ton of ore. The mill consists of twenty stamps, driven by an engine of forty horse-power. The ore in which the precious metal principally occurs is mickspickel or arsenical pyrites. It is anticipated that by an improved process of treatment, of which Professor Chapman of the Toronto University is the inventor, a much larger yield of gold will be obtained, besides employing the arsenic for valuable economic purposes. The works are distant about thirty miles from Belleville.

The subject of the second sketch is the pit of the Blairton iron mines, from which large quantities of productive ore have been extracted. The pit is about 150 feet wide, 300 feet long, and 90 feet in depth. On the east margin is erected a steam engine, which supplies the power for steam drilling in all parts of the pit below. The engine also works a crane by which the ore is raised and emptied into the cars for forwarding. There are employed at the mines about 200 men, and the ordinary rate of production is 200 tons per day. The ore is usually sent to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, or Buffalo, where it undergoes the smelting process. The metal has proved to be of such excellent quality that the proprietors of the mine are unable to fill all the orders that come in.

THE FIRE AT THE QUEBEC COURT-HOUSE.

The Quebec Court House was destroyed by fire on the morning of Sunday, the 2nd inst. The fire is supposed to have originated under the flooring of the third story, near the office of the Clerk of the Crown. Very little was saved, the valuable library falling a prey to the flames, together with many important documents. Among the latter were a record in the great bank suit of the Banque National vs. the Bank of Montreal, and a will involving the disposal of a quarter of a million. The insurance is stated to have been \$25,000 on the building, \$10,000 on the furniture, and \$1,000 on the Bar Library.

The Court House was completed in 1804, at an expense of \$120,000. It was a plain building, without any pretence to beauty or ornamentation, standing at the corner of St. Lewis Street and the Place d'Armes. "Of its appearance," says the author of a Guide Book to Quebec, "we can say nothing in praise. Had no ornament been attempted by its designer, it might have passed unnoticed by strangers; but as it is, there is sufficient in it to attract the eye, and cause the observer to exclaim, 'How very ugly!' One consolation we may have is, that it must decay, and when replaced, it will, no doubt, be by a building more befitting the improved taste of the community. We regret to say that it is too substantially built to give us any hope that it will speedily crumble away." The fire has, however, speedily done the work in the place of Time, and it is to be hoped that the site will soon be occupied by a building of greater architectural beauty.

The plate

IL PENNEROSO,

after the painting by Hicks, and the cartoon,

THE DOMINION VALENTINE FOR 1873,

require no comment.