

AN ANCIENT VALENTINE.



IN the last number of the *Antiquarian*, page 74, was given, a biographical sketch of Governor Simcoe. The following, (which we reprint from the *American Historical Record* for February, 1872), referring to an event in his early life, shows that his devotion to the God of War, did not entirely absorb his attention. "In the winter of 1778-9, while in command of the Rangers, he established a fortified camp at the village of Oyster Bay on the north shore of Long Island where vessels were well sheltered from storms on the Sound. There he made his headquarters at the house of Samuel Townsend, who was a member of the New York Provincial Assembly in 1776. While he was there, Major Andre and other young British officers visited him; and in the house was an object of special attraction in the person of Mr. Townsend's daughter Sarah, then about sixteen years of age. She was the toast of these young men, and Simcoe was regarded as a most fortunate being in basking in the daily sunshine of her charms. His heart seemed to have been somewhat touched by the "tender passion," and on St. Valentine's day he addressed a poetical Epistle to Miss Townsend, asking her to choose him for her Valentine. To this he appended a pen-and-ink Sketch of two hearts interpierced by an arrow, and bearing respectively the initials of her and his name of which a fac-simile is given on the following page.

Miss Townsend did not choose the large and handsome Lieutenant-Colonel to be her Valentine. He had cut down her father's fine apple orchard, and formed an *abatis* of the trees for his fort on Fort Hill, and her political sentiments were not in accordance with his. She did not wed her lover and, like other maidens who became matrons, have this effusion framed and hung up as a precious memento. She died unmarried in December, 1842, at the age of eighty years.