

St. Valentine's Day

In the PUBLIC EYE

How the youth of other times celebrated the festival of love which antedates Christian era. Romans observed event first, seeking sweet-hearts

THE ROSE IS RED, THE VIOLET BLUE, SUGAR IS SWEET, AND SO ARE YOU.

The oldest valentine verse in the world. It has traveled to all quarters of the globe and been translated into every tongue. It is believed to have originated in the Greek in some much more lovely form.

ROME and St. Valentine's day so far back in the Christian centuries that the festival of love had not yet annexed to itself the name of a Christian saint! So says a writer in the New York Herald.

On this great day the Sacred urn, prominently placed so that none might ignore it, was doing a rushing business, bubbling forth its fateful messages for the coming year. For the first valentines were not sweet or saucy documents, of lighter import, like the sugary rhymes of our grandmothers' time nor the flowers and gloves of today. Instead, they were real human beings whom destiny paired for the space of a twelvemonth.

It was the duty of the Roman youth on the day of the feast of Lupercalia, which, according to ancient chroniclers, coincided with our St. Valentine's day, to repair to the Sacred urn in search of a sweetheart. In the urn were the names of the maidens of the neighborhood, written on slips of parchment. The Roman youth never thought of shrinking from the ordeal. Any attempt on his part to go around by the back streets on his way to business or to spend the day on the golf links instead of doing his duty as a man and a citizen would have marked him out as a man with no sporting blood in his veins. So, assuming an air of gay indifference, he took his place in the line, called upon the gods for succor and boldly plunged his hand into the Sacred urn.

Then, like the historic Horner, he pulled out, let us hope, not a plum, but, in the modern language of admiration, a peach. If so, his face lighted delightfully and he hurried out to buy an unusually rich and varied assortment of sacrifices for the altar of Venus, Cupid and the rest of the really important divinities. If, however, fate had gone against him and he had drawn an undesirable maiden from the bowl, striking his clenched fist fiercely upon his brow, he strode in silence from the place of doom.

But he never thought of demanding a second helping. No, the gods had willed it, and so it was to be. He had acquired a sweetheart for a year, and he stuck by her until next St. Valentine's day gave him the opportunity to break the engagement.

It was in the year 496 that Pope Gelasius, noting with pain the ancient method of observing the feast of Lupercalia, which took place on February 15, decided that something would have to be done about it. As the youths of the time seemed to be strangely addicted to the practice of pulling the names of young women out of the Sacred urn, it was decided that it would not do to deprive them altogether of this playful diversion. Instead, they could be led by easy stages away from the heathenish portent of the game. So the leaders of the reform movement hit upon the scheme of permitting the Sacred urn to perform on its usual day, but the names of saints and martyrs were substituted upon the papers which the youths picked out of this receptacle for those of maidens in the community. Then, reasoned the reform leaders, the youths could consider that the saints whose names they drew out were their patron saints and could pattern their lives by those of these worthy persons. This would be quite as exciting as picking out the name of one's next season's girl.

And to make the transformation of this day of pagan rites into a Christian festival complete, it was decided by the reform element that the day should henceforth be known as St. Valentine's day and that it should be set on February 14 in honor of the fact that in 270 A. D. the good bishop, afterward St. Valentine, was beheaded by the persecutors of the early Christians because he had performed the remarkable miracle of making his jailer's blind daughter see.

The Day of Lovers.

St. Valentine's day February 14 indeed became, but, alas for human frailty, although the name was changed, the spirit of the day remained as before. Down to our own time it is still the day of lovers the world over. The names of the saints which came out of the Sacred urn instead of those of the pretty girls of old Rome were powerless to turn the thoughts of young men away from love and happiness toward self-sacrifice and piety. The ancient usages persisted, and thus originated the incongruous situation whereby an ecclesiastic of ascetic life and pious history has given his name for all time to a festival devoted to the impassioned sentiment of lovers.

In later days, when valentines had come to be delicate missives in which lovers expressed their ardor in their own verses, the duke of Orleans was one of the many great personages who thought the inditing of valentine verses not too small a goal for his poetical ambitions. It was after Charles was taken prisoner at the battle of Agincourt, in 1415, that he did the greatest amount of his valentine poetizing. He composed the first written valentine which now exists. As he was a prisoner of England for 25 years, he had plenty of time to polish up these dainty epistles, and he left



about 60 of them, a strangely bright and lovely memento of that dreary sojourn in the Tower of London. The following is typical of his valentine verses:

Wilt thou be mine? Dear love, reply—
Sweetly consent, or else deny;
Whisper softly, none shall know—
Wilt thou be mine, love; aye or no?

Spite of fortune we may be
Happy by one word from thee;
Life flees swiftly, Ere it go
Wilt thou be mine, love; aye or no?

It was an ancient idea cherished through many generations that St. Valentine's day was the day of mating for birds as well as for men and women. Herrick refers to this charming fancy in this lovely valentine verse:

Oh have I heard both youths and virgins say
Birds chose their mates and couples, too, this day,
But by their flight I never can divine
When I shall couple with my valentine.

Lovers less talented who found rhyming on their own account exceedingly difficult were obliged to resort to books which were regularly published with a view to supplying valentine verses and replies appropriate to all stations in life and all trades. These verses, published in small volumes, with highly colored frontispieces, were not usually of the loftiest order.

Reply valentines were very much the fashion for a time, as were those in which there was a play of words upon some particular calling. A valentine for a butcher and his sweetheart, included among those supplied in a little book published in London, was as follows:

Valentine From a Butcher.
Strong as an ox my love for thee,
Thou tender bit of veal;
'Thou small thin eyes as pigs' they see
Too well my love to steal.
This hast thou done, and something more—
Deprived me of my sleep;
Oh, then, be kind, nor shut the door
Against the hapless sheep!

To this the beautiful maid of the butcher's fancy replied:

Good Mr. Butcher, I must own, although I am no glutton,
I'm rather partial to the taste of beef, pork, veal and mutton;
I've half a mind to grant your suit, but one thing makes me falter;
I fear, when tied, you'd take me straight to Smithfield in a halter.

In some instances lovers also chose St. Valentine's day as an occasion on which to reprove their sweethearts and cut them off from further communication, as shown in the following verse:

To a Lady, Fond of Public Places.
I have kept company, it's true,
At least for three long months with you.
But this last week I've found you out;
You're given for a gadabout;

And I've been told your pretty face
Is well known in each public place.
And if we wed you'll soon adorn
My brow with antlers from Cape Horn.
Thus prudence makes me to decline
Your company, my Valentine.

To this the reply was tart, not to say shrewish. Indeed, our own more polite age would scarcely care to hear so crude a letter from a feminine versifier. These valentine books, from which most of the love-lorn swains of the early eighteenth century culled the lines that they wrote to their loves, were published in collections bearing such titles as "Cupid's Directory," "Carvalho's Polite Valentine Writer" and "The Frolicsome Valentine Writer," the last a collection containing many examples of early eighteenth-century humor of a sort which almost reconciles one to the merry professional jests of one's own era.

The Manufactured Valentine.

It was a girl who started the business of manufacturing valentines for sale in the United States—a most enterprising girl named Esther Howland, who had just been graduated from Mount Holyoke seminary and resided with her father in Worcester, Mass. In 1840 she received from England a manufactured valentine, the first she had ever seen. It interested her so much that she decided to see whether she could make some of these valentines and find a sale for them. With lace paper, cut-out pictures and printed verses she manufactured several samples and gave them to her brother to take out on the road to show customers when he went on his trip for their father's stationery business. To her amazement, her brother returned with orders for \$5,000 worth of valentines. Miss Howland, of course, was quite unable to carry out the orders herself, but she called her young woman friends to her assistance, and they immediately started what later developed into a very large and prosperous valentine manufacturing plant. In a few years they were sending out \$100,000 worth of valentines each season.

The comic valentine, which was painfully ugly and coarse, and which flourished very broadly at one time, has now almost entirely passed away, at least in its cruder forms. It used to be the greatest happiness of the schoolboy's life to purchase a very large assortment of these wretched comics and leave them on the front doorstep of his school-teacher, male or female. Then when he had left a few comics on the steps of the village constable and paid his respects in similar fashion to the Sunday school superintendent he felt that St. Valentine's eve had been well spent. The joy of St. Valentine's day has diminished greatly since the practice of throwing valentines on the doorstep, ringing the bell and running, gave place to the less exciting method of mail delivery. But in spite of up-to-date interference with the valentine spirit, St. Valentine's day always will hold its own. The most famous valentine verse ever written is still being attached to homemade valentines in painfully neat children's handwriting in various happy districts where boys and girls have real fun without spending much money for valentines or anything else. Roses are as red as ever and violets are still true blue in the joyous land of boy and girl love affairs where reigns the good St. Valentine.

THOMAS W. LAWSON



Thomas W. Lawson of Boston who jumped into the limelight again by his charges of "leaks" from Washington to Wall street, is not only a grotesque figure in the eyes of the financial community, which has been familiar with his methods ever since he first became prominent, more than a quarter of a century ago as a joint promoter with "Gasman" Addicks of the great speculative bubble, the Bay State Gas company of Delaware, but is a very painful one to thousands of investors, great and small, whose losses in the last score of years have run into the millions.

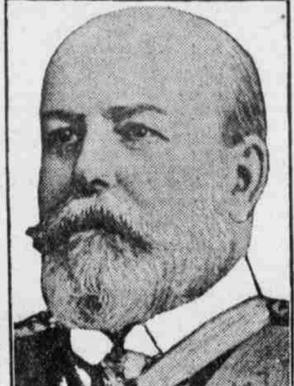
Lawson began his speculative career over 40 years ago as a clerk in a Providence bucket shop. It was said at the time that he was a natural-born speculator, and his shrewdness of perception, his ability to grasp speculative opportunities and his agility and daring as a market operator soon began to attract attention in State street, Boston, which afterward became the scene of his activities. While a very young man, Lawson had accumulated a fortune and had achieved some local reputation as a financier.

As far as Wall street's recollections go, he first attracted attention on the New York stock exchange as one of the most active promoters of Bay State Gas of Delaware. This stock once reached a quotation of \$28 a share on the New York stock exchange. At high prices a large amount of the stock was unloaded by Lawson and his friends on the public, among which he had by that time built up a substantial following, largely through his spectacular methods.

NEW RUSSIAN PREMIER

The appointment of Prince D. B. Goltzine as Russian premier marks a definite victory for the reactionaries in the councils of the czar. While the prince comes of a family with a historical reputation for liberal leanings, he himself belongs to a group of extreme conservatives. He is a firm believer in the responsibility of ministers to the czar alone, and his attitude toward parliamentary government is summarized in a saying of his known all over Russia: "The duma will keep quiet as soon as it gets a beating."

Goltzine is the first prince to become premier of Russia, though in 1904 Prince Mirski was minister of the Interior, a post which before the proclamation of the constitution in 1905 corresponded largely to the premiership. Goltzine is head of one of the four noble families of Russia, a family which once refused the crown and which has been as distinguished in arts and letters as in war and diplomacy. The new premier embodies the military, diplomatic and literary traditions of the family; he is a general of cavalry, has been a member of the imperial council and enjoys a high reputation as a writer of poetry and fiction. As grand huntsman of the czar he was before the war a conspicuous figure in the society of the Russian capital. He was born in 1860.



PRESIDENT OF HAVERFORD

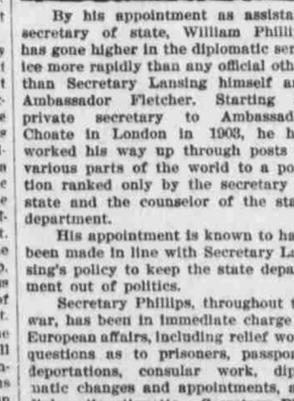


The recent selection of Dr. William Wistar Comfort, professor of romance languages at Cornell university, to be president of Haverford college is in line with the recent policy of several colleges in bringing young blood into their managements, as he is only forty-two years old, having been born in Germantown on May 27, 1874. His mother before her marriage was Miss Susan F. Wistar. In 1902 he was married to Miss Mary Faes of Lake Forest, Ill., and he is the father of four children, a son and three daughters.

Throughout his scholastic career at Haverford, Doctor Comfort was a leader in the activities of his class, being its president in its senior year. He also was president of the college Y. M. C. A. In his junior and senior years he was a member of the first cricket team and he took an interest in music as well as athletics, being a member of the mandolin and banjo club.

Doctor Comfort was graduated from Haverford in the class of 1894. He took his A. B. degree at Harvard in 1895, his master's degree one year later and his degree of Ph. D. in 1902. He was instructor at Haverford college in 1897-98, studied in France and Germany for several years, and returned to Haverford in the fall of 1901 as instructor. In 1903 he was made associate professor, holding that position until 1909, when he resigned to become the head of the romance languages' department in Cornell university.

PHILLIPS' RAPID RISE



By his appointment as assistant secretary of state, William Phillips has gone higher in the diplomatic service more rapidly than any official other than Secretary Lansing himself and Ambassador Fletcher. Starting as private secretary to Ambassador Choate in London in 1903, he has worked his way up through posts in various parts of the world to a position ranked only by the secretary of state and the counselor of the state department.

His appointment is known to have been made in line with Secretary Lansing's policy to keep the state department out of politics.

Secretary Phillips, throughout the war, has been in immediate charge of European affairs, including relief work, questions as to prisoners, passports, deportations, consular work, diplomatic changes and appointments, and diplomatic etiquette. Secretary Phillips is a graduate of Harvard university and Harvard law school, has been second secretary of legation at Peking, chief delegate to several international gatherings, and was appointed third assistant secretary of state March 13, 1914. His transfer to the assistant secretaryship increases his salary from \$4,500 to \$5,000 a year.