



BEAUTIFUL, BLUE EYED HAIDEE. A GREEK VALENTINE.

Between the meadow and the sea, Oh, lovely maid, I look at thee Till morning doubt is painful, And yet the heaven within thy eyes, Provoking joy and swift surprise, Imprints no look disdainful.

Often within those orbs of blue I see a glance so kind and true Its welcome seems undoubted, And then come spectral shades about, To rule the pretty picture out, When all my hopes are routed.

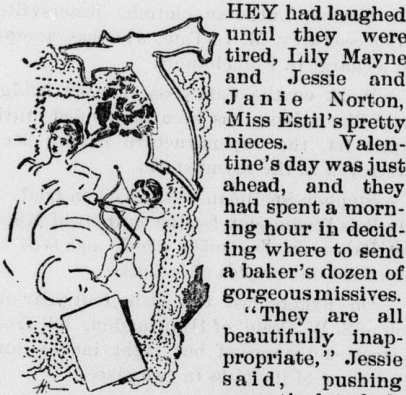
Like the rarest tinted rose, In a richly favored clime, Within some princely garden, Thou standest in the ranks serene, The matchless-fair, unquestioned queen, Of loveliness the varden.

Beautiful superb Haidee, None there is more fair to see Than you the wide world over! Not Helen of the Trojan days, Dido's nor Cleopatra's face, Could surpass so a lover.

And now if you should grant to me The utmost that high hope can see, No force our hearts shall sever, But in a realm of subtlest grace, My love shall have the crowning place, And joy will reign forever.

JOEL BENTON.

A RANDOM DART.



HEY had laughed until they were tired, Lily Mayne and Jessie and Janie Norton, Miss Estil's pretty nieces. Valentine's day was just ahead, and they had spent a morning hour in deciding where to send a baker's dozen of gorgeous missives. "They are all beautifully inappropriate," Jessie said, pushing away the lot of addressed envelopes with a laughing sigh. "But this one, who will it fit most? I can't for my life decide! It must be sent, though. Must! That's flat. It cost a whole half dollar. It would be simply awful to let that amount of valentines go to waste."

major himself took them in and blushed through all his tan and grizzle at sight of the big envelope, which had a spray of roses and a pair of turtles dove embossed upon the flap. "I wonder what girl is trying to guy me," he said as he sat down in his own snugery, tossing it to the other side of the table. In reality he was full of eager curiosity to see the inside of it, but a sense of what was seemly for a man of his gray hair made him leave it ostentatiously alone until he had read through all the morning's grist of letters. He even answered one or two of the most imperative and read another page of the morning paper before he allowed himself to touch his valentine. "Really that is not so bad—not half so bad as it might have been," he said, holding the pink Cupid at arm's length. Through living so much alone he had got into a way of talking to himself. He had few visitors. His own man, Mulligan, was a model of discreet silence, and Marina, cook and housemaid, never ventured to address more than three consecutive words to "the master." Semioccasionally he spent an evening at the club. Once a year he made a round of ceremonious calls upon old friends—friends that had been his mother's rather than his own. Otherwise he kept entirely to himself. That made talk, of course. His neighbors and their gossips could not understand why a retired officer, more than reasonably well to do outside of his half pay, should elect to live thus, more than half a hermit. What did it matter that he was a bachelor, without near ties of blood? There was Louise Estil, almost his age and single, devoting herself to many things, and especially keeping in touch with social life. The girls, Lily and Jessie and Janie, were not really her nieces, only the children of her step brothers and sisters. Yet she kept them about her half the time and gave them all sorts of pleasures. Even when they were absent she was never at a loss. All the young people, especially all the young men, adopted her as aunt and haunted her cozy house. Major Sterling knew all this. Sometimes he smiled over it. Oftener he sighed. The smile was for the hints of doubled down pages in his past; the sigh for the intolerable loneliness more and more enveloping his present. He had a man's memories of women whom he had fancied, some hotly for the minute, some delicately afar off and wavering. He had never seriously made love to any of them, mainly that he had been too busy with doing a man's part out on the frontier. He had always meant to marry; he might even have done it long ago, only that chance

the least bit like anybody I know." With that he took up the envelope and carefully scrutinized the address. It was written in a big hand, fashionably angular, and noncommittal. As he fingered it he felt something inside. He turned it upside down, shook it and sent the card spinning to the other edge of the table. "I see!" he said, his eyes twinkling. "Those wicked, wicked young persons Miss Estil harbors have plotted against us, their elders and betters. They think I may be fooled into believing she had a hand in it. As if I did not know Louise Estil better than anybody in the world." Then in his mind he ran over their long acquaintance. He had been dangerously near loving her back in the old days when she was his mother's pet, and Tom, her youngest stepbrother, his own especial chum. He remembered quite clearly how it had made his heart beat to see her come tripping up the walk, and how gloomy he had been for a whole week when Tom let him know, quite incidentally and as a matter of course, that Louise was going to marry young Cary, the railroad president's son. Then he had pulled himself together and gone west, putting her so completely out of his mind that he had felt only a mild surprise at meeting Cary ten years after with a wife upon his arm as unlike Louise as possible. And it had not given him the least thrill to come back and find her free. He had listened with only languid interest when a club veteran told him how Louise had sent away her rich lover for no other reason than that she did not choose to marry him. "You do not expect me—not the least, young ladies," he said after a little, smiling at the faces his fancy conjured up. "But I shall go to your party. More, I shall claim my rights as a valentine. As I remember, if you found out what girl had sent one you were entitled to kiss her in the face of daylight. I wonder how you will like that. I wonder still more if I shall have courage to carry through so daring an enterprise." Major Sterling sometimes Major Sterling found that out beyond peradventure. The Estil house stood in the town's outskirts, sitting quite apart in the middle of wide grounds. It was gray and solid and roomy, with doors hospitably wide. He found it lighted up from top to bottom and within it as merry a company as man might care to see. It gave him an odd turn to be met by young Tom Norton, son and image of his old chum, and hustled off into the big sitting room, where 30 other men were already congregated. "You see," Tom explained as they went along, "Janie has got this in hand. She is always up to some mischief. I tried to make her hear reason; but you know, girls never will pay attention to what their brothers say."



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Good St. Valentine.

He Has Not Deserted His Post in the Humdrum World.—A Word About the Wide Though Varying Demands for Valentines—Immense Establishments With Capital and Costly Talent Produce Them—And They Go.

Every valentine season brings out a reflective essay, generally congratulatory in tone, to the effect that the custom of sending tokens is dying out. One is led to conjecture who and what manner of people the gloomy essayists must be, whether too old to experience a thrill of happiness or too blind to observe the life of the common folk who are the preachers and moralists who now and then exclaim with extended hands and wide open eyes that marriage is getting to be a thing of the past. It is not a far cry from valentine sending and receiving to the day of Cupid's victory and crowning. Whether valentines always mean that consummation or not every union of hearts and hands implies countless days sacred to Cupid's patron saint well observed in the past and an earnest of more devotees for the same shrine. The boys and girls are not going to slight or miss the privileges their elders remember too joyfully to let pass in silence. Then, too, there is the interchange of those tender—but not the tenderest—sentiments which Christmas, New Year's and birthday greetings do not imply, something more than mere friendship, but less than marital love because the fates will have it so; also the fun, for there is fun without a sting in it for sensible folk who make the carnival day one of innocent merriment. Burns wrote sublimely, "Oh, would power the giftie gie us, To see ourselves as others see us," and why may not the power work through truth telling comic valentines? They are much pleasanter to take than Caudle lectures or sermons aimed at a mark. No, the most fashionable streets of New York, Philadelphia or Boston are not the places to study the extent of St. Valentine worship in this year 1928. There the reporter will hear from grumblers the same old story that the sales are falling off year by year. That means counted in dollars and of the gilt edged kind. A trip along the side streets may tell a different story. There, where the salesmen are laid on the forms each year, and sales of the most popular reach the 100,000 mark. From over the ocean come stories also of vast sums invested in valentine plants, with sales in average establishments of \$100,000 a year. The valentines must be up to date, and yet the profits warrant the expense of new machinery and devices to meet every fresh fad. Rice paper, plush, silk fringing and celluloid have come into play, and when a market gives out for a certain kind another is found and another until it is a back number and gives way to the next favorite. New ideas are the artists furnish as readily as for the picture market and the illustrated press. In comes the bike has held sway for years and comes up in new form each anniversary. Latterly the tandem has opened a new field for fancy, and we have not seen the last of the new woman nor of the Roentgen rays. Today there are more than 30,000,000 American youngsters walking in the footsteps of the lovers and frolickers of the past, and they keep the day as did their elders, signing and smiling with Cupid's patron saint.

Pitted Lovers' Woes.

The Late Rev. Dr. Houghton as the Friend of Lovers in Distress.

Dr. George H. Houghton of the Church of the Transfiguration in New York city is among the absentees this St. Valentine's season. He died very suddenly last November. The kind hearted pastor of the "Little Church Around the Corner" was most widely known on account of his Christian liberality in burying from his modest but still orthodox and aristocratic church the social sinners as well as the saintly righteous. He also gained repute as a sort of a latter day St. Valentine, or a friend of lovers in despair or distress. "It is not true that I am the St. Valentine of Greater New York and vicinity," said the genial rector, with a smile, when spoken to about this phase of his pastoral duties; "most certainly not. I do not pose as being a saint of any kind, but I do love young people, and if my sympathy for them in their rights and wrongs entitles me to become a competitor of the good old priest who was beheaded in the days of Claudius on account of his popularity with lovers, why, then, I suppose that I may be called the modern St. Valentine."

"I marry all who come to me and want to be married. Of course I have to use a great deal of judgment in these cases and show almost the wisdom of the serpent. I put both the man and woman under oath and make them solemnly swear that they are free to marry. If they look very young, I make tolerably sure that they are of marriageable age. Then I go ahead, and sometimes I help out the marriage service with a little private prayer of my own that they may be happy together. Richard Harding Davis' Van Bibber story of the young runaway whom I married is not overdrawn. They were far from home. They were young and alone in New York. Were they not better married?"

"What do I regard as my special forte? Well, perhaps it is that of advice giving. I think I am a born peacemaker, and I know that with the grace of God I have patched up many a home quarrel."

"Once upon a time there came to me a young man carrying two letters from his ladylove. One of the letters called him her lover and her dovey. The other was very cold and requested that their marriage be put off six months."

"What shall I do?" asked he, with the tears running down his cheeks. "Answer the lover, dovey letter," said I, "and let the other go." He did so, and in a few days they were happily married. It takes tact and management to make things go smoothly with our frail human machinery."

"Are such consultations frequent? They are. This morning at 5 o'clock I went out of town to see some people who are at sixes and sevens with each other and the world. I got home at 5 o'clock this afternoon, and before I had finished my dinner a young fellow—a fine young fellow—came to ask advice. And now I am as tired as four or five dogs and couldn't do any more talking even if I had a chance to do a bit of matchmaking, which I so dearly love."

"Do I want to become a love saint some day, like St. Valentine? Oh, no, indeed. I only want to be a good priest of my church. But if people want to call me the modern St. Valentine, they may do so in welcome."

Just Horrid.

Five mashers, grand in dash and swell, Ogled a fair one to her head. St. Valentine had marked them well, And straight to each this token sped:

"In this composite valentine Thy phiz and more beside pray see, I'll let thee choose the 'beaut' for thine— All mashers look alike to me."

Like Her Face.

Miss Cutting Very—Yes, May, dear, the valentine Charley sent you was so like you—so like your face. Miss May D'Upp—Like my face? "Yes, dear—hand painted, you know."

Valentine to a Musical Maid.

In a truly awful manner You can pound the poor "planner," You can bawl, You have had a singing master, And can sing the very plaster Off the wall!

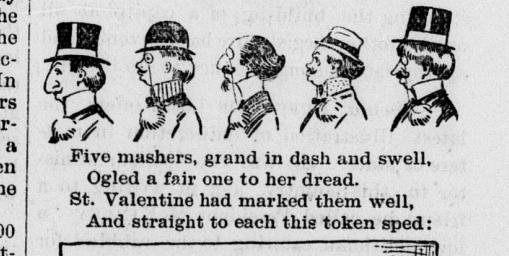
Valentine to a Musical Maid.

Let us twain keep our faith till death do part Us, thou and I! The world's in rhyme, sweetest Thy heart and mine are

Valentine.

Should we stray, lost within a lonesome land Where flowers refuse to bloom and deathful sand O'erweeps the way by which we may return, Love will still lead, though, lost, we wait and yearn.

And if by chance of grief and sorrowing Our disjoint hands no longer clasp and cling, Some whispered word of love will find its place, Exalting us to newer peace and grace. Let us twain keep our faith till death do part Us, thou and I! The world's in rhyme, sweetest Thy heart and mine are



Valentine. With the valentine before him, On his knee, What a precious thought came o'er him: Did she send it? Does she love me? How he sighed! "She's an angel far above me, But I wish her for my bride." Then he kissed the scented letter On his knee, "None could ever love her better— Sweet Marie! Did she send it? Has she meant it? Wish I knew!" Ah, the pity! Sue sent it, And he did not care for Sue! EARLE HOOKER EATON

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