Democratic Watchman.

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HER VALENTINE.

By Nettie K. Nehan.

Out of the heart of long ago,
Faded and yellow, by time, you know,
But cherished still in shadow and shine,
Cometh to me her valentine;
Here is the couplet, quaint and true,
The rose is red,
The violets blue—
And I dream in the gloaming soft and low
Of the lass who penned it long years ago.

A little maid with the bluest eyes
That ever danced neath the winter skies;
A roguish miss, whose love was told
To the sound of a kiss in a moonlit wold,
But here is the rest of her rhyming tune!
Love is sweet
And so are you,
And a boy's cheeks flushed at the final line
Of a rustic sweetheart's valentine.

Deep in the past, but dimly hid,
Behind her soft eye's drooping lid,
Quivers and arrows that Cupid keen
Shot at the Castle of Might-have-been.
And plainer still the couplet true,
The rose is red,
The violets blue—
And laughter low, which is half divine,
Ripples across her valentine.

With a cherished thought for the love it told
I tenderly open each yellow fold.
And my heart beats fast as it did one day
In a past that is hallowed and far away,
I can see the eyes that were deep and blue.
Love is sweet
And so are you—
So thought the lass as she penned each line,
And sealed with a kiss her valentine.

Flowers and candy are more to Milady's fancy nowadays than jingles, lace paper and arrow punctured hearts as St. Valentine tokens.

Her grandame may bewail this change as evidence of a mercenary ring that seems to jangle the sweet belles of the twentieth century out of tune with the ternal melody of Cupid. But Milady's tastes must be appeased, even in such changes of mind as affect affairs of the heart and of art. Therefore, it will be found that, while costly valentines are a back number, the flower and candy trades bloom and bloom marvelously on the eve of that day, when the paths of the good old saint and the ever-youthful and mischievous Cupid run parallel, as they yearly have, it seems, pretty near since time was.

DESIRE TO GET EVEN.

In the case that formed the basis for this decision a West Philadelphia woman, with a desire to "get even" with her sister-in-law, sent her one of the alleged "comics" with these inscriptions, some printed, some written:

To my Valentine: Trouble maker. Scandal. Lies. Other's people's business. Slander. The woman with a mischievous tongue.

To stir up a row is to you such joy
That the whole of your time in such work you employ.
If some one had courage to muzzle your jaws,
The neighbors would hail the good deed with applause.

It contained a woman, a pair of scales and a scroll. On the scroll was "License—This is to certify that I may lie at any time that I think there is money in it."

All of which is submitted as evidence of "regards of the day" whereof there used to be a deluge, but which are nowadays comparatively as few as are the costly ones, with "frills an' fixin's," from anonymous swains to the women of their hearts.

The tendency of the times in Valentine tokens is all against this ancient notion of the swain hiding his light under a bushel of lace paper. There is no chance of candy and flowers going begging if they have the sniff of being the real thing coming from a friendly hand; and, besides, anonymous sweetmeats always suggest the possibility of tragedy.

MANY ARTISTIC REMINDERS.

While the complicated affairs of lace are few, there are many artistic and inexpensive reminders of the day in various forms less wearisome than the eternal postal. Playing cards that open out in a full hand of hearts, each containing a little jingle, have on the cover the miniature reproduction of the organ of life, with Cupid doing a spearing stunt, and the inscription "From heart to heart," with room for the names of the sender and the recipient.

It is, of course, quite appropriate that Cupid should be depicted on an automobile-shaped valentine booklet as the chauffeur of the horseless vehicle; and the verses therein carry along the idea that he has a leading part in this game of latter-day transportation.

There are many pretty little affairs of colored pasteboard, ribbons and the like, designed for children, which are the most attractive of this season's valentine novelties.

There is one at which two tiny mortals are forging hearts on Cupid's anvil; another in which Cupid is chauffeur, with a dainty maid as passenge in a flower-be-decked auto; another in which love is engineer of an equally unbusiness-like looking locomotive. All of which are doubtless destined to become nine-minute wonders to youngsters after the candy contents have disappeared.

HUMOR AIMED AT AUTOISTS.

Humor aimed at autoists is not always of kindly brand, as, for instance, this:

"I'm king of the highway and street;
I scare every horse that I meet,
My chauffeur is in jail,
When he isn't on bail;
But no cop my red devil can beat."

This is on a postal card with a red devil—of sulphurous, not gasoline brand—standing in a position that seems to indicate absolute ownership of everything in sight.

There is a card, designed for members of the bar, which some rising young barrister—having risen in his wrath at its receipt—may use as a basis for confirming Judge Staake's opinion. In one corner is a typical little bleed'ng heart, arrow-punctured; in another the reproduction of that ancient musical instrument, the lyre—the veiled allusion being made obvious by the verse between:

"Where there's a will there's a way
To break it, the legal sharps say—
And, between you and me,
A contingent fee
Is a case of the devil to pay."

There are, of course, many cards, bubbling over with sentiment. Sometimes they cost no more than a cent, and yet they may serve as a ready-made mouthpiece in expressing, or, rather, mailing, the outpouring or sentiment from your heart.

COMPLETE GUIDE TO LOVE.

Many of them have been handed down, with little or no change, from the times when "Gentlemen and Ladies' Polite Valentine Writer" furnished what's-what in this line to as eager an assemblage of pupils as pours now-adays over hand-books that profess to be complete guides to those who seek to live and move and have their being in society. For instance:

"If you'll be mine,
I will be thine.
And so good-
Morrow, Valentine."

And this:

"Round is the ring that has no end,
And so is my love for you, my friend."

Now, that the Twentieth Century maid can be expected to believe such a protestation as this if there is no accompanying ring. In short, the sentiment doesn't seem to ring true, judged in the light of these practical times.

And, therefore, it is that, more and more St. Valentine's day, like Halloween, when Cupid also holds sway, doing serious damage in antic disposition, is becoming a time for the making of presents that mean something to the maid of today. There are in the shops many little tokens that are appropriate to the sentiment of the day, and yet may be of use. The heart is often reproduced in these little gifts—heart shaped pen wipers, heart shaped emery bags and the like.

Only remember that while the maid of yesterday did knit, her descendant of today is likely to be more fond of doing "nit," and that a heart shaped box of candy will go much further toward her good graces than anything in the "sewing" line.

LOOKING BACK TO YESTERDAY.

Looking back to the day before yesterday, it may be interesting to take a glimpse of the customs the basis for which the ancient writer could find nothing in the life of St. Valentine to justify.

A fourteenth century English writer records: "It is a custom never omitted among the vulgar to draw lots, which the term Valentine, on the eve before Valentine's day. The names of a select number of one sex are chosen by an equal number of the other, put into some vessel, and after that every one draws a name, which for the present is called their valentine, and is looked upon as a good omen for their being man and wife afterward."

In the Connoisseur, of London, of 1776 is found this account of a curious species of divination practiced on Valentine day, or eve: "Last Friday was Valentine day, and the night before I got five bay leaves and pinned four of them to the four corners of my pillow and the fifth to the middle, and then if I dreamt of my sweetheart, Betty said we would be married before the year was out. But to make it more sure I boiled an egg hard and took out the yoke and filled it with salt, and when I went to bed ate it, shell and all, without speaking or drinking after it. We wrote our lovers' names on bits of paper and rolled them up in clay and put them into water, and the first that rose was to be our valentine. Would you think it, Mr. Blossom was my man. I lay abed and shut my eyes all the morning, until he came to our house, for I would not have seen another man before him for all the world."

And nowadays? Well, if the latter-day Mr. Blossom wants to bloom in milady's heart to the exclusion of all other budding lovers, he will do-well to bank on such things as the hereinbefore-mentioned heart of diamonds set in the purple fragrance of a huge bunch of violets.

For the world wags, and Cupid never lags an inch behind.

Ask Ban on Mah Jongg by American Churches.

A protest against the playing of Mah Jongg by American church members, on the ground that it is the leading gambling device in use in China, by means of which as much as $1,000,000 is won and lost in a single night, has been made by the National Christian Council of China, according to a statement made recently by Rev. Paul Hutchinson, of the committee on conservation and advance of the Methodist Episcopal church.

The adoption of the game in America has appalled China christians, and has brought about a critical situation in Chinese churches, where the playing of the game previously has been frowned upon, Mr. Hutchinson said.

Mah Jongg is too intricate and subtle for the occidental mind, and since it is only a social fad in America, will soon disappear, Rev. Hutchinson predicted.

"Chinese christian leaders have appealed to American christians through the Federal Council of churches of Christ to discourage its use in America," said Mr. Hutchinson, explaining that they did not raise the question as to the ethics of the game itself, but only the fact that it is used for gambling in China.—Record.

A Veteran.

In the old days of the draft—stories are popping up about them even at this time—an examiner was putting Sambo through a course of questions.

"Any previous military experience?" he asked.

"Lord, yes, boss," replied Sambo. "Ise an old-timer. Ise been shot at three times befo' they ever was a war."

AN ENGLISH VIEW OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

From "Headway," a publication devoted to discussion of questions of great public interest such as political, social and financial problems confronting the world, we reprint the following article on the League of Nations by the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Balfour. Balfour, as you probably know, is one of Eengland's really great men. He has held almost every cabinet office in the Empire and been so long a student of world affairs that his view of the League is worth reading, whether you favor it or not.

The League of Nations has now completed its fourth year of active life, and it behooves us to take stock of what has been accomplished during that eventful period, and to consider our present position and future prospects.

I do not on the present occasion propose to attempt the task, for which, indeed, I have neither the time nor, in all respects, the necessary equipment. I content myself with some brief observations on points not always perhaps sufficiently considered either by ourselves or by our critics.

Critics, indeed, we have in plenty, and the vehemence with which some of them exercise their functions has always surprised me. Indifference on the part of certain sections of the public was to have been expected; for there are many who feel but a languid interest in international relations until war, or the threat of war, is loudly knocking at their gates. Again, it is natural that many should be sceptical about our permanent success. For we are admittedly pioneers in a new adventure; our course is certainly difficult, perhaps perilous; and those who doubt of our future can make a plausible case. But, in addition to the indifferent and the sceptical, there are some who are violently hostile; and their attitude is harder to explain.

It may be that some friends of the League have given provocation. They have not been content with defending its principles; they have thought it necessary to treat it as an infinitely superior substitute for the "old diplomacy," an infallible prophylactic against the disease of war. I do not myself hold that this is the best way of approaching the subject. The "old diplomacy" is necessary, and the League is never likely to replace it. No doubt, like other forms of human intercourse, it has often been grossly misused. A nation that wishes to play the part of a bully or a bandit will take care that its diplomacy matches its policy. It has always been so in the past; we need not expect it to be different in the future. But, on the other hand, the services rendered by the diplomatists of nations reasonably and pacifically inclined have been of infinite benefit to international harmony, and even in the millennium diplomacy must remain the necessary instrument of international intercourse.

But the real question is not whether the "old diplomacy" is good or bad, but whether it is sufficient. Does it give us, can it by any possibility give us, all we want? I find it hard to believe that anybody who has seriously reflected upon the lessons of history can answer in the affirmative. For, after all, it was created to serve the interests of individual States in their relations, friendly or otherwise, with the rest of the world. If it also served the interests of the world, as doubtless it often did, this was because the interests of the two happened often to coincide. The League of Nations, on the other hand, while constitutionally incapable of interfering with the autonomy of its constituent members, fosters by its very nature the sense of international comity, and provides a machinery incomparably better fitted to further the good of the whole than any which could be supplied by ordinary diplomacy, devised as this was to further the separate good of each individual part.

There are doubtless many who admit that the great experiment was worth making, and that the framing of the peace treaties was the proper occasion on which to make it, yet are anxiously inquiring what prospects there are of its ultimate success. They are aware that it has been tried under conditions which are singularly unpropitious. The League was framed to include all the nations of the earth. But three of the greatest among them—America, Germany and Russia—are not within its ranks. It was designed to deal with a world in which peace was solidly established between communities whose frontiers had a reasonable prospect of performance. But even now the frontiers remain in some cases doubtful and undetermined. It was designed to prevent a social system, working normally and peacefully, from being again engulfed in such abysses of horror and destruction as those into which it was plunged by the authors of the Great War. But five years have passed since the armistice, society is not yet normal, the horror is not wholly overpassed, nor has the destruction of wealth and credit been nearly repaired.

Never was an infant institution beset with difficulties so far in excess of those contemplated by its contrivers. Yet who can deny that, even under these untoward conditions, the League has worked, and worked well? It has performed more than one task to which (through no fault of its own) the "old diplomacy" had shown itself unequal. It has supervised the administration of communities torn by racial antagonism and historical resentments—witness Danzig. It has dealt with frontier problems of extraordinary complexity; and even where its award has (inevitably) satisfied neither disputant, as in the case of Upper Silesia, it is admitted that the arrangements made for maintaining the economic life of the divided territories have been crowned with a most satisfactory measure of success. It has played the leading part in the financial reform of Austria. It is, I trust, in a fair way to perform the same great service for Hungary. It has preserved peace where war seemed certain, as in the case of Serbia and Albania. It has settled most difficult international disputes, as in the case of Sweden and Finland. It has succeeded in establishing a long-desired Court of International Justice, which has already demonstrated its value as a tribunal for deciding juridicial questions where governments are at issue and diplomacy has failed to find a solution. I will not attempt to enumerate its performances in such tasks as those dealing with international waterways, controlling the spread of epidemics, alleviating the lot of political refugees, and diminishing the miseries of famine-stricken provinces.

Now I am the last person to minimise the patience and the ability which individual members of the Council and the Assembly, aided by their admirable staff, have shown in dealing with these varied, and often most difficult, subjects. But it is all important to remember that their successes have been due not merely to their own efforts, but to the fact that these were made in the name and with the authority of the League of Nations. Now for the first time in the history of the world international public opinion has been given a permanent organ of self-expression; for the first time it is conscious of a great mission, for the first time it has been supplied with machinery for carrying that mission into effect. Its agents, therefore, and its representatives, whether they be members of the Assembly or of the Council, speak and act, in their collective capacity, with a kind of authority, which, be it great or small, has few precedents in the experience of mankind. Each individually is the delegate of his own country, and as such has special duties to perform. But his country is a member of the League; the League is embodied in its Assembly and its Council, and these, like all living political organisms, develop qualities and characteristics of their own, which are more than the sum of the qualities and characteristics of their individual members. Neither of them will ever knowingly be the mere instruments of particular ambitious, or the support of particular interests. The spirit fostered by the League is as wide, nay, wider than the League itself.

Hostile critics may industriously pick out cases where, in their opinion, the League has failed; cases where it has done nothing, or has done wrong. But what is the value of such cavillings as these? The League makes no pretence to infallibility. It is neither omniscient nor all-powerful. And surely the vital question for us all is not whether it fails to do some things which some persons would like to see done; but whether it does things which certainly ought to be done, and which no other organization in existence, or in contemplation, is capable of doing. Who can doubt what the answer should be? The League has existed for four years only—a mere moment in the history of civilization. Yet unless I be greatly mistaken, it has, even in this brief period, shown itself capable of performances which should give pause to the most prejudiced among its critics, and hope to the least sanguine among its friends.

But There Aren't Many.

St. Peter was examining a newly arrived immigrant seeking entrance. He had given his occupation as editor and publisher. Following is a transcript of the testimony:

Q. "Ah, yes—of the world's greatest newspaper?"

A. "No, sir. Just a common rag."

Q. "Circulation the largest in your city?"

A. "No, sir; oh, no, indeed! One of the smallest in the country."

"You'll do," said St. Peter. "Pick your harp."