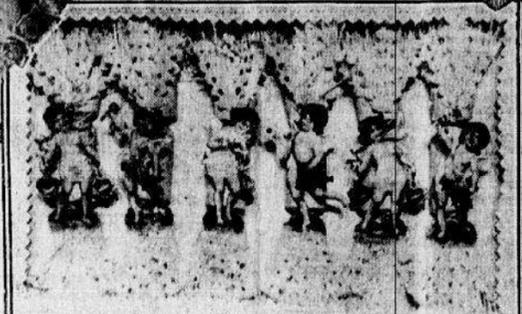


# St. Valentine's Day

## Its Legends and Customs



Custom rules the world for no matter how much we may deny that we are custom fettered the fact remains that we follow blindly curious old and unwritten laws without so much as asking the reason for so doing. The method celebrating St. Valentine's day is one of the best examples of this, for if the sender of one of these love missives were asked to explain just why it was sent on this special day the answer in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred would be "because it is the custom."

It is a pretty and picturesque idea which has decreed that on St. Valentine's day, which in the Roman and Anglican calendar falls on February 14, young folk should exchange greetings of love set forth in verses or emblematic pictures, and this has been practiced certainly for the last three hundred years. The legends of Saint Valentine's day are far from satisfying. For search history as we may there seems to be no real reason why this Cupid's feast should be given that name. The saint who bore the name of Valentine was not of a sentimental nature. He wrote no love songs, nor does history record any love affairs in connection with his life.

He was a bishop or pope of Rome, who remained steadfast in his faith during the persecution of the Christians by the Emperor Claudius and was cast in jail for this reason. While he was incarcerated there history tells us that he cured the jailer's daughter of blindness. His fate was anything but sentimental, for

when the miracle was made known to the authorities they beat him with staves and later he was beheaded. His body is preserved in the church of St. Praxedus at Rome, where the gate now known as the Porto de Popolo was formerly called the Porto Valentinol or Valentine Gate.

Another Valentine, too, may have had a share in the day, but he had even less to do with sentiment. He was like-wise a bishop, and one of his acts was to heal the son of Cratan, the rhetorician. This miracle worker chokied to death on a fish bone. His memory is still revered in Germany and Italy, where prayers are offered to him for the cure of epilepsy. So, it would seem that neither Valentine would seem eligible to the honor of being the patron saint of lovers.

An old English dictionary of the eighteenth century gives the following definition: "Valentines day (in England). About this time of the year the birds choose their mates and probably thence came the custom of the young men and maidens choosing valentines or special loving friends on that day." This is very pretty, but hardly the real foundation for the custom.

The renowned antiquarian Francis Douce suggests in one of his books written in 1807, that Saint Valentine's day is a Christianized form of the Roman feast held during the month of February in honor of Pan and Juno. At that time it was customary to put the names of young women in a box and to have young men draw out the slips bearing them. It was a barbarous, pagan feast for

many of the girls so won were carried off into slavery. The Christian clergy found it impossible to stop the custom during the feast of the god and goddess, but they finally succeeded in substituting the names of saints for those of young girls when the slips were ready for drawing. As the names came out the young men were asked to pray to the saints whose names were on the papers they received. The result was that the lottery of girls at the Roman festival ceased.

As far back as 1698 history records incidents of St. Valentine's day, such as parties where maidens and bachelors would meet and each write their names upon separate billets. These billets were then rolled up and drawn by way of lots, the men taking the girls' billets and vice versa. After the drawing each girl and man found themselves with two valentines. However, there seems to have been but little attention paid to them, for the man became the devoted cavalier of the girl whose name he drew. It seems, after all, to have been the man's privilege to choose and the girl's drawing amounted to a mere form. There was dancing and a supper where each bachelor appeared

### BROOKLYN TABERNACLE

PASTOR RUSSELL'S WEEKLY SERMON

Manila, Philippine Islands—General W. P. Hall, second in command of the United States army, and at one time governor of the Philippines, is here in company with Pastor C. T. Russell, Professor F. H. Robinson, Dr. L. W. Jones, J. T. D. Pyles, E. W. V. Kuehn and R. B. Maxwell, the special committee of foreign missions investigation appointed by the International Bible Students' association. They were heartily welcomed and given every aid for resting and missionary activities among the Filipinos. Pastor Russell gave two addresses today to large audiences, chiefly Americans. He had a very earnest hearing. We report his address in the Manila grand opera house from the text, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven" (Matthew vi, 10). He said:

Many of us have learned to appreciate the republican form of government as the very highest form of civil administration. I trust that I am not one who behind the most patriotic of you in my appreciation of the great government of the United States which many of us believe is the noblest that has yet risen among men. Nevertheless, the Bible teaches that Messiah's reign will be that of a monarchy; not only so it will be a very exclusive and aristocratic monarchy. Additionally, it will be most autocratic—theocratic; the will of its subjects will not be consulted in the slightest particular.

#### The Fifth Universal Empire.

At first, in alarm, we are ready to say: "Would not that be a most dangerous condition of things?" Could any royal family, however noble and generous, be entrusted with such autocratic power without fear of its being misused for the enslavement of the people, for the aggrandizement of the rulers. Have we not learned this in the history of the past 5,000 years? Do we not see the necessity for curtailing and controlling the powers of kings and governors? Are we not more and more brought to realize the necessity that the people shall rule, whether in congress or in parliament, in doumas or in chambers of deputies?"

Yes, my dear friends, I heartily accede to all this, but when I shall describe to you the nature of the kingdom that is to be established, and its personnel, all your fears will assuredly flee, and you will rejoice exceedingly that the Divine arrangement is what it is in respect to the theocratic kingdom

way of involving all the 10 kingdoms represented in this prophecy. But that is not the special point of interest in my subject, rather, I am discussing the character of Messiah's kingdom, which is to rule the world, overthrow sin and death and uplift humanity from ignorance, superstition, sin, weakness and death. The declaration is that Messiah shall reign until He shall have put down all insubordination, and that the last enemy to be destroyed will be death. (I. Corinthians xv, 25, 26.)

This is the kingdom for which the Master, Himself, taught His followers to pray. Nothing slight or insignificant will be the outcome of that glorious, Messianic reign of ten thousand years. At its very beginning Satan will be bound, with all that signifies—the repression of evil and darkness. For a thousand years the Sun of Righteousness shall pour forth the light of truth and grace upon our poor, fallen race until the knowledge of God's glory shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. (Habakuk ii, 14.) Eventually all willful opponents of that kingdom will die the second death, from which there will be no redemption, no recovery. But meantime, all the willing and obedient will be rising, not only from the tomb, but also out of all the weaknesses and fruitless of the present time, up, up, up to the fullness of perfection of life, although they will not live again in this perfect sense until the thousand years shall be finished. With the close of that reign of righteousness, work it shall have accomplished its work of delivering the growing creation from the bondage of corruption, sin and death, Messiah will abdicate the throne, as it is written, "He will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that He may be all in all." (I. Corinthians xv, 24.)

#### Smiting the Image's Feet.

The prophecy declares (Daniel ii, 41) that in the days of those kings, represented by the toes of the image, the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom which shall subdue all kingdoms, and which shall never be overthrown. It shall "be given to the people, saints of the Most High God, and they shall take the kingdom and possess it forever, even forever and ever." (Daniel vii, 18, 27.) In the picture God's kingdom is symbolically represented as a great stone hewn from the mountain without hands—supernaturally. It shall smite the image in its feet, and forthwith "the iron, the brass, the silver and the gold shall become like the chaff of a summer threshing floor, and the wind shall carry it away," but the mountain shall increase until "it shall fill the whole earth."

Thus, in a figure, or symbol, God pictures things now shortly to come to pass. I know not how much to expect from the war between Italy and Turkey, but Rome and Constantinople stand for, represent, the two legs of the image, for be it remembered that each in turn was the Roman capital, and representative of the image. We are certainly justified in watching with considerable interest the present war and what it may be leading to in the

more than any other part of the world. You know that the cause of wrong has triumphed as often or oftener than the cause of right. You know that today these kingdoms of Europe, styled kingdoms of God, are threatening one another as they have done in the past. You know that great gains, great battles and great monster torpedoes, such as the world has never known before, are being prepared by these various nations for use, either aggressively or defensively, against one another, while they all claim to be Christ's kingdoms. Is this logical? Is this rational? Most assuredly not!

We must go to the Bible for true information on this subject. It tells us that these kingdoms are not the kingdoms of God, but "kingdoms of this world." It tells us that Satan is the Prince of this world. (John xiv, 29; Ephesians ii, 2); that he is "the God of this world"; "that now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience"—so much more numerous than

#### For Child's Welfare

New York, Feb. 10.—Quietly and unheralded, Mrs. Elizabeth Hoover Thatcher started on her trip around the world on what is to be a world-wide movement, fraught with billions of good to the children of the world. She is going on child welfare and will have visited practically all of the important cities of the globe, suggesting and offering suggestions where possible.

Her trip will take her through England, touching France, Germany, Belgium, Russia, China, Japan, India, Australia and back to San Francisco, Mrs. Thatcher is a resident of Flor-

ence, N. J., and active in the "National Congress of Mothers."

She holds a responsible position as auditor of this movement founded by Mrs. Theodore W. Bixey of Washington, D. C., and by Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst. She has been active all her life in such work as would help or tend toward the uplift of American children, and in thus having the opportunity of studying at first hand conditions over the world, she accomplishes one of her greatest desires, and it is her express hope that after she returns to New York she will be able to have gathered many new ideas which will be of help in this country.

#### The Election Hath Obtained It.

Come with me and take a cursory view of God's great work thus far accomplished. For more than 3,000 years God gave no clear intimation of what He intended to do for the fallen race. Then He made a statement to Abraham, so clear, so explicit, that St. Paul

declares it was a statement of the Gospel in advance. God said to Abraham, "I intend to bless the world, which could only mean I intend to relieve them of the curse of death which came upon them through Adam's sin. God added to Abraham, "This blessing which I will bring to all the families of the earth will come through your posterity—in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

God's due time for bringing this blessing was still future; the blessing intended could not come until Messiah should come; but, meantime God gave to the natural seed of Abraham, through Moses, the law covenant, which offered them eternal life and an inheritance in the kingdom if they could keep the law. Of course, they could not keep the law because it was a measure of a perfect man's ability, and all the remainder of the world, the Israelites were imperfect sinners. Nevertheless the offer and their attempt to keep the law brought them great uplift of heart, so that when Jesus came to them a considerable number were ready to receive Him, did receive Him, and He received them. They became sons of God, through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, at Pentecost and afterward. These were the spiritual seed of Abraham, begotten of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Himself being the head, or first; the others were counted in as members of His body.

Israel had been hoping for a share in Messiah's kingdom, and St. Paul explains, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The blinded Israelites are still cast aside, but not forever. The Divine blessing shall come to natural Israel just as soon as spiritual Israel shall be completed. (See Romans xi, 25-34.)

What did the "election" obtain? Of what did the faithful "Israelites indeed" become heirs by accepting Jesus and by the Pentecostal blessing? We answer that they became identified with Messiah's kingdom and heirs or inheritors of the glorious promise made to Abraham, that in this kingdom all the families of the earth should be blessed. But how many did there were not a sufficient number of Jews found worthy to complete the kingdom class. The kingdom, therefore, could not be inaugurated then. God had foreseen this and through the prophet had promised that some would be gathered from the Gentiles to complete this kingdom class. The entire work of this Gospel age has been the calling of this "elect" class, for the kingdom. If we have rightly viewed the matter, the foreordained number will soon have been found, the election will be at an end, the accepted will be glorified as the kingdom, and Messiah's reign of righteousness will begin.

But notice now the course of all belonging to the kingdom class, throughout this age. They are not reigning with Christ, but suffering with Christ. And Jesus explained this; they are, in the Royal Family, because begotten of the Holy Spirit; they are indeed the kingdom class, because they are affil-

ated with the great king; but they have not yet entered into their glory. They will do so only by the power of the first resurrection. Thus it is written, "We must all be changed," because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

Our Lord, Himself, was the pattern, the forerunner of all these. After His consecration and His begetting of the Holy Spirit, He was tested even unto death, even the death of the cross, before He experienced His glorious resurrection change and ascended up and sat down at the right hand of His Majesty on High. Similarly all of His followers, after consecration, must be tested, their loyalty must be proven, before they can share with Him in "His Resurrection."

Partly for the testing of these, their development takes place in a time when Satan is the prince of this world, and when his power is permitted to be exercised against them at it was exercised against their Lord. The message to these is, "The kingdom suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." As our Lord suffered violence from the prince of this world, so will His followers, for "the disciple is not above His Lord." His promise to His followers is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation ii, 10.)

So, then, we perceive that God's kingdom class, the followers of Jesus, have been suffering violence, just as did their leader, for righteousness' sake. That the persecutors had not known and done their evil work intentionally, St. Peter intimates when he says to the Jews, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers, for if they had known they would not have crucified the Prince of Life." Hence, in due time their blindness shall be turned away and they will look upon Him whom they pierced and mourn (Zechariah xii, 10), and God will pour upon them the spirit of prayer supplication, and forgive them and make the experience profitable to as many as shall prove willing.

Meantime, for 18 centuries, the Scriptures declare, "The world knoweth us not even as it knew Him not." God's saintly ones have not been generally the great, the influential, either in church or state. Just as Jesus and the apostles were not in their day. Nevertheless, the Lord knoweth those that are His. Scattered here and there, during the past 18 centuries, He has been dealing with them, preparing them, polishing them, fitting them as jewels. And He tells us that at our Lord's second coming He will make up His jewels—they will constitute the kingdom class, for if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.

If you are sure you will agree with me that those whom the Lord has been so carefully selecting, instructing and polishing in the school of Christ, who have been so effectively polished with the trials and disciplines of evil, will be the very class above all others to whom the glorious dominion of earth may well be entrusted without fear. Only those thoroughly loyal to God and to principle will be in that kingdom class.