AN ILL-USED SAINT.

VALENTINE HAS HAD BUT LITTLE RESPECT OF RECENT YEARS.

HE ONCE BETOKENED SENTIMENT.

His Name Formerly the Synonym of Chivalry, But Now the Cause of Caricature—History of the Religious Festival.

(Written for the Dispatch.)

What connection St. Valentine, presumably a pious man, who earned by serious thoughts and ascetic living the ecclesiastical prefix to his name, should have with the custom of dispatching, through the medium of the United States mails, all kinds of ridiculous missives, has always puzzled those who like consistency. If any saint representing a valentine could come to earth again, and peruse some of the doggerel rhymes of doubtful color attached to pictures of colors, too demonstrative to be doubtful, the worthy monk would probably bring suit for the abolishing of the custom, and the blotting of February 14th from the calendar.

The poetry of the day has gone. Only the memory of its romance remains. It was the mating time for the birds, according to the once popular belief. It was the universal mating-time, according to the popular idea, further developed. The earliest stages of the development of this interesting coupling of Cupid's name with the custom of the day is many centuries old. The custom prevailed in various parts of Europe of drawing lots for "valentines." A number of the unmarried of both sexes assembled, wrote each other's names on slips of paper, threw the slips into a common receptacle, and then drew them, the men the women's slips from one lottery-box, the women the men's from another.

The drawing then went on, the one who drew a certain slip becoming that person's valentine. Frequently the imaginary engagement, thus begun in the playfulness of a holiday gathering, changed later to a real one. This is not to be wondered at, when it is remembered that the knight was bound by the rules of Valentine's-Day to wait hand and foot on the lady whose name had been drawn by him in the lottery, and be her devoted slave for a whole year, or, until the following 14th of February, when a new drawing of lots would free him from one service, and bind him to another.

THE CUSTOM LOSING DIGNITY.

The custom, which extended all through the countries of Europe, from the common people to the courtiers, broadened, until the valentine game came to be played by married, as well as single players, and in addition to being bound to run errands for and wait on the lady whose name was written on the slip drawn from the lottery-box, the knight was expected to make her a present. Just when the valentine custom fell from grace is not known, but the present-day practice of playing pranks with the self-esteem of an acquaintance by sending him or her a wicked caricature of a human being with verses that are supposed to make the connection between the person receiving the valentine and the picture at once apparent, is of comparatively recent origin. Most people agree that the custom is a nuisance, and the person caricatured wonders why a nineteenth-century civilization makes murder an offence punishable by law.

A percentage of the valentines sent out nowadays are of the sentimental order, but the fact cannot be gainsaid that every year sees St. Valentine retrograding further from the romantic position he once occupied.

But, as before stated, no saint should be in any way saddled with the responsibility for all the pictorial and alleged poetical tomfoolery that fly around on his day. It seems that an accident, not kind to the saints, mixed them up with the valentine custom. No saint had any connection with the 14th of February custom, according to those who have been anxious enough about the reputation of the Church to investigate the matter closely.

ROMANS HAD A FEBRUARY FESTIVAL.

The only explanation these authorities can give for the connection is that the ancient Romans bequeathed to us a February festival similar to that described, of drawing from the lottery box the names of women, who became the affianced of the one who drew the name. This pagan practice shocked the prelates when Christianity began to get the upper hand, and a courageous effort was made to stamp it out, but it proved too popular, and so the best that the clergy could do was to give the sanction of the Church to the festival, by having a saint selected on the 14th of February, who was called a Valentine.

But it is far more likely that the custom of sending valentines on one day of the year is a queer survival of the religion of nature that existed in primitive Europe. It would seem so, from the fact that legendary lore has handed down to us this passage: "About this time of the year the birds choose their mates, and thence probably came the custom of the young men and maidens choosing valentines or special loving friends on the day."

The custom is dying out, as all customs will when they descend from the romantic to the foolishly strife-stirring stage. The mails are still heavy with the additional missives that owe their existence to the valentine custom, but the time-honored and favorite picture of the professional humorist, in which the letter-carrier is represented as staggering beneath the weight of a huge load of Valentine-Day mail, can no longer be called into service with absolute confidence.

Another Retrenchment Suggestion.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

I believe the legislative Committee on Retrenchment and Reform was sincere in its work, but it seems strange that it should give so much attention to the reduction of the clerical force at the Auditor's office, the abolishment of the Land Office, and other smaller matters, and at the same time overlook, or fail to notice, a charge upon the Treasury created by the Legislature of 1895-'96, amounting to between $18,000 and $20,000 annually. I refer to the act of March 4, 1896 (Acts, 1895-'96, page 773), providing for examining records by a commissioner in chancery to ascertain property subject to taxation under control of courts, fiduciaries, etc. This act created eighteen new offices—one for each circuit. The services required of these officers were already required of the clerks of the courts and Commissioners of the Revenue (Acts, 1889-'90, page 201), at no extra cost to the State. The money paid these new officers is not deducted from the compensation of the Clerks and Commissioners of the Revenue, so the whole burden is upon the State. It may be said that the Clerks and Commissioners of Revenue did not perform their duties, and hence the necessity of the new officers. Why should not they have been compelled to perform their duties? Surely, the Clerks and Commissioners of Revenue are as competent to perform the duties as the commissioners in chancery. But even if such new officers are necessary, is not the compensation granted them unreasonably large? Let us see. The time consumed by any commissioner in chancery in performing his duty was not more, I venture to say, than thirty days, except, perhaps, in the Richmond District, where it was, of course, more, say 100 days. I may be wrong as to the time, but believe this estimate to be fair. The total amount paid said officers for 1897 (see Auditor's report) was $18,827.85

I have not the figures for 1896, but presume they are about the same as for 1897—certainly, not less. If so, the State has paid to these officers nearly $40,000 within two years. They are paid more than any other officers in the State—many times more in proportion to the time engaged.

If these officers are continued, why should they not be paid at the rate commissioners in chancery are paid for other work—to wit, $1 per hour for time actually engaged. At this rate they could earn from $10 to $15 per day. There are scores of commissioners who would gladly do the work at this rate. The State should not pay more than the individual for the same work. At the rate of $1 per hour, the work would cost the State perhaps $2,000, a saving of at least $16,000. But the law of 1895-'96 should be repealed, and the work performed by the Clerks and Commissioners of Revenue without cost to the State. The attention of the Legislature is respectfully called to this matter.

CHESTERFIELD.

Demand for More Battleships.

The Secretary of the Navy has demanded more battleships, and there can be no doubt that Congress will consider his recommendations. Protection is what our seaports require, and fortifications will not adequately supply this. Defence against all disorders of a malarial type is, however, adequately afforded by Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, an efficient remedy, also, for constipation, biliousness, dyspepsia, rheumatism, and nervousness.

Odds and Ends.

(Philadelphia Press.)

More than a third of the French crown jewels have been bought up by Americans. Americans in France are regarded as people who have money to burn, and it a reputation that has been justly earned.

* * *

M. L. Hewitt, a Montana mining expert, declares that there is more gold in Montana than in Alaska. He declares that men who go to the Klondike are fit subjects for admission to lunatic asylums.

* * *

It is a general belief in China that women who wear short hair are transformed in the future state into men. This may account for the fact that so few women in China wear short hair. They do not want to degenerate.

CASTORIA.

The fac-simile signature of Chas. H. Fletcher is on every wrapper.

(my 26-W, F. & Su f r)

DEPARTURE OF STEAMERS.

VIRGINIA NAVIGATION COMPANY, JAMES RIVER DAY LINE.

Steamer POCAHONTAS leaves MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, and FRIDAY at 7 A. M. for Norfolk, Portsmouth, Old Point, Newport News, Claremont, and James-river landings, and connecting at Old Point and Norfolk for Washington, Baltimore, and the North.

State-rooms reserved for the night at moderate prices.

Electric-cars direct to the wharf. Fare, only $1.50 and $1 to Norfolk. Music by Grand Orchestrion.

Freight received for above-named places and all points in Eastern Virginia and North Carolina. IRVIN WEISIGER, General Manager.

A. H. Drewry, President. se 13

PHILADELPHIA, RICHMOND AND NORFOLK STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

Appointed sailing days: Every TUESDAY, FRIDAY, and SUNDAY at daylight.

Freight received daily until 5 P. M.

Fare (including meals and berth), $6 on Friday's steamer.

For further information apply to J. W. M'CARRICK, General Southern Agent; office Rocketts. W. P. CLYDE & CO., General Agents, Philadelphia. fe 6

RAILROAD LINES.

SR SOUTHERN RAILWAY.

Schedule Effective January 17, 1898.

TRAINS LEAVE RICHMOND, VA.

12:00 Night, No. 11, Southern Express, daily for Atlanta, Augusta, and points South. Sleeper Richmond to Danville, Greensboro', Salisbury, Charlotte, Columbia, and Augusta. Sleeper open at 9:30 P. M. Stops at all stations between Richmond and Danville to take on and let off passengers.

Connects at Danville, Salisbury, and Charlotte with the Washington and Southwestern Limited (No. 37), carrying sleepers New York to Asheville, Hot Springs, Chattanooga, and Nashville; New York to Memphis; New York to New Orleans; New York to Tampa; and first-class day coach between Washington and Memphis. Connections are made for all points in Texas and California. Sleeper open for occupancy at 9:30 P. M.

12:00 noon, No. 7, solid train daily for Charlotte, N. C., connects at Moseley with Farmville and Powhatan railroad. At Keysville for Clarksville, Oxford, Henderson, and Durham, and at Greensboro' for Durham, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem; at Danville with No. 35, United States fast mail, solid train, daily for New Orleans and points South, which carries sleepers New York to New Orleans, and New York to Jacksonville. Through sleeper Salisbury to Chattanooga; also, Pullman tourist sleeper every Wednesday Washington to San Francisco, without change.

3:00 P. M., No. 17, local, daily, except Sunday, for Keysville and intermediate points.

TRAINS ARRIVE AT RICHMOND.

8:00 A. M.

6:25 P. M., from Atlanta, Augusta, Asheville, and Nashville.

8:40 A. M., from Keysville.

LOCAL FREIGHT TRAINS.

Nos. 61 and 62, between Manchester and Neapolis, Va.

YORK-RIVER LINE VIA WEST POINT, THE FAVORITE ROUTE NORTH.

LEAVE RICHMOND.

4:30 P. M., No. 15, Baltimore Limited, daily, except Sunday, for West Point, there making close connection on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays with steamer for Baltimore; also, with stage at Lester Manor for Walkerton and Tappahannock on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

2:30 P. M., No. 10, local express, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, for West Point and intermediate stations. Connects with stage at Lester Manor for Walkerton and Tappahannock; also, at West Point with steamer for Baltimore. Stops at all stations.

5:00 A. M., No. 46, Local Mixed. Leaves daily, except Sunday, from Virginia-Street Station for West Point and intermediate stations, connecting with stage at Lester Manor for Walkerton and Tappahannock.

TRAINS ARRIVE AT RICHMOND.

9:17 A. M., daily.

10:40 A. M., Wednesdays and Fridays only.

8:00 P. M., daily, except Sunday, from West Point and intermediate stations.

Steamers leave West Point at 6 P. M. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and Baltimore at 5 P. M. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Ticket Office at station, foot of Virginia street. Open from 9 A. M. to 6 P. M., and from 9:30 P. M. to 12 A. M. City ticket office, 903 east Main street.

J. M. CULP, Traffic Manager. W. A. TURK, Gen. Pass. Agent.

F. S. GANNON, Third Vice-President and General Manager, Washington, D. C.

C. W. WESTBURY, Travelling Passenger Agent, 920 east Main street, Richmond, Va. oc 3

CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO RAILWAY.

Effective January 5, 1898.

TRAINS LEAVE RICHMOND, BROAD-STREET STATION.

8:50 A. M., Daily, with Parlor car, for Norfolk, Portsmouth, Old Point, Newport News, and principal stations. Connects daily with Old Dominion steamships for New York.

3:40 P. M., Daily, with Pullman, for local stations, Newport News, Old Point, Norfolk, and Portsmouth.

10:00 A. M., Local train, except Sunday, for W. Clifton Forge. Connects at Gordonsville for Orange, Culpeper, Calverton, Manassas, Alexandria, and Washington; at Union Station, Charlottesville, for Lynchburg; at Basic for Hagerstown.

2:25 P. M., Daily, with Pullmans to Cincinnati, Louisville, and St. Louis. Stops only at important stations. Meals served on Dining-cars. No. 7, Local Train, except Sunday, follows above train from Gordonsville to Staunton.

5:30 P. M., Accommodation, except Sunday, for Charlottesville.

10:30 P. M., F. F. V., Daily for Cincinnati, with Pullmans to Hinton, W Va., and Gordonsville to Cincinnati and Louisville. Meals served on Dining-cars. Connects at Staunton, except Sunday, for Winchester, Va., and at Covington, Va., daily, for Hot Springs.

TRAINS LEAVE EIGHTH-STREET STATION.

11:30 A. M., Daily, for Lynchburg and Clifton Forge. Connects at Bremo, except Sunday, for White Hall, except Sunday at Balcony for Lexington, and at W. Clifton Forge with No. 1 for Cincinnati.

4:00 P. M., Except Sunday. Local accommodation for Columbia.

TRAINS ARRIVE AT RICHMOND, BROAD-STREET STATION.

8:20 A. M., Daily, from Cincinnati.

11:15 A. M., Daily, from Norfolk and Old Point.

3:30 P. M., Daily, from Cincinnati and Louisville.

6:50 P. M., Daily, from Norfolk and Old Point.

7:45 P. M., Except Sunday, from W. Clifton Forge.

TRAINS ARRIVE EIGHTH-STREET STATION.

8:50 A. M., Except Sunday, from Columbia.

6:20 P. M., Daily, from Lynchburg and Clifton Forge, and, except Sunday, from Lexington and White Hall.

JOHN D. POTTS, Assistant General Passenger Agent.

DEPARTURE OF STEAMERS.

OLD DOMINION STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

DAILY LINE FOR NEW YORK.

Passengers can leave Richmond DAILY via Chesapeake and Ohio railway at 8:50 A. M., or Richmond and Petersburg railroad (Norfolk and Western route) 9 A. M., connecting at Norfolk with Old Dominion Line steamer, sailing same evening for New York.

ALL-WATER ROUTE.

Steamship Old Dominion leaves Richmond every Monday at 5 P. M. for New York via James river.

Tickets on sale at Richmond Transfer Company's, 903 east Main street; Chesapeake and Ohio railway, and Richmond and Petersburg railroad depots, and at company's office, 1212 east Main street, Richmond. Baggage checked through.

FREIGHT

for New York and all points beyond can be shipped by direct steamers, sailing from Richmond every MONDAY AND FRIDAY at 5 P. M.; also, by steamer leaving Richmond WEDNESDAY 5 P. M. for Norfolk, connecting with steamer for New York.

Manifest closed one hour before sailing time.

Freight received and forwarded, and through bills of lading issued for all northern, eastern, and foreign ports.

FROM NEW YORK.

Passengers can leave daily, except Sunday, to Norfolk or Old Point Comfort, connecting with Norfolk and Western railroad or Chesapeake and Ohio railway.

Direct steamers (via James-river route) leave every SATURDAY (passenger and freight), and MONDAY (freight only).

Sailing from company's pier, No. 26 North river, foot of Beach street, at 3 P. M.; Saturday, 4 P. M.

Freight received and forwarded daily, except Sunday.

For further information apply to JOHN F. MAYER, Agent, 1212 east Main street, Richmond, Va.

W. L. Guillaudeu, Vice-President and Traffic Manager, New York. se 13

RAILROAD LINES.

A. C. L. ATLANTIC-COAST LINE.

Schedule in Effect January 17, 1898.

TRAINS LEAVE RICHMOND—UNION DEPOT.

9:00 A. M., Daily. Arrives Petersburg 9:31 A. M., Norfolk 11:25 A. M. Stops only at Petersburg, Waverly, and Suffolk, Va.

9:05 A. M., Daily. Arrive Petersburg 9:30 A. M., Weldon 11:33 A. M., Fayetteville 4:15 P. M., Charleston 10:30 P. M., Savannah 12:50 A. M., Jacksonville 7:30 A. M., Port Tampa 6:30 P. M. Connects at Wilson with No. 47, arriving Goldsboro' 3:30 P. M., Wilmington 5:45 P. M. Pullman Sleeper New York to Jacksonville.

2:55 P. M., Daily. Local. Arrives Petersburg 3:42 P. M. Makes all stops.

5:30 P. M., Daily. Arrives Petersburg 6:15 P. M. Makes all local stops, Richmond and Petersburg railroad.

7:30 P. M., Daily. Arrives Petersburg 8:04 P. M., connects with Norfolk and Western for Norfolk and intermediate points, Emporia 9:10 (connects with A. and D. for stations between Emporia and Lawrenceville), Weldon 1:07 A. M., Fayetteville 1:07 A. M., Charleston 6:42 A. M., Savannah 8:05 A. M., Jacksonville 1 P. M., Port Tampa 9:45 P. M.

NEW LINE TO MIDDLE GEORGIA POINTS—Arriving Aiken 7:28 A. M., Augusta 8:10 A. M., Macon 11 A. M., Atlanta 12:15 P. M. Pullman Sleepers New York to Wilmington, Jacksonville, Port Tampa, Aiken, Augusta, and Macon.

8:56 P. M., Daily. Arrives Petersburg 9:31 P. M., Weldon 11:39 P. M. Makes local stops between Petersburg and Weldon.

10:00 P. M., Daily, except Sunday. The New York and Florida Special arrives Charleston 1:45 A. M., Savannah 3:01 A. M., Jacksonville 1:10 P. M., St. Augustine 2:20 P. M., Tampa 8:25 P. M. Pullman Vestibule, Sleeping-, Dining-, Library-, and Observation-cars.

10:50 P. M., Daily. Arrives Petersburg 11:30 P. M., Lynchburg 3:30 A. M., Roanoke 5:20 A. M., Bristol 11:20 A. M. Pullman Sleeper Richmond to Lynchburg.

TRAINS ARRIVE RICHMOND.

4:00 A. M., Daily, from Jacksonville, Savannah, Charleston, Atlanta, Macon, Augusta, and all points South.

8:15 A. M., Daily, except Sunday, Atlanta, Athens, Raleigh, Henderson, Lynchburg, and the West.

8:37 A. M., Daily. Petersburg local.

8:55 A. M., Daily, except Monday, from Tampa, Jacksonville, Savannah, and Charleston.

8:00 A. M., Sunday only, from Atlanta, Athens, Raleigh, Henderson, Lynchburg, and the West.

11:05 A. M., Daily, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Petersburg.

7:15 P. M., Daily, Jacksonville, Savannah, Charleston, Wilmington, Goldsboro', and all points South.

6:55 P. M., Daily, Norfolk, Suffolk, Waverly, and Petersburg.

8:56 P. M., Daily, Petersburg, Lynchburg, and the West.

J. R. KENLY, General Manager. T. M. EMERSON, Traffic Manager. H. M. EMERSON, General Passenger Agent. C. S. CAMPBELL, Division Passenger Agent. ja 16

N. & W. RY. Norfolk and Western

Schedule in Effect December 5, 1897.

LEAVE RICHMOND, BYRD-STREET STATION.

9:00 A. M., Daily—Richmond and Norfolk. VESTIBULE LIMITED. Second-class tickets not accepted on this train.

9:05 A. M., Daily, "THE CHICAGO EXPRESS," for Lynchburg, Roanoke, Columbus, and Chicago. Pullman Sleeper Roanoke to Columbus; also, for Radford, Bristol, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and intermediate points.

7:30 P. M., Daily, for Norfolk, Suffolk, and intermediate stations.

10:45 P. M., Daily, for Lynchburg and Roanoke. Connects at Roanoke with Washington and Chattanooga Limited. Pullman Sleepers Roanoke to Memphis and New Orleans.

PULLMAN SLEEPER between RICHMOND AND LYNCHBURG ready for occupancy at 9 P. M.; also, Pullman Sleeper Petersburg to Roanoke.

Trains arrive Richmond from Lynchburg and the West daily 8:15 A. M., and 8:56 P. M. From Norfolk and the East 11:05 A. M., and Vestibuled Limited 6:55 P. M. Office: 828 Main street.

R. W. COURTNEY, District Passenger Agent; W. B. BEVILL, General Passenger Agent. General Offices: Roanoke, Va. de 5

R., F. & P. Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac.

Schedule in Effect January 10, 1898.

AT 12 O'CLOCK NOON.

LEAVE BYRD-STREET STATION.

4:10 A. M., Daily, for Washington and points North. Stops only at Milford and Fredericksburg. Pullman Sleepers to New York.

8:20 A. M., Sunday only, for Washington and points North. Stops at Elba, Glen Allen, Ashland, Taylorsville, Doswell, Ruther Glen, Penola, Milford, Woodslane, Guinea, Summit, Fredericksburg, Brooke, and Widewater. Pullman car.

8:45 A. M., Daily, except Sunday, for Washington and points North. Stops at Elba, Ashland, Taylorsville, Doswell, Ruther Glen, Penola, Milford, Woodslane, Guinea, Summit, Fredericksburg, Brooke, and Widewater. Pullman car.

9:05 A. M., Commencing January 20th, daily except Monday, for Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. The New York and Florida Special, composed entirely of Pullman sleeping-, dining-, and observation-cars. No extra charge other than regular Pullman fare. Does not stop at Elba.

12:00 M., Daily, except Sunday, for Washington and points North. Stops at Elba, Glen Allen, Ashland, Doswell, Milford, Fredericksburg, Brooke, and Widewater. Parlor car. Also, connects with Congressional Limited to Washington.

7:30 P. M., Daily, for Washington and points North. Stops at Elba, Ashland, Doswell, Milford, Fredericksburg, Brooke, and Widewater, and other stations Sundays. Sleeper Richmond to New York.

ARRIVE BYRD-STREET STATION.

8:40 A. M., Daily. Stops at Widewater, Brooke, Fredericksburg, Milford, Doswell, Ashland, and Elba, and other stations Sundays. Sleeper New York to Richmond.

2:45 P. M., Daily, except Sunday. Stops at Widewater, Brooke, Fredericksburg, Summit, Guinea, Woodslane, Milford, Penola, Ruther Glen, Doswell, Taylorsville, Ashland, Glen Allen, and Elba. Parlor car from Washington.

7:10 P. M., Daily. Stops only at Fredericksburg, Doswell, and Ashland, and Elba. Pullman cars from New York.

8:36 P. M., Daily. Stops at Widewater, Brooke, Fredericksburg, Summit, Guinea, Woodslane, Milford, Penola, Ruther Glen, Doswell, Taylorsville, Ashland, Glen Allen, and Elba. Sleeping-car.

9:50 P. M., Commencing January 17th, daily except Sunday, the New York and Florida Special. Does not stop at Elba.

FREDERICKSB'G ACCOMMODATION.

(Daily except Sunday.)

4:00 P. M., Leaves Byrd-Street Station.

8:30 A. M., Arrives Byrd-Street Station.

ASHLAND TRAINS.

(Daily except Sunday.)

6:42 A. M., Leaves Elba.

6:20 P. M., Leaves Elba.

6:40 A. M., Arrives Elba.

6:00 P. M., Arrives Elba.

C. A. TAYLOR, Traffic Manager. R. T. D. MYERS, President. ja 16