

Friends at Court

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

December 9, Sunday.—Second Sunday in Advent.
 „ 10, Monday.—Octave of the Feast of St. Francis Xavier.
 „ 11, Tuesday.—St. Damasus I., Pope and Confessor.
 „ 12, Wednesday.—St. Melchiades, Pope and Martyr.
 „ 13, Thursday.—St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr.
 „ 14, Friday.—Translation of the Holy House of Loreto. Fast Day.
 „ 15, Saturday.—Octave of the Immaculate Conception.

St. Damasus, Pope and Confessor.

St. Damasus was Pope from 366 to 384. He appears as the principal defender of Catholic orthodoxy against Arius and other heretics. He condemned the Macedonian and Apollinarian heresies, and confirmed the decrees of the General Council of Constantinople. He was very solicitous for the preservation of the Catacombs, and adorned the sepulchres of many martyrs with epitaphs in verse, which he himself composed. For his secretary he chose St. Jerome, his faithful friend, and induced him to publish a corrected version of the Bible, known as the Latin Vulgate.

St. Melchiades, Pope and Martyr.

St. Melchiades, who was Pope from 311 to 314, was born in Africa. He presided over the Council of Rome (313) and condemned the Donatists.

St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr.

St. Lucy, Virgin and martyr, was born at Syracuse, Sicily. She was of a noble and Christian family. She made a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Agatha at Catania, obtained the healing of her mother Eutychia, consecrating her virginity to the Lord, and, being accused of being a Christian, she was beheaded in 303.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

SUMMER.

In dreamy calm the gardens fair repose,
 And in the brilliance of the silent noon
 The butterfly drops anchor in the rose—
 The dial flower that marks the hour of June.

The treasure born of wedded dew and sun.
 Caught in the Gulf Stream of the azure air,
 The honeybee drifts by like galleon
 Weighed down with fragrant spoil of blossoms fair,

The gipsy Wind halts in his gay career
 To rest a moment in the woodland hush;
 And softly from the hill draws Echo near,
 The shepherd of the linnet and the thrush.

The daisies bind the world with Milky Way;
 And not a pool that shines upon the sod
 But mirrors in its depths the star of day,
 The golden mask that veils the face of God!
 —Ave Maria.

A man without patience is a lamp without oil.—
 A. De Musset.

Every savant who fears not his own ignorance is a false savant.—E. Thiaudiere.

Wit pleases, but 'tis the heart that binds.—L. De Tonseau.

The smallest of enterprises is worth the attention of a good workman.—Nivernais.

The world is always beginning for youths and maids of twenty.—E. De Vogue.

Gratitude is a flower that droops speedily in men's hearts.—M. Du Camp.

There is always a little folly in the make-up of genius.—Boerhaave.

Gentle raillery is a thorn that has kept something of the flower's perfume.—C. Doucet.

Away with those whose mouths blow hot and cold! —
 La Fontaine.

Frequent the company of the good, and you will become good yourself.—Franklin.

The Storyteller

THE THREE FRIENDS

I.

Nowhere are the inequalities of fortune more strikingly displayed than in a Paris hotel or apartment house. The first floor, beautifully fitted up, may be occupied by a wealthy banker or government official of high rank; while in the second may be lodged a family of far less importance in the social scale. And so up to the top of the building—the higher one ascends, the lower the rank in life of the occupants. In the attic are usually found art students, poor authors, shop women and seamstresses.

It happened that in one of these large hotels there lived three old friends—gentlemen who had been schoolmates and comrades when boys, and who had preserved an uninterrupted friendship during all the increase of fortune which had come to some of them, and the vicissitudes that had befallen others. M. Beauvallon, the wealthiest member of the trio, lived on the lower floor of the hotel; on the second, M. de Bonneval had his apartments; while on the third, M. Bertrand lodged with his little daughter Zoe, and an old servant, Madeleine, who had taken care of the child since her infancy. He was a clerk in the civil service department.

M. Bonneval and M. Beauvallon were also widowers. The former lived just below M. Bertrand. He had an income of a thousand francs monthly, kept only one servant, but a more expensive one than old Madeleine. He had one child, Mirza. M. Beauvallon, the proprietor of the first floor, kept three servants, had a beautiful suite of apartments, and a large garden. He, too, had an only daughter, Eveline.

The three girls were about the same age, Zoe being the eldest. They were as unlike as they could possibly be, yet were firm and devoted friends. M. Beauvallon, having secured excellent teachers for his daughter, would not be content until their services were shared by the two other children. They were all bright and studious.

The three families led an even and happy life. Zoe was a quiet, meek little creature, who moved noiselessly about, without attracting attention; but she was ever on the alert to help and do good to others. Mirza, the daughter of M. de Bonneval, was the most selfish of the three. Zoe and Eveline, naturally amiable, had grown accustomed to renouncing their own wishes in her favor; and were really not aware that they were constantly sacrificing themselves because of the many brilliant and attractive qualities that drew them toward her. Eveline was exceedingly fond of dress, and her father predicted that she would one day become a devotee of society, and this seemed quite possible.

Time passed swiftly and pleasantly till the three girls were about fourteen. Then a rich aunt of M. de Bonneval invited Mirza to visit her. She lived at Lyons, where her husband was a prosperous manufacturer. Mirza was gone a year, during which time she corresponded with her two friends. Her letters were full of the beautiful things she saw and enjoyed; her life seemed to be one round of pleasure.

The aunt, who thought of adopting her, suddenly died, and Mirza was obliged to return to her father's house. She did so reluctantly, bringing with her an atmosphere of worldliness and discontent, which soon had its effect on the pliable mind of Eveline, who was as fond of enjoyment as her friend. But good, gentle, little Zoe still pursued her quiet way undisturbed. Her excellent common-sense told her that the pleasures and vanities in which her friends took an interest were not for her, and she did not grumble that it was so. She knew how hard her father was obliged to work, how tenderly he loved her, and was content.

Gradually Zoe came to be left out of the conversations which so engrossed the other two, who now had but little time for study or aught else than romantic dreamings and fond anticipations of the world, of which Mirza had had enough experience to make her wish to see more of it.

One day Zoe was sitting in the garden, outside of a small arbor, when the two girls entered it by a door on the other side.

'Where is Zoe this morning?' asked Eveline. 'I have not seen her to-day.'

She is probably reading or studying somewhere,' said Mirza. 'She is such a little mouse! She will never care for society.'