

Friends at Court

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

December 30, Sunday.—St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Widow.
 „ 31, Monday.—St. Sylvester I., Pope and Confessor.
 January 1, Tuesday.—Feast of the Circumcision.
 „ 2, Wednesday.—Octave of St. Stephen.
 „ 3, Thursday.—Octave of St. John, Evangelist.
 „ 4, Friday.—Octave of the Holy Innocents.
 „ 5, Saturday.—Vigil of the Epiphany.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Widow.

St. Elizabeth was the daughter of the King of Hungary, and the wife of Louis, Landgrave of Thuringia. She was remarkable for her charity, and took a special delight in serving the sick with her own hands. On the death of her husband, St. Elizabeth was driven from her home, and reduced to take shelter with her children in a building that had been used for swine. These and other privations she bore uncomplainingly. She died in 1231, in the 24th year of her age.

St. Sylvester, Pope and Confessor.

St. Sylvester, a native of Rome, was called to rule the Church during the twenty-one years which followed the accession of Constantine. One of his principal cares was to provide churches for the faithful, who were now, for the first time, allowed perfect liberty in the exercise of their religion. The most important event in the pontificate of St. Sylvester was the celebration of the First General Council, which was presided over by the Papal legates, and in which the errors of Arius were condemned. St. Sylvester died in 335.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

A. LEGEND OF THE NATIVITY.

The chilly, wind-swept stable-home
 A holy Temple hath become,
 And Mary worships at the shrine
 Of Emmanuel Divine.
 Prostrate, adoring kisses meet
 She presseth to His Sacred feet
 Who lieth where the beasts have trod,
 While in great awe she doth repeat—
 'My God! my God!'

The cattle's straw-strewn stable-home
 A Royal Palace hath become;
 Before Him, throned upon the mow,
 Again our Lady sweet doth bow,
 In homage kissing His dear hand
 Who earth and Heaven doth command,
 While in great rapture doth she sing
 With all the choiring angel band—
 'My King! my King!'

But now the stable hath become
 The Holy Infant's earthly home,
 And Mary stoops to lift and hold,
 And fondly to her bosom fold,
 This Child of glory and of grace
 And shower soft kisses on His face:
 'My Love! My own most precious One!
 Come to Thy Mother's dear embrace—
 'My Son! my Son!'

— Boston Pilot.

Every moment of time may be made to bear the burden of something which is eternal.

The good God has measured out our years; and of these years that He has resolved to leave us on this earth, He has marked out one which shall be our last. What distance is there between that moment and this? The space of an instant!

If you cannot be happy in one way, be in another, and this facility of disposition wants but little aid from philosophy, for health and good humor are almost the whole affair. Many run about after felicity, like an absent-minded man hunting for his hat, while it is in his hand or on his head.

There are few souls so base but some fond heart is ready to trust them. God sometimes sends the clinging vine up the dead trunk of the tree to teach us that even in death His grace clings green and vigorous, and to remind us that the wretched life, though deformed and unsightly, can be made beautiful by ever-clinging love.

The Storyteller

ETHEL'S ANSWER

It was Christmas Eve, and the sleepy little village of Preston has awakened from its usual indifference to assume the holiday spirit. The pretty stone church on the hill had been occupied all day by the young ladies of the parish, whose busy fingers had so skillfully decorated it with the loads of pines and cedars brought by the young men from the snow-covered woods, and by night it was a bower of rustic beauty.

When the last touch had been given to the cave of Bethlehem, almost hidden under a profusion of green, the happy workers took their departure. As they passed into the dark, gloomy street, the snow came down in a riotous flurry, so that Ethel Blandford gladly accepted for herself and several friends an invitation to ride home in Frank Marshall's new cutter.

Ethel was the most accomplished and beautiful girl of the village, and the daughter of a widowed mother, whose inheritance had been spent by a profligate husband. When the change came from affluence to poverty, Mrs. Blandford gave up her elegant mansion and moved into a small house. Her health declined, and Ethel took entire charge of the family and the education of her brothers and sisters. Mrs. Blandford's income was a mere pittance compared to what it had been a few years previous, so that it was scarcely sufficient to make 'both ends meet.' With the assistance of Ethel and by making over the many garments the little ones required, she managed to keep the wolf from the door, although his growls were sometimes not far away.

Ethel was a great favorite in the community, for she was kind to all and interested herself in everything tending to promote the happiness of her neighbors. She was a devoted Catholic, and her greatest pleasure was to be present at the daily Mass. But even this comfort she denied herself rather than permit the household duties to devolve upon her delicate mother. When sacrifices were to be made, Ethel was always expected to make them, nor did she ever disappoint the family.

For several years the rich and aristocratic Frank Marshall had been a visitor at the Blandford cottage, where he spent at least two evenings each week. Ethel gave him no reason to hope that she cared more for him than she did for several other young men who came frequently to her mother's. She did not dare ask herself whether she loved him or whether he loved her. He had not announced his love, and she did not suppose he would care to marry a poor girl. Mrs. Blandford realised that he was in love with Ethel, and, while she would not object to the match, she regretted that he was an agnostic, as her own husband had been.

Ethel alighted from the conveyance at her own door, thanked Frank for his thoughtful kindness, and at once entered the house to begin her second day's labor. She must hang a few wreaths on the walls of their humble little parlor, dress the Christmas tree, and have the children's clothing ready for them to put on to go to the five o'clock Mass. When she had finished her labors and was taking a little rest, Frank was shown into the room. He was always a welcome guest, being bright, light-hearted, and kind. Although by far the wealthiest man in the village, he was considerate to all, even to the priest, whom he visited in case of sickness or distress. Ethel noticed as he entered the room that his face was not lit up with the light that usually played around his handsome features, and she imagined he was not at ease. Before she had time to try to account for the change in the manner of her friend he advanced towards her and handed her a beautiful bouquet of half-blown roses. Knowing her appreciation of flowers and their language, which she thoroughly understood, he awaited a reply, but was disappointed when Ethel coolly expressed her thanks and proceeded to exhibit a few of the many little presents she had made for the children. He made a poor effort to be interested, but did not dare to mention the object of his visit. He wanted a Christmas present for himself, the most valuable she could give her love. Now he was in despair. If she cared for him, the blush of the half-blown roses that he gave her would have brought a deeper tint to her cheek and a brighter light to her eye. He recited in a low tone the lines of Wordsworth:

To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that often lie too deep for tears.

Direct Distributing Company

(The House of Quality).

CCC'S CORNER, SOUTH DUNEDIN.

Have opened up one of the Choicest Stocks of MEN'S MERCERY in Dunedin. All articles purchased from us are guaranteed.

GIVE US A TRIAL.