

Friends at Court

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

January 13, Sunday.—Octave of the Epiphany.
 " 14, Monday.—St. Hilary, Bishop and Confessor.
 " 15, Tuesday.—St. Ita, Virgin.
 " 16, Wednesday.—St. Fursey, Abbot.
 " 17, Thursday.—St. Anthony, Abbot.
 " 18, Friday.—The Chair of St. Peter at Rome.
 " 19, Saturday.—St. Canute, King and Martyr.

St. Ita, Virgin.

St. Ita was born in the south of Ireland. She has always been held in great esteem in the district in which she lived, but, unfortunately, few details of her life have come down to us. She died in 570, and is styled by Colgan, the second St. Brigid of Ireland.

St. Fursey, Abbot.

St. Fursey was born in the west of Ireland, and was of noble parentage. He spent a portion of his life in England, where he founded a monastery, in the county of Suffolk. Passing over to France, he continued to labor zealously for the advancement of religion until his death in 650. The remains of St. Fursey are still preserved at Peronne, in the neighborhood of Amiens.

St. Canute, Martyr.

St. Canute was King of Denmark. He used every endeavor to solidly establish the Christian religion, which had some time previously been introduced into Denmark, and to bring about the conversion of those of his subjects who still adhered to paganism. His zeal won for him the martyr's crown, A.D. 1086.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

THE BRIG 'CONTENT.'

Whoever would sail in the storm and gale
 When the white foam hissing flies,
 Or passage take when the blue seas make
 Fair mirrors for cloudless skies,
 Will ne'er repent that they journeying went
 In a barque that's stout and strong,
 Bearing the name, the brig 'Content,'
 On a voyage short, or long.

This gallant barque in the light or dark
 Sails well o'er a sullen sea,
 And when breakers roar on a rock-bound shore
 She rides in security,
 And happy are they who when shadows grey
 Tell that the day is spent,
 O'er the sea of Life, in calm or in strife,
 Have sailed in the brig 'Content.'

— 'Ave Maria.'

A vine bears three grapes—the first of pleasure, the second of drunkenness, the third of repentance.

In the shipwreck of any life there might almost always be a last chance of safety left, did not dishonor take her place on the plank.

In affliction, say in the loss of a beloved member of your family, despite every attention, natural and supernatural, the true Christian, the true Catholic, however sorrowful at heart, must be submissive to the Will of God. 'Blessed are they who mourn; they shall be comforted.'

Did you ever see a mother bird teaching her little ones to fly? She makes the nest so uncomfortable that they are obliged to learn the use of their wings. The discipline of life is mercifully arranged to teach us to use our wings—the powers that lift us heavenward. And these same wings can enable us to fly above and over many of our troubles and to live in the sunshine on the mountain top while in the valley the storm rages.

Sorrow is sorrow wherever you find it, and no bank account can purchase immunity. A grave is a grave, whether there is a costly monument above it or only a headstone of marble. When you reckon with actual experience you discover they are independent of wealth or poverty and come to all alike, and when you look at the hearts of men you find the same measure of human nature in them all. Now, when we take our departure, what shall we carry with us?

The Storyteller

A WOMAN'S PLEDGE

The woman who pledged herself to speak the truth on all occasions was fagged out after a trying day.

'John,' she said to her husband, 'after having gazed into vacancy for a quarter of an hour, it is almost necessary to lie, isn't it? That is, it is better to refrain from speaking all the truth on all occasions; perhaps that would be the better way to put it.'

'Why?' asked her husband, wondering whence the cargo for this train of thought.

'Well, the other day I fell to thinking of the numberless petty lies we women tell every day, and the far higher self-esteem that would come from truth and candor.'

'Yes,' assented her husband.

'And I registered a mental pledge to tell the truth at all times, and to abstain from the nasty little fibs we think we have to tell.'

'Well?'

'You see, my pledge took effect this morning, and the first person to come to the house after you left was that Holmes woman.'

'I'm listening.'

'She wanted us to come to a card party, an informal affair,' she said; and the way she slobbered over me made me sick. Slobber is the only word that expresses it, John. You know, I always did despise that woman, and it is only by the greatest effort that I can be civil to her. Ordinarily I would have fibbed and told her how delighted we would be to come. But the passion for truth was on me, and, as nearly as I can remember it, this is what I said: "Mrs. Holmes, neither my husband nor I care for you. We do not enjoy ourselves in your company, and we dislike to be under any obligation to you; for we must return it, and that we do not care to do."'

John Whistled—a long-drawn, contemplative whistle.

'You were telling the truth for the family,' he observed.

'It would not have been so bad, John, if I had stopped there, but when the truth started from my lips it seemed so good it overpowered my prudence. "Your entertainments are always prosy," I said, "and you haven't a bit of tact in the world. You insist on inviting three or four couples who don't speak to each other and expect to mix them round card tables and work out a complete scheme in social harmonies. Your refreshments are abominable, and your guests poke fun at you behind your back. Your house always smells as if it didn't get an airing for a month, and I have a headache whenever I go there." So, if you please, John and I will not come.''

'Don't you think you told a little more truth than was absolutely necessary?' asked her husband reflectively.

'I fancy I did, John; but, as I told you, it got away from me. You should have seen her, John. She turned red and blue and white and green, and fairly choked with rage when she found I meant it. I told so much truth it hurt. She called me a jealous scold, and said she never wanted me at all, but always invited us because we had so few friends and went out so little. That was a stinger, wasn't it?'

'I can hear the echo of the hammers now,' was John's solitary comment. 'About how far did this mania for truth carry you during the day? You might as well tell it all now.'

'Well, to go on, the Rev. Mr. Prosey dropped in about 11.30 o'clock. You know he always comes about the time you are trying hardest to do something, says he knows he's intruding, excuses himself every five minutes, and stays about three hours. He came to the door when I had both hands covered with flour, making pastry, and I know he saw me wiping them on my apron. When I opened the door he said he knew his call was ill-timed, but he was passing and could not resist the temptation to drop in.'

'Then you said you were delighted to have him, and that if he would come in you would make a cup of tea for him?'

'Indeed, I did nothing of the sort. That passion for truth overcame me again, and I stood in the door without inviting him in. "Mr. Prosey," I said, "I am busy making pastry, and I know you saw me wiping the flour off my hands when I came to the door. If I should invite you in I would be guilty of deceit, for I do not want you. You would interfere with my domestic arrangements, and in my perturbed and irritated state of mind I do not believe any spiri-