

Friends at Court

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- April 21, Sunday.—Third Sunday after Easter. Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph.
 „ 22, Monday.—SS. Soter and Caius, Popes and Martyrs.
 „ 23, Tuesday.—St. George, Martyr.
 „ 24, Wednesday.—St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Martyr.
 „ 25, Thursday.—St. Mark, Evangelist.
 „ 26, Friday.—SS. Cletus and Marcellinus, Popes and Martyrs.
 „ 27, Saturday.—St. Anastasius, Pope and Confessor.

SS. Soter and Caius, Popes and Martyrs.

We know very little of these two Pontiffs except the manner of their deaths. St. Soter won the crown of martyrdom in 177; St. Caius, after many sufferings for the faith, died in 296, in the reign of Diocletian, whose kinsman he was.

St. George, Martyr.

St. George has been recognised as patron of England since the time of the Crusades. Unfortunately, no authentic details of his life have come down to us. He is believed to have been a soldier, and to have suffered martyrdom about 303. In emblem of the victory he thus gained over the Evil One, he is often represented in pictures as a knight tilting against a dragon.

SS. Cletus and Marcellinus, Popes and Martyrs.

St. Cletus, the third Bishop of Rome, suffered martyrdom under Domitian about the year 89. St. Marcellinus occupied the throne of St. Peter during a period of eight years. He died in 304, after having endured many sufferings for the faith in the cruel persecution of Diocletian.

GRAINS OF GOLD

THE MADONNA FLOWER.

There is a favored flower of Palestine—

The pale Madonna lily of the plain.

So fair is it, so free from spot or stain,

That they have named it for thee, Mother mine—

Its peerless beauty typical of thine.

It blooms where Moab's verdant mountains chain

In Bethlehem's valleys, where the humble swain

Still watch the lights of far Judea shine.

Oh, white, white flower of olden Palestine,

What tender thoughts your fragile presence brings!

You breathe the story of the King of Kings,

The plain, the shepherds, and the glorious sign,

The heavenly songs, the sweep of angels' wings,

The sweet Madonna, and the Babe Divine!

—“Ave Maria.”

Life, to be worthy of a rational being, must be always in progression. We must always purpose to do more or better than in time past.

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 experiences 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?

“Without mutual confidence,” says Cardinal Gibbons, “there could be no official or friendly relations among men, and the wheels of social intercourse and commercial communication would suddenly stop.” Every man, of course, should strive to improve his condition, but his strife need not be of a sort as to make him unhappy. Persistently, calmly, and heroically striving to better one's condition will bring happiness. Patience, contentment, charity for others, interest in the world about us, these are the conditions of happiness. Neither fame nor fortune can bring happiness to a man who is discontented.

For Children's Hacking Cough at night Woods' Great Peppermint Cure. Is 6d and 2s 6d....

The Storyteller

THE SILENT KEYS

In the closed and deserted music room stood the grand piano that had belonged to Elizabeth Robertson. It was a beautiful room, richly and tastefully furnished. The mahogany cabinet was filled with music, fine compositions of the old masters, the best modern productions; and vocal selections from grand opera. The piano was open, and on the rack was a composition bearing the title, ‘Too deep for tears.’ A marble bust of Mozart stood on the mantel-piece, and one of Beethoven, laurel-crowned, looking scowlingly in the direction of ‘music's monarch.’

An oriental rug lay on the polished floor. The soft, rich colors were curiously wrought, but exquisitely blended. The delicate butt-tinted walls were adorned with a few choice pictures, and the curtains were fine enough to have been the handiwork of fairies. It was nearing the twilight hour when the door was opened softly, and as one might enter a sanctuary, a fair, but sad-faced woman glided into the room. She moved noiselessly to a shadowy corner, where gleamed the long row of ivory keys, and, kneeling, bowed her head.

‘Elizabeth,’—the soft, sweet voice was a wail of pain—‘it is the “De Profundis” hour. Oh, my child, is your spirit hovering near me?’

She laid her hand with gentle touch on the shining wood.

‘This was the hour when she loved to pour out her soul in exquisite melody. Only a week ago she sat here, and to-night she lies in her grave.’

Bending, she kissed the keys, and at the touch of her lips, a soft minor note broke the stillness.

She shivered at the sound. ‘It is a farewell,’ she murmured. ‘No one shall ever press these keys made sacred by the touch of her fingers. Her music I shall put away. This piece’—she rose and took the sheet of music from the rack—‘was the last she played. “Too deep for tears”—so is my grief. Oh, Elizabeth, you were so young to die; you were beautiful and good, and life seemed so full of promise. Where is there sorrow like mine? You were the last tie that bound me to earth. Without you, wealth can give no comfort. I have nothing now but a beautiful memory—for you are dead!’

Her voice died away like the moan of the autumnal wind. She laid the music in the cabinet, locked it, and with the key clasped in her hand, left the room.

The years glided by, for ‘Time knows not the weight of sleep or weariness.’

Mrs. Robertson had not ceased to mourn Elizabeth, but the blow that caused such bitter anguish had been softened by the Great Consoler.

She had been true to her word, and unyielding to the pleadings of friends. No one had opened the closed piano—the keys were still silent. Despite the fact that she had not cared again to mingle in society and preferred to live in retirement, her station demanded that she pay the tribute wealth owes to humanity. Many appeals were made to her in the name of charity. She always responded readily, but mechanically. Visits to the haunts of sorrow and misery did not change the heart that grief had made cold and unresponsive. She could feel distress, but not pity. She had never wept since the coffin lid closed over Elizabeth's beautiful face, cold and white as marble.

It has been said that there are few things stranger in a large city than the juxtaposition of the rich and the poor—the close proximity of wealth and poverty. In a narrow, crowded street, only a few blocks from the sumptuous home of Mrs. Robertson, with shout and shrill laughter the children of the poor were following a dark, foreign-looking man, carrying a hand organ, and upon whose shoulders was perched a hideous little monkey wearing a scarlet blanket. The brute's keen eyes gleamed with almost human intelligence, and the little black paw was eagerly extended for pennies, or per chance a cookie.

Both seemed scarce in that vicinity. The man trudged along scowling and muttering, and would not play again. At last, where the street merges into a much-travelled thoroughfare, a man passing by tossed a coin to the greedy monkey. Then the procession of children halted, the man turned the crank, and the organ began to grind out the air of a popular song.

‘Let me hear the music,’ cried a clear, childish voice, and a little girl ran from a yard in which stood a neat cottage, and started to cross the street.