

Friends at Court

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

June 21, Sunday.—Second Sunday after Pentecost. St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Confessor.
 „ 22, Monday.—Blessed Innocent V., Pope and Confessor.
 „ 23, Tuesday.—St. Mark, Evangelist.
 „ 24, Wednesday.—St. John the Baptist.
 „ 25, Thursday.—Octave of Corpus Christi.
 „ 26, Friday.—Sacred Heart of Jesus.
 „ 27, Saturday.—St. William, Abbot.

Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

St. Augustine remarks that while the Church celebrates the feasts of other saints on the day of their death, as being that of their entrance into eternal life, she keeps as a festival the day of St. John the Baptist's birth, because he came into the world, not as a sinner, but as a saint, having being sanctified in his mother's womb by Our Blessed Lord. Of St. John the angel foretold, 'He shall be great before the Lord, and shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. And he shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. And he shall go before them in the spirit and power of Elias . . . to prepare unto the Lord a perfect people.' The Son of God, speaking of St. John, says: 'There hath not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist.' The glorious martyrdom of St. John is commemorated on August 29.

St. William, Abbot.

St. William, a native of northern Italy, inspired with the desire of leading a penitential life, retired to a lonely spot named Monte Vergine, near Benevento. Having being followed by many persons desirous to place their souls under his guidance, he established a religious congregation, which was afterwards united to the Benedictine Order. St. William died in 1142.

GRAINS OF GOLD

A PRAYER.

Have mercy on them! Sweet and holy thought;
 O! may it reach above
 To that Eternal Love,
 Who by His precious blood redemption bought.

And when, perhaps, thy day of life shall cease,
 May others breathe thy name
 In tender prayer the same—
 Have mercy on him; may he rest in peace.

The longest life is one of which the most is made.
 The supreme excellence is simplicity.—Longfellow.
 He that has no silver in his purse should have silver on his tongue.

Truth does not do as much good in the world as its counterfeits do harm.

If a man is not making constant sacrifices he is deceiving himself and is not advancing spiritually. If a man is not denying himself daily, he is not carrying his cross.—Father Faber.

It is a fundamental maxim of Christian perfection that all interior trials, whatever they may be—the most humiliating temptations, repugnance in the exercise of piety, distaste for prayer, perplexities of conscience, darkness of mind, doubt of salvation—in a word, all the spiritual trials which afflict and crucify the soul—are crosses infinitely precious.

'Be assured,' says St. Augustine, 'nothing happens that is not first either commended or permitted in the visible court of the Supreme Monarch. God is the only Father of this great household. Who, arranges moves, and regulates all that happens in the whole world at all times. And He takes as great care with the smallest creature as with the greatest.'

Life is not so very different, as one might think, east or west, in country or in city. Anywhere a man may be a gentleman if he will. Anywhere one may do honest, faithful work if he will. Anywhere one may make great intellectual advancement if he will. Anywhere one may live a pure and noble life, doing good, if he will. And these are the marks of a man.

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The Storyteller

THE DOWER RIGHT

The meadow and gently sloping hillside beyond ran with the highway for a mile. Midway on the hillside you could see the red dower-house. But you could not see within, to where the old lady sat beside the window of her humiliation, and looked down the long meadow where the invaders rode every day to watch their relentless scarlet machines sowing wheat as if each grain were a dragon's tooth, or mowing it as if they were guillotines at work upon ranks of golden aristocrats.

In the pride of youth she had chosen this window for her own, because from it she could command so wide a view of her realm. Especially she had never glanced down that great meadow without a thrill of pride—as now, in the evil days, she never beheld it without a pang.

Of all this the invaders had no idea. That she was an enemy, and the dower-house was a grim fortress, and themselves the wicked besiegers of that fortress—why, they were too young and joyous to imagine such preposterous things. So they went on sowing and reaping in her one-time fields, and riding by her white-pillared portico, innocently parading their youth and comradeship and affluence before the face of her age and her loneliness and her poverty—her bitter poverty that might not even keep the house of her fathers for her own people to inherit.

The girl invader was the worst. She was twenty-five, and she had been married to the other invader for six years, and two little boys were singing out 'mother' after her the whole day long; but for all that, she looked a mere girl to the enemy at her loophole in the honeysuckle on the portico. And so she was—just a big, rosy, delighted girl, as she cantered by on her own brown mare, Chips.

Her name, by the way, was Rose. The old lady heard him calling her by it one day—his was Terence. And always when she caught sight of the old lady she would nod gaily, and call, 'Good morning!' or 'Good evening!' as the case might be, in country fashion.

To the old lady these children, wild with their first freedom and their first own home, were as red flags flaunted. After such an encounter as we have indicated, she would leave the pleasant porch, and go to sit in the dusky parlor, surrounded by family portraits and memorials of past days, and open the family Bible on a marble-topped table cold as a tombstone, seeking consolation in certain verses once possessed of power to heal an unhappy and lonely heart.

But that girl's fresh face and voice would remain in her memory, would distract her, would taunt her with an invulnerable joyousness. She could not help but look up at one particular portrait set over the tall white mantel-shelf—such a boy's face it was, and smiling; and whenever she looked memory cried, 'We were like them once!' Then she would sit, forgetting the book, with her tears of old age on her withered cheeks and the dull despair of old age in her heart.

Now it would simply have broken Rose's own heart to have had the faintest conception of all this, for she was just as sweet as she looked.

One day, indeed, Terence did say, 'Girl, I don't half-believe that old lady likes us,' and another day, 'Rosie, sure as sunrise she hates us,' but Rose only flouted him.

'Terry,' she said, on this last occasion, 'you're too imaginative for a farmer. Stop maligning human nature and go put your cultures to soak. Your beans won't be worth photographing if you don't get them planted soon.'

Terence grinned. 'But, Rose, she's just sent me word not to use her road any more. That means I must cut across the meadow with another road.'

'Well, we must be a nuisance, Terry. I don't blame her at all. We should have had our own road long ago. You can't set me against an old lady with curls, and a lace cap and a Chinese silk shawl and a gold-headed cane, and I'm going to see her to-morrow.'

'She hasn't been to see you,' mentioned Terence.
 'She doesn't call on anyone,' retorted Rose, 'since she's been so crippled with rheumatism. Sally says so.' She looked across from their temporary cottage to the red dower-house. Its white pillars gleamed in the dusk.

'We'll make a great old place of it some day, girl,' said Terry.