

Friends at Court

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- January 24, Sunday.—Third Sunday after the Epiphany.
 St. Timothy, Bishop and Martyr.
 „ 25, Monday.—The Conversion of St. Paul.
 „ 26, Tuesday.—St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr.
 „ 27, Wednesday.—St. Vitalian, Pope and Confessor.
 „ 28, Thursday.—St. John Chrysostom, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.
 „ 29, Friday.—St. Francis of Sales, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.
 „ 30, Saturday.—St. Felix IV., Pope and Confessor.

The Conversion of St. Paul.

St. Paul was at first a violent persecutor of the Church. In fact, at the very moment when the grace of God touched his heart he was on his way to Damascus, with authority to seize any persons whom he might find professing the new faith, and send them in chains to Jerusalem. After his conversion, St. Paul devoted all his energies to the propagation of the Christian religion, and spent his life in carrying the glad tidings of redemption to the nations that till then had sat 'in darkness and in the shadow of death.'

St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr.

St. Polycarp, a disciple of St. John the Evangelist, governed the important See of Smyrna for seventy years. He is believed to have been the Angel or Bishop of Smyrna commended by Our Blessed Lord in the Apocalypse (chap. ii.). He was martyred in 169, being then about 100 years of age.

GRAINS OF GOLD

COMPLINE.

Now the day is over
 Night is drawing nigh;
 Shadows of the evening
 Steal across the sky.

Now the darkness gathers,
 Stars begin to peep;
 Birds and beasts and flowers
 Soon will be asleep.

Jesus give the weary
 Calm and sweet repose;
 With Thy tender blessing
 May mine eyelids close.

Grant to little children
 Visions bright of Thee;
 Guard the sailors sailing
 On the dark blue sea.

Comfort every sufferer
 Watching late in pain;
 Those who plan some evil
 From their sin restrain.

Through the long night watches
 May Thine angels spread
 Their white wings above me,
 Watching round my bed.

When the morning wakens
 Then may I arise
 Pure and fresh and sinless
 In Thy holy eyes.—Amen.

A man's way is of his own fashioning; his house, prison, or palace, as he builds and peoples it; his garden, weed or lily grown, as he plants and waters it.

We pass on, but our lives remain. We do, indeed; more truly than we know, 'call the lands after our own names.' Let us see to it that they shall be names to conjure with, names that shall nerve the failing spirit of some after toiler beneath the roof that once sheltered to noble work and brave endeavor.

Womanhood should ever enter a young man's life radiant with smiles of welcome and recognition, the divine aura of purity making sunlight around and blue above her, white-garmented, bathed in the incense of immortal flowers—for the true woman's office is, above all else, priestly, as her appointed temple is a good man's heart.

The Storyteller

BACK TO THE FOLD

The smiling morn rose over the hill, calm and festal in Nature's uncontaminated freshness beneath the peaceful mountain chalets. A traveller came along the road, with the air of one who had long been wearied and embittered. He sat down on a rock in the sunshine, stretched his limbs, and looked over the luscious green of the pastures. Nature had never wronged him, only life had been so unspeakably hard. It had put him in the world in such poverty that he had to wrestle and fight for every crumb that he ate, for every scrap of knowledge that he learned, for every upward step that he took on the ladder. And when at last he looked back, glad and proud, on the way that lay behind him, on the home and position he had won for himself, there came a malicious and jealous fate to destroy all.

A restless disquiet had mastered him and never let him go; he must wander and wander. Wherever he went he shunned other people; if he could not avoid them, he was severely silent. But he saw only what he wished to see, what fitted in with his dominant idea: 'No truth and no love.'

Towards midday he became hungry, and went to the nearest mountain hut. Three girls were sitting at table, dipping their spoons in common into a dish full of milk. They were shyly embarrassed when the gentleman asked for something to eat. He was certainly not hard to please; some bread and mountain cheese and a glass of new milk sufficed for his needs. He sat silent and apart, and by degrees the girls began to chatter again. They spoke in low tones. Tonerl, from the Rieder-Alm, had fallen down a precipice over there, and had been terribly injured. Already he had lain senseless for 24 hours. If he lasted two days more it was all one could expect.

Suddenly a man stood at the door. It was the brother of the injured one.

'Please, will one of you run to St. Martin to beg the Pfarrer (parish priest) to come?'

One of the girls who herded the cows at once rose.

'Is Tonerl still—with you?'

'Yes, but he will not live much longer.'

The stranger sat down outside the mountain hut, while the girl ran down into the valley.

Three hours later the girl came back. She was very hot, and great drops of sweat were falling from her forehead.

'How you have run!' said Teresa, one of her companions. 'And the Pfarrer?'

'Is himself in bed, and so ill that he cannot take a step. It came on him last night.'

'Jesus, Maria! It is sad for Tonerl. Sit down and get cool. I will go to the Rieder-Alm.'

Teresa took the path through the pine trees towards the highest mountain hut.

Franz Helwart raised himself. He did not know why it was, but he wished to see how the matter would go. He followed close behind the girl up the hill. Tonerl lay in the back room, with the window open, and the traveller could catch every word. When the sick man heard that the Pfarrer could not come, he began to lament loudly; he could not die without a priest.

'If our own Herr Pfarrer cannot come, fetch me the curate from St. Blasien,' he begged at last.

The brother shook his head. 'It takes six hours to go there and six hours back. In twelve hours you will never be here, Tonerl.'

'Then the old Pfarrer must come!' exclaimed the sick man in the greatest excitement.

'Be still and calm, Tonerl,' besought Teresa. 'We will pray for a good repentance. Our Lord God regards the good will; He is merciful, and will forgive you all.'

But the sick man became even more excited; it was difficult to keep him in bed. At last the brother got up. 'I will try again at St. Martin,' he said.

'Our Lord God reward you!' cried Tonerl, thankfully.

Teresa shook her head. Before her eyes rose the picture of the old sick Herr Pfarrer, scarcely better than the dying man here on the Rieder-Alm. Then she knelt down beside the bed and began softly to say the rosary.

The sick man now lay wearied and exhausted. A long hour went by. Suddenly the room became dark.

'What is that? Are my eyes closing in death?' cried the terrified Tonerl.

'No, but a storm is coming,' sighed Teresa.

And even while she spoke the wind rose suddenly. The windows rattled; thick drops fell, at first slowly and separately, then the storm broke loose. The rain came rushing down; in the distance, thunder rumbled between the light-