

Friends at Court

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

February 7, Sunday.—Septuagesima Sunday.
 „ 8, Monday.—St. John of Matha, Confessor.
 „ 9, Tuesday.—The Prayer of Our Lord in the Garden.
 „ 10, Wednesday.—St. Scholastica, Virgin.
 „ 11, Thursday.—Apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Lourdes.
 „ 12, Friday.—St. Telesphorus, Pope and Martyr.
 „ 13, Saturday.—St. Gregory II., Pope and Confessor.

St. John of Matha, Confessor.

St. John was born in Provence towards the middle of the twelfth century. Even in boyhood he was remarkable for the perfect manner in which he practised fraternal charity, his chief pleasure being to assist the sick in a neighboring hospital. In conjunction with St. Felix of Valois, he founded the Order of Trinitarians for the ransoming of Christians enslaved by the Moors. He died in Rome, A.D. 1213.

St. Scholastica, Virgin.

St. Scholastica was a sister of St. Benedict, and, like him, she embraced the religious life at an early age. She was for several years Superioress of a community of nuns at a convent near to Monte Cassino, where her saintly brother was Abbot. St. Scholastica died about the year 543.

GRAINS OF GOLD

TO-DAY.

Lord for to-morrow and its needs
 I do not pray;
 Keep me, my God, from stain of sin
 Just for to-day.

Let me both diligently work
 And duly pray;
 Let me be kind in word and deed
 Just for to-day.

Let me be slow to do my will,
 Prompt to obey;
 Help me to mortify my flesh
 Just for to-day.

Let me no wrong or idle word,
 Unthinking, say;
 Set Thou a seal upon my lips
 Just for to-day.

Let me in season, Lord, be grave,
 In season gay;
 Let me be faithful to Thy grace
 Just for to-day.

And if to-day my tide of life
 Should ebb away,
 Give me Thy Sacraments divine,
 Sweet Lord, to-day.

In Purgatory's cleansing fires,
 Brief be my stay;
 O bid me, if to-day I die,
 Go home to-day.

Age and youth look upon life from the opposite ends of a telescope: it is exceedingly short—it is exceedingly long.

Prejudices are notions or opinions which the mind entertains without knowing the grounds and reasons for them.

The human race is divided into two great classes—those who go ahead and do something, and those who sit still and inquire, 'Why wasn't it done the other way?'

Prejudices are like the knots in the glass in our window: they alter the shape of everything we choose to look at through them; they make straight things crooked, and everything indistinct.

It is a good thing to believe, it is a good thing to admire. By continually looking upward, our minds will themselves grow upward; and as a man, by indulging in habits of scorn and contempt for others, is sure to descend to the level of what he despises, so the opposite habits of admiration and enthusiastic reverence for excellence impart to ourselves a portion of the qualities we admire.—Matthew Arnold.

The Storyteller

AUNT MABEL'S STORY

'I am so glad you were able to come, Aunt Mab! Christmas—and my birthday—would not have seemed the same at all without you to any of us.' The speaker was a young girl, brown haired and blue eyed, with a fair, sweet face and a lissom slender figure that looked the perfection of neatness and grace in its well-cut navy-blue house-gown, with an appropriate touch of color in the scarlet neck ribbon and in the bright bunch of holly berries that shone amongst their leaves in her belt.

'Thank you, dear,' Aunt Mabel said affectionately, as her favorite niece deftly helped to remove the heavy fur-lined cloak which the new-comer had been wearing on her long, cold journey. 'But despite a severe twinge of rheumatism I was fully determined to come, dear child. I have never missed spending a Christmas at the Rath since you were a baby, Kitty, and I don't intend to stay away as long as I can help it. I'm glad your mother is keeping so well; and father? I suppose he looks as happy and jovial as ever.'

'Oh, yes, papa keeps splendidly, Aunt Mabel. Now, do let me do that for you,' and suiting the action to the word, Kitty was down at once on her knees unbuttoning the elder woman's boots.

'Thank you, child,' Miss Brereton said again. 'I'm afraid I'm getting old at last, Kitty, or else it is the rheumatism which makes my poor old joints so stiff. And how about yourself, Kitty?' she went on, as seated in a comfortable armchair before the blazing log fire she partook gratefully of the hot cup of tea and the thin buttered toast which her niece had thoughtfully ordered up to the visitor's room, it being still an hour or two before dinner. 'I thought you looked not quite the thing—just a little thin and pale—when I came in.'

'Oh, I'm all right, Auntie,' Kitty said, with a brightness that was perhaps a little forced, and a suddenly-flushed face which did not seem altogether due to her exertions.

'And Charlie?' her Aunt went on interrogatively, while a shadow not altogether unobserved of her keen dark eyes passed swiftly over Kitty's face. Yes, the child did look distinctly pale and trouble.

'Oh, Mr. Nugent is very well, I think,' Kitty began. 'You think,' and 'Mr. Nugent,' her aunt repeated in surprise. 'Why, when did you see him, Kitty?'

'Not for three or four weeks now,' the girl admitted shyly and with a slightly tremulous lip.

'Three or four weeks! That is quite a long time—for him. Why, Kitty, I thought—I hoped—it was all practically settled between you and my godson. Is it your fault or his? I must talk to him, really I must, the moment he comes.'

'I—I am not sure that he will come at all,' Kitty faltered. 'In fact, I'm pretty certain that he won't.'

'Not come—even to your birthday party!' Miss Brereton exclaimed in surprise. 'Why, Kitty, what has come between you, tell me.'

'Nothing, Aunt Mab—or at least, the merest trifle,' Kitty said huskily. 'It is all his own foolish jealousy, and really—'

'Tell me all about it, dear,' Miss Brereton said gently, as the girl stopped, suddenly overcome.

'Well, you see, auntie,' Kitty began, in a choking voice, 'Charlie asked me to marry him this time last year—and I promised that I would think of it. I'm very attached to him, really, auntie—I never knew how attached until this last few weeks. But somehow—you know how fond of fun and enjoyment, auntie—'

Miss Brereton nodded. 'Yes, I often told you, Kitty, that you were a little too much of a flirt,' she said, bluntly and inexorably.

'Well, somehow, I didn't feel,' Kitty went on, apparently too miserable—or too guilty—to attempt to answer the charge, 'that I wanted to settle down that way just yet a while; and when I told Charlie so he seemed quite hurt. Still we kept very good friends till a few months ago, when Captain Reggie Ponsonby came here for the shooting. He paid me great attention and—I'm afraid I did flirt very outrageously with him. Then at Blakeley's dance at the end of November I danced all night—at least, I'm afraid I danced a great deal too often with him. Charlie was there, and he looked—looked rather furious; and once when he came into the conservatory—I fancy he was looking for me—and saw me sitting under the palms with Captain Ponsonby, he grew quite white with anger, and then passed by as though he did not know either of us.'