

Friends at Court

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

February 21, Sunday.—First Sunday in Lent.
 „ 22, Monday.—The Chair of St. Peter at Antioch.
 „ 23, Tuesday.—St. Peter Damian, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.
 „ 24, Wednesday.—St. Matthias, Apostle. Ember Day.
 „ 25, Thursday.—Of the Feria.
 „ 26, Friday.—Of the Feria. Ember Day.
 „ 27, Saturday.—Of the Feria. Ember Day. No Abstinence.

Chair of St. Peter at Antioch.

On this day we commemorate the establishment by St. Peter of his Episcopal See at Antioch, where for seven years he ruled the Church as Universal Pastor, before finally fixing the seat of his spiritual government at Rome.

St. Peter Damian, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.

St. Peter was born at Ravenna, in the north of Italy, about 988. After a youth of hardship, he entered a Benedictine monastery at the foot of the Apennines, where for many years he led a life of austerity, prayer, and study. His great piety and learning having brought him under the notice of his ecclesiastical superiors, he was employed by more than one Pope in important affairs, and displayed great zeal and prudence. In 1057 he was created Cardinal and Bishop of Ostia, but, five years later, he succeeded in obtaining permission to resign his bishopric and return to his monastery. His death occurred in 1072.

St. Matthias, Apostle.

After the Ascension of our Lord, St. Matthias was chosen by lot to fill the place which the treachery and suicide of Judas had left vacant. Tradition assigns Cappadocia as the place of his labors and martyrdom.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

TO-NIGHT.

To-night, dear Lord, I can not pray:
 My heart is sore oppressed—
 So long and weary was the day,
 That fain would I have rest!
 Before Thy altar see me now—
 I know that Thou art near—
 And to Thee all my faith I bow,
 My Jesus, present here!

Although no word to Thee I speak,
 Thy love my heart can read,
 And see how poor, and vile, and weak
 Am I, in all my need!
 Most humbly, Lord, I come before
 Thy majesty and might,
 And ask that to a heart grief-sore
 Thou givest peace to-night!
 —Amadeus, O.S.F.

It is better to prefer honorable defeat to a mean victory, to lowering the level of our aim that we may more certainly enjoy the complacency of success.

A virtuous life may lie under more burdens than a free-and-easy one, but it is supported by all the strength of charity and religion, and these burdens are delightful.

It is supreme folly to attempt to find happiness by taking the short cut across the lawns of life. There is but one end to all these endeavors. They all end in tragedy.

Each complaint drags us down a degree in our upward course. If you would discern in whom God's spirit dwells, watch that person and notice whether you ever hear him murmur.

The Storyteller

THE CHASTENING OF SISTER CLAIRE

The visit to New Orleans would be her first since she entered the convent, and Sister Claire was anticipating it with the eagerness of a child. Devoted as she was to her companions in the Order and absorbed in her dedicated life, there was still about this journey the particular charm of a return to her own people.

She was a member of one of the old families from the land of the fleur-de-lis who had entered America through its Southern ports many years before. Her own particular family group had lingered for a time in the old Louisianian city, then passed northward, while her uncle's branch of the family remained in the South. As a little girl she had dreamed romantically of those Southern relatives. Having no sisters and brothers, no cousins in the community where her family had pitched its tents, her childish imagination pictured her little kinsmen and wished for their presence in her games. The roots of inherited affections stirred in her childish heart. In her girlhood the older members of the family were associated in a business relation which meant financial loss to her father. For this the New Orleans brother was blamed. The result was a cleavage of affections and business relations. Thereafter the daughter of the Northern branch of the family was discouraged in her affection for her Southern cousins.

But youthful sentiment withers slowly. Though their names were not spoken, the Southern cousins continually reappeared in their young relative's thoughts. Even when she entered the convent they were not forgotten, and gradually it became her custom to pray for them daily. Thus, though she had never seen them, these men and women of her clan were bound to her not by ties of blood only, but by a distinct spiritual union.

By one of the roundabout roads which fact and falsehood sometimes travel, she had heard that her father's brother, after his losses, had gradually fallen away from his Church. She concluded that her cousins were what her father bluntly styled 'little pagans,' and as such she fondly commended them to the Shepherd of straying lambs.

And now, when Sister Claire, in the maturity of her womanhood was to be sent on a very special mission to a distant city, her heart and imagination turned eagerly to her unknown but endeared relatives. Could she find them?

She had some hope. Their name was unusual. A few years ago she had clipped from a Southern paper which had drifted to her desk the name of a merchant in the city to which she was journeying—her family name. She now placed it in her pocket-book. She would, if possible, go to see them—and who knew what she might accomplish for their spiritual salvation? The idea became a fountain of enthusiasm.

Sister Claire welcomed the day when, having accomplished the purpose for which her Superior had designed the visit, she was free to undertake this more personal devoir, this intimate, Heaven-directed duty. Then she took the slip containing her family name to the Sister in charge of the parlor. In response to her inquiry the Sister said that she knew the name—it was one of some prominence in the city—but she did not know if its bearers were Catholics. Sister Claire decided to write a note declaring her own identity and asking if the person addressed was a member of her family. The response stated that the recipient was the child of Sister Claire's uncle, and he and his brothers and sisters were living—living together in somewhat patriarchal fashion—and that his wife and sister would like to call for Sister Claire the following morning to escort her home to make the acquaintance of the whole family, now eager to see her.

The next day Sister Claire went gladly forth to make the acquaintance of 'her own.' She learned something of the family from the two gracious and dig-