

Friends at Court

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

February 23, Sunday.—Sexagesima Sunday.
 „ 24, Monday.—St. Matthias, Apostle.
 „ 25, Tuesday.—Of the Feria.
 „ 26, Wednesday.—Of the Feria.
 „ 27, Thursday.—Of the Feria.
 „ 28, Friday.—Of the Feria.
 March 1, Saturday.—Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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 as the place of his labors and martyrdom Cappadocia and the countries bordering on the Black and Caspian Seas.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

LACHRYMAE CHRISTI.

Tears of Christ, Oh, tears Divine!
 Flow upon this soul of mine—
 Sanctify and make it pure,
 Teach it truly to endure;
 Wash away its every stain—
 Only let God's love remain.

Tears of Christ, Oh, tears most blest!
 Flow upon my aching breast:
 And the cross which presseth there
 Shall be wreathed in pearls so fair,
 That for aye my soul shall cling
 To this trophy of her king.

Tears of Christ, Oh, tears most dear!
 When mine agony draws near,
 Flow upon each sinful hand,
 Thou, my God, wilt understand
 How in pity—as I died,
 Jesus, watching by my side,
 Gave me of His tears so sweet,
 To lay before Thy mercy-seat.

OUR DESTINY.

We are not sent into this world for nothing; we are not born at random; we are not here to sin when we have a mind, and reform when we are tired of sinning. God sees every one of us; He creates every soul; He lodges it in the body one by one for a purpose. He needs—He deigns to need—every one of us. He has an end for each of us; we are all equal in His sight, and we are placed in our different ranks and stations, not to get what we can out of them for ourselves, but to labor in them for Him. As Christ has His work, we, too, have ours; as He rejoiced to do His work, we must rejoice in ours also. The end of the things is the test.

It was our Lord's rejoicing in His last solemn hour that He had done the work for which He was sent. "I have glorified Thee on earth." He says in His prayer; "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." It was St. Paul's consolation also: "I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith."

We were created that we might serve God; if we have His gifts, it is that we may glorify Him; if we have a conscience, it is that we may obey it; if we have the prospect of heaven, it is that we may keep it before us; if we have light, that we may follow it; if we have grace, that we may save ourselves by means of it. Alas! alas! for those who die without fulfilling their mission; who were called to be holy, and lived in sin; who were called to worship Christ and who plunged into this giddy and unbelieving world; who were called to fight, and who remained idle.

The Storyteller

THE WILD BIRDS OF KILLEEVY

ROSA MULHOLLAND.

(By arrangement with Messrs. Burns and Oates, London.)

CHAPTER IX.—FAN AMONG THE GIPSIES.

On the outskirts of an English village, under trees just fringed with autumnal gold, the gipsies were encamped, and in a recess of the tents Fanchea was being dressed for a performance. Naomi, the sad-faced gipsy, plaited her long hair, laced her scarlet bodice, and arranged her tinsel skirts. A necklace of gaudy beads glittered on her neck; round her waist was clasped a belt of imitation jewels, and tawdry ornament was heaped on her till she looked like some bird of strangely brilliant plumage from which no song could be expected.

Outside, in the sunshine, a crowd was expecting the appearance of a little dancing and singing girl, the greatest attraction of the show, and among the villagers and country people stood a group of ladies and gentlemen who had ridden from a neighboring watering-place, and passing the encampment had dismounted from curiosity to see what was going on.

Fanchea bounded out of the tent into the sunny open, and, rattling her castanets, had already begun her dance. At first the little figure dazzled the eyes with its glowing colors, flying draperies, and glittering tinsels, but soon the graceful motion of the slim, brown limbs became noticeable, and gave an artistic value to sandals and bangles, to streaming scarves of scarlet, and purple and gold. Thistleton Honeywood, one of the riders who had dismounted to look on, was captivated by the brilliant little apparition even before the beauty of the child's countenance was discerned by him.

"It is the poetry of dancing," he said, "as only a child can render it. Exuberant life and joy in every movement, unconscious grace in every attitude!"

He pressed through the crowd, and drew nearer to the dancer. Fanchea's little oval face, glowing like a pomegranate, was turned towards him. The dark eyes burned with excitement; lips and cheeks were rippled over with a smile of glee. She looked at no one, but seemed laughing at the moving clouds above the heads of the people as if she descried her own fitting counterparts among their bright and fantastic shapes. She looked the very ideal of picturesque joy and mirth: and her looks carried no deceit. Marks of blows lay under her garments, for little Fan had had a beating since she left Killeevy Mountain, yet her delight in her dancing was as real as her life. The free movements in the open air gave her liberty for the moment, the clashing of bizarre music exhilarated, the breezy scudding of the autumnal clouds overhead inspired her. Her dance under the sky was the short-lived rapture of a too-often miserable day.

The dance came suddenly to an end, and Mr. Honeywood was startled to see how quickly the look of joy vanished from her face, the buoyant expression of the limbs disappeared, and as the little dancer fell into an artless, childlike attitude of waiting, he noticed how heavily the mouth and eyelids drooped.

"Poor little thing!" mused he, "her face is too good for her fortunes. Only a child could endure such a life, and in a year or two more she will be too old for it. What is this? She is going to sing!"

A gipsy had brought her a guitar, and she was all animation once more. Seating herself on the grass against a background of waving, sombre-hued trees, this bird of glowing plumage began to pour out a song that startled the hearts of her hearers. It was a wild, stirring gipsy ditty, full of dramatic surprises and strange refrains, mirthful and impassioned by turns; and the