

Friends at Court

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- May 18, Sunday.—Fourth Sunday after Easter.
 „ 19, Monday.—St. Peter Celestine, Pope and Confessor.
 „ 20, Tuesday.—St. Bernardine of Siena, Confessor.
 „ 21, Wednesday.—Of the Feria.
 „ 22, Thursday.—Of the Feria.
 „ 23, Friday.—Of the Feria.
 „ 24, Saturday.—Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians.

Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians.

This feast was instituted by Pope Pius VII. at the beginning of last century. Napoleon, in his ambitious attempt to become autocrat of the world, found a formidable obstacle in the opposition of the Supreme Pontiff, who refused to surrender the patrimony of the Church, or to allow the French Emperor to control the management of ecclesiastical affairs. As a consequence of his firmness, Pius VII. was detained in captivity for several years.

In gratitude for his liberation, which seemed an answer to the prayers of the Church, invoking the intercession of the Blessed Virgin on his behalf, he ordered the present feast to be celebrated. Under the title of "Help of Christians," the Blessed Virgin Mary has been selected as patron of the Catholic Church in Australasia.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

MATER CHRISTI.

Adown the linked years there sweetly rang
 Thy praises, as inspired prophecy
 In chorus grand thy matchless beauty sang:
 Unspotted Mirror of God's majesty,
 In type and figure beautiful foretold,
 The City of our God, the Ivory Tower,
 The Lily pure whose blooming should unfold
 A chalice whiter than earth's whitest flower;
 The Star before the Dawn whose rising bright
 Should promise Him, the World's unfading Light.

Fair names, O Mary! Yet there still was one
 More than all these thy stainless Heart should thrill;
 No prophet sang it, for thy Blessed Son
 Himself would speak it; and, by speaking, fill
 His soul and thine with rapture heavenly.
 Long seemed thy waiting, while the holy fire
 Of yearning glowed more radiantly than He
 Might say that word. His, too, was thy desire:
 Both Hearts are ever one. And came a day,
 Smile meeting smile, when Christ did "Mother" say.

"Mother" He called thee first in Egypt's night,
 And "Mother" lingered like a sweet refrain
 Through Nazareth's years. In Resurrection light
 Of Easter morn, oh, hear again the strain!
 The Risen Lord sought for no dearer name,
 But "Mother" said. We fancy that was all.
 Mother of Christ, it is our joy to claim
 Thee Mother of Christ's Body Mystical;
 Mother of Christ, and still our very own:
 Speak thou good things for us before His throne.

It is not wealth or ancestry, but honorable conduct and a noble disposition, that make men great.—Ovid.

Whereas a prayer, a sign, a tear would have sufficed for the salvation of humanity, our Saviour strove to conquer our souls by every means that could touch and move us, that could make us love Him, and pass by Him to the love of His Father.—Cardinal Mercier.

The Storyteller

THE WILD BIRDS OF KILLEEVY

ROSA MULHOLLAND.

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

(Continued.)

CHAPTER XXII.—GATHER YE ROSES.

The signora had, during the late years of ease and peace that had passed over her head, been striving to catch back at the lost purpose of a life, and had tried to gather up with one hand some of the broken threads that youth had spun and time had snapped, with the hope of weaving them into something beautiful that should yet glorify the close of her existence. The spirit of resignation which made her content to stand and wait while others served, which had kept her from feeling her fate intolerable, and at times would rise from her heart in language which startled the listener with its sanctity, and in thoughts which lifted her own feet over too difficult places, this spirit of resignation was not always with her. When it went at intervals, feverish desires made havoc in her soul, and she dreamed again that hers might be among the hands that are carvers of the corner-stones of the palace of imperishable art.

In the room that she had furnished with the furniture of her old lodging, trying to make it look, in the midst of splendor, like the meagre home in which she had struggled so long, and where poverty had seemed to baffle her most passionate efforts, she had set up her old easel, stained and worn as it was with the patient labor of many years—an easel on which had been perfected many a delicate copy of the old masters, and some lovely bits of original work that had gone forth to the world to be loved and admired; but to make no lasting name for their creator. Upon it had also been angrily destroyed, by the hand of the artist, more than one ambitious effort, begun in a fever of hope that perhaps this, at least, might prove, at its completion, to be one of those works which are the glory of all time. But the moment of completion had never been attained; the star of hope had set in the feverish brain that conceived such pictures long before the work had approached its maturity, and destruction had followed swiftly on the first foreshadowing of failure. The canvas intended as the groundwork for a structure of imperishable beauty had turned into an instrument of torture for the too presumptuous soul; and like one who had invoked an angel and been confronted by a fiend, the half-crazed dreamer had turned and fled from even the memory of the once holy labor of her hands.

Grown meek through failure, and persuaded by her higher nature to be satisfied with the perfection of what others had achieved, she had thought to fling herself entirely into the life of another, and for a long time Fanchea's love, and Fanchea's future, had been sufficient to absorb the action of all the fire within her. But as the years moved on the old passion revived, and the longing that only death would ever extinguish returned upon her in her more self-forgetting existence, to do battle with the peace that had been gradually gaining sway over her soul.

The old easel was set forth into the light, and the old frown reappeared on the signora's brow. Again she refused to believe that it was a demon, this spirit that whispered to her of a glorious crown of fruition which should yet descend out of the heavens to give signal meaning to her bleak and barren life.

"Dear Mamzelle," said Fan, sorry to see the absent, unsatisfied look glowing in the eyes of her little friend, and the spasm of pain contracting her furrowed mouth, "why do you not paint the wild flowers as you did last year? You made them look living things,