

Friends at Court

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

March 23, Sunday.—Easter Sunday.
 „ 24, Monday.—Easter Monday.
 „ 25, Tuesday.—Easter Tuesday.
 „ 26, Wednesday.—Within the Octave.
 „ 27, Thursday.—Within the Octave.
 „ 28, Friday.—Within the Octave.
 „ 29, Saturday.—Within the Octave.

Easter Sunday.

'The festival of Easter (writes St. Gregory) is the solemnity of solemnities, because it raises us from the earth into eternity, which it enables us to enjoy beforehand by faith, hope, and charity.' 'You shall rise again!' This is what the Church says to us by the eloquent voice of her ceremonies. From the holy temple all signs of mourning have disappeared. The altars are decked out with extraordinary magnificence. Ornaments of gay color and rich embroidery appear. Every face is bright. The bells are all in motion. The song of joy—the Alleluia—that word of the language of heaven, fallen on earth for our festive days, resounds on all sides, is repeated every moment; is varied again and again, is modulated into every key; and when thereto are added the rays of a beautiful sun, you cannot fail to have those feelings of hope and delight which it is the mission of this great day to inspire.

Easter Monday.

'The contemplation of Christ's glorious Resurrection and the eternal joys of heaven ought particularly to occupy our souls at this season.'—Butler.

GRAINS OF GOLD

HE IS RISEN.

He is risen; He is risen;
 Tell the tidings o'er and o'er;
 He has left His earthly prison,
 He now lives to die no more;
 He has proved His Christly teaching,
 He is Victor o'er the grave;
 And the joyous news is reaching
 To the souls He came to save.

As partakers in His glory
 Let our gratitude be shown;
 Let us spread the wondrous story
 To the lands where yet unknown
 Is the tale of our salvation
 From the toils that Sin has set;
 Tell it out to ev'ry nation
 That our Lord is Master yet!

AMADEUS, O.S.F.

He sees enough who doth his darkness see.
 The noblest mind the best contentment has.
 He sins against this life, who slights the next.
 The mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands.
 Watch thy tongue; out of it are the issues of life.
 Everything that lives, lives not alone nor for itself.

A man should keep his friendship in constant repair.

Take what is, trust what may be, that's life's true lesson.

He who cannot hold his tongue cannot keep his friends.

Things gained are gone, but great things done endure.

Truth is truth, though from an enemy, and spoken in malice.

'STAND FAST IN THE FAITH'

(A Weekly Instruction specially written for the N.Z. Tablet by 'GRIMEL'.)

THE CEREMONIES OF HOLY WEEK: V.—HOLY SATURDAY

According to modern practice the ceremonies of Holy Saturday commence early in the morning. In reality, the service is the vigil or night-watch of Easter Sunday, and originally did not begin till the Saturday evening and lasted almost till the dawn. The early Christians believed that our Lord would come again at the dawn of some Easter, and hence they surrounded the night-watch of that festival with great solemnity. Thus of the Emperor Constantine (fourth century) we are told that he 'transformed the night of the sacred vigil into the brilliancy of day, by lighting throughout the city pillars of wax, while burning lamps illuminated every part, so that this mystic vigil was rendered brighter than the brightest daylight.'

The chief features of the service are these: The Blessing of the New Fire, the Procession, the Prophecies, the Blessing of the Font, the Blessing of the Paschal Candle, and the Mass.

The Blessing of the New Fire.—The sacred ministers proceed to the front of the church and there bless and light the fire which is to be used in the thurible and from which is lit the taper that serves to light the Paschal Candle. The idea is this: Christ promised that 'by His death He would make all things new'; and so, the Church, which with her risen Spouse rises to newness of life, gives a fresh blessing every year to the 'creatures of God' used in her service. According to old Roman custom the fire was hidden on Good Friday as an image of the death of Christ, and from it the candle was lit on Holy Saturday, as a type of the Resurrection.

The Procession to the Sanctuary.—When the blessing is over, the procession moves up the Church. The rubric explains what follows: 'Then the deacon, putting on a white dalmatic, takes a rod with three candles fixed on the top. The thurifer goes first with an acolyte, carrying on a plate the five grains of incense; the subdeacon with the cross follows, and the clergy in order; then the deacon with the triple candle, and last of all the priest. When the deacon is come into the Church, an acolyte, who carries a taper lighted from the new fire, lights one of the three candles on the top of the rod, and the deacon, holding up the rod, kneels, as do all the rest except the subdeacon, and sings alone:

Lumen Christi (Behold the light of Christ).

Response: Deo gratias (Thanks be to God).

Twice more the procession stops, while the deacon lights the remaining candles and sings the 'Lumen Christi.' The triple candle on the single stalk represents the distinction of Persons in the Blessed Trinity—a very appropriate ceremony in view of the baptism of catechumens associated with the Holy Saturday service.

The Blessing of the Paschal Candle.—This feast, as we have explained, was originally the night-watch of Easter, when the faithful commemorated Christ's Resurrection, and the blessing of the Paschal Candle was designed to represent that great fact in a striking manner. 'It was intended,' writes Father Thurston, 'amongst the early Jewish Christians, a people who like other Oriental races clothed all their thought in figures and parables, that this great light should typify Him Who is the 'True Light' which cometh into this world,' Him in Whose light the catechumens that evening to be 'illuminated' were to participate. He was the great Light, their little flame was only derived from Him. In what more speaking way could the Resurrection be represented than as a 'blaze of light'—*Lumen ad revelationem Gentium*, a light for the revelation of the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people, Israel?'