

Friends at Court

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- September 21, Sunday.—Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost. St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist.
- „ 22, Monday.—Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- „ 23, Tuesday.—St. Linus, Pope and Martyr.
- „ 24, Wednesday.—Our Lady of Mercy.
- „ 25, Thursday.—SS. Eustachius and companions, Martyrs.
- „ 26, Friday.—St. Eusebius, Pope and Martyr.
- „ 27, Saturday.—SS. Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs.

St. Linus, Pope and Martyr.

St. Linus, the immediate successor of St. Peter, received the martyr's crown after a pontificate of twelve years.

SS. Eustachius and Companions, Martyrs.

St. Eustachius, a Roman general, suffered martyrdom, together with his wife and two sons, shortly after the beginning of the second century.

St. Eusebius, Pope and Martyr.

St. Eusebius, who succeeded St. Marcellus on the Papal throne, was banished by Maxentius to Sicily, where suffering and privation soon caused his death, A.D. 310.

Saints Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs.

These two saints were brothers, born in Arabia, and renowned for their skill in medicine. They were remarkable for their charity, and for the zeal with which they endeavoured to propagate the Christian religion. They were both beheaded in the persecution of Diocletian, about the year 303.

GRAINS OF GOLD

MY CHOICE.

From day to day, these many years, some vain
Imagined good has filled my heart and eye,—
Some pleasure slow to come and swift to fly,
By long regret succeeded and disdain.

How much is he mistaken and insane
Who seeks delight in things of earth that die,—
False joys which from the true far distant lie,
A painted cloud, a phantom of the brain,—
Pleasure for which till it arrives we pine,
Which scarcely brings enjoyment when possessed,
Which parting leaves us to remorse at last!
Exchanged for such a state, O Lord, be mine
That which embraces, in one moment blest,
The future and the present and the past!

—Ave Maria.

It is better to reconcile an enemy than to conquer him. Your victory may deprive him of his power to hurt for the present; but reconciliation disarms him even of his will to injure.

It would be hard to portray the darkness of a world in which there were no reverence. Happiness would be impossible, for there could be no friendships upon which to build it and no values out of which it might spring. To view life thus would be to put it on the basis of pessimism, and pessimism is in its last analysis misery.

The inner knowledge that one has been honest is a reward which passes words. One thus rewarded is rich beyond measure of wealth that might be dishonestly gained. These are not fancies, but facts. Humanity should have learned them as such and made use of them long ago. Not having done so, humanity should begin now. The first step is to be honest with self.

'STAND FAST IN THE FAITH'

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

BENEDICTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT—II

It must often appear strange to us that the Litany of Loreto in honor of the Blessed Virgin should occupy such a large place in a service which is professedly held out of reverence for our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Over and above the direct veneration of our Lord which appears in the hymns, 'O Salutaris Hostia' and 'Tantum Ergo,' in the numerous genuflections and the blessing, there is generally some hymn, most often a litany, in honor of our Lady, and this hymn or litany takes up most of the time. The explanation of this anomaly is to be found in the history of Benediction, for the hymn of praise to Mary is really the stock upon which the other part of the Benediction service has been grafted.

As early as the thirteenth century members of the numerous confraternities and guilds of those days were accustomed to assemble in the evening in order to sing canticles before a statue or picture of our Lady. These canticles (called *Laude*, praises), were written not in Latin but in the vulgar tongue, and gave the service from first to last a lay character. So popular did these services become with the devout laity, that confraternities were established for the express purpose of singing these canticles. The custom of holding an evening service in honor of our Lady started in Italy, and soon spread throughout Europe, but while in Italy the hymns sung were almost endless in number, in England, Germany, and France the laity stuck to a few chants, especially to the 'Salve Regina' (Hail, Holy Queen) as they heard it sung at the end of the Divine Office by the Dominican, Carmelite, and Servite Friars.

The whole service was looked upon as the product of private devotion, suited to the people, 'and even before it was glorified by the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, we note that it was already a service which possessed those three very popular elements which contribute so much to make our present Benediction attractive to the majority—I mean the profusion of lights, the brevity, and the pleasant music in which all were probably able to join. For, strange to say, we may regard this "Salvo" as being in its origin simply the attempt of the laity to imitate and reproduce that part of the Office of the monks which specially appealed to them. The antiphon of our Lady at the end of Vespers or Compline varying with the season, is the one feature in the monastic Office which, speaking generally, is sung, and not merely recited in monotone. Hence it is admitted by nearly all, that the anthem in the Anglican liturgy, which forms the great attraction of the choral service in our Protestant cathedrals, is simply a substitution for the antiphons of our Lady sung at the conclusion of the ancient Lauds and Compline. But before the Reformers took to imitating these popular antiphons of the Office in their own special way, the laity, as a whole, had taken to imitate them in theirs. Just as the Rosary was a miniature Psalter with 150 Hail Marys instead of 150 Psalms, just as the scapular was a miniature religious habit, just as the Stations of the Cross were a miniature pilgrimage to the Holy Land, just as the morning and evening Angelus are probably a curtailment of the *Tres Preces*, the morning and night prayers of the monks; so the "Salve," which has by degrees developed into the *Salut* and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, was originally a lay imitation of the most popular feature of the monastic Office' (Thurston at Eucharistic Congress of 1908, p. 460).

Now we turn to the other feature of Benediction, the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and the blessing. The idea of exposing the Blessed Sacrament for veneration in a monstrance goes back to the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century. The beginning of the thirteenth century witnessed a great manifestation of popular veneration for the

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