

FRIENDS AT COURT

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S
CALENDAR

- Feb. 1, Sun.—Fourth Sunday after Epiphany. St. Brigid, Virgin.
- 2, Mon.—Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- 3, Tues.—St. Blaise, Bishop and Martyr.
- 4, Wed.—St. Andrew Corsini, Bishop.
- 5, Thurs.—St. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr.
- 6, Fri.—St. Titus, Bishop and Confessor.
- 7, Saturday.—St. Romuald, Abbot.

✠

St. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr.

St. Agatha was born at Palermo, Sicily, and was martyred on February 5, 251, at Catania, during the persecutions of Decius. Quintianus, the Governor of Sicily, seeing his love for her repudiated, took revenge by accusing her of being a Christian, and caused her to suffer most cruel torments. She was scourged, burned with hot irons, torn with hooks, and then placed on a bed of live coals and glass. From all these tortures St. Agatha went forth triumphant, and finally died in her prison. The inhabitants of Catania invoke her, especially during an outbreak of Mount Etna.

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

GRAINS OF GOLD

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE.

Up to the Temple gates the Virgin came
(O soft and warm the burden 'gainst her breast),

Obedient to the Law her offering made—
The gentle turtle-doves; as meek as they—
Placed her Beloved in the waiting arms
Of eager Simeon. In joyful tones
He begged that he might be dismissed in peace,

Since that his eyes had looked upon his Lord.
"A sign for contradiction He shall be,
Ordained of Heaven for the rise and fall
Of many; and thy soul a sword shall pierce!"
Closer she claspt the tender Lamb of God,
Pillowed the tiny head upon her breast
And whispered to the Infant's listening ear—
Destined to gather every cry of earth:

"Oh, Holy One, for whom the Prophets
sighed,
What though the sword of woe my soul may
rend;

Should I grow fearsome in the evil day,
Whom Heaven charged to nurture at my breast

The Omnipotent; who feel the trustful cling
Of fingers that have shaped the universe;
Whose lips unto the lips of God may press,
Daring to frame those wondrous words: My Son!

And with eternal peace upon her brow
The Strength of Martyrs folded to her breast,

Down the great Temple stairs the Virgin came.

—CATHERINE M. HAYES.

THE STORYTELLER

NORA

Translated from the German by PRINCESS LICHTENSTEIN

(Published by arrangement with Burns, Oates, Washbourne, Ltd.)

CHAPTER XIII—(Continued)

His first little act of revenge had been well worthy of his slow and vulgar self, in the anonymous letter he had sent the countess. At the time he had only considered the matter in the light of a low love intrigue, probably to end in dishonor. A few words which the director let fall had opened his eyes on that score; but as Nora's conduct had been more distant than ever since that day, his thirst for revenge had increased. Yes, he would humble her, he would crush that proud heart, and bring it to his feet. Perhaps, after all, she would be brought, if not to love him, at all events to marry him, and to be his slave, and now the father's difficulties seemed to be a weight thrown in his balance.

Pale with rage, he had stepped back as she had turned to go away, and as he made room for her his dark eyes rested upon her with a wicked flash. At that moment Landolfo made up his mind.

The director's eyes had also followed his daughter with displeasure, and in order to pour balsam upon Landolfo's wounded pride he said, "No; come into my room, Landolfo; we had better begin business at once—and ladies understand nothing about business, you know."

"They certainly seem to have no taste for simple and honest MEN of business, however much advantage may be gained from them," said Landolfo sharply, and in so loud a tone that Nora must have heard him.

"But I know how to appreciate them," said Mrs. Karsten from her *chaise longue*, upon which she was gracefully reclining, her head ensconced in soft pink satin and delicate white lace. Karsten, mind you bring Signor Landolfo back, and do not deprive us of him the whole evening," she added, holding out her hand, which Landolfo gallantly kissed.

"Come," said the director impatiently, and leading him into his study. "What news have you?" he added almost tremulously, before even the door was closed.

As soon as Landolfo was alone with the director, his submissive and respectful air completely disappeared; he was far too indispensable to that man to be particular about his manners towards him.

Before vouchsafing an answer he leisurely lit a cigar, to which important operation he devoted even more time than is usually necessary; then he threw himself negligently into an arm-chair, and puffed at his cigar until he could make sure that it was properly lighted. Meanwhile the director was pacing his room up and down with long strides.

"Here are letters!" said Landolfo at last, throwing a small packet upon the table.

"And the banker? What news from him?" asked the director excitedly.

"At the best, you are in for a great loss; two-thirds will go, if not more."

"Good heavens! that is the death-stroke!" exclaimed the director. "The loss is an irreparable one under present circumstances. We have had nothing but expenses during the whole winter, and the income has considerably diminished."

Landolfo was silent, and watched with interest the nice little white clouds arising from his cigar and disappearing one after the other into vacuum.

"Two-thirds lost!" muttered the director; "I tell you that's ruin!"

"One single lucky season would set you upon your legs again."

"But how can I conjure up a lucky season?" cried the director angrily. "That fellow there has put it into his head to ruin me, and he has colossal means to back him. Depend upon it, it is an intrigue got up in order to rob me of the result of these long years of labor. But I won't be beaten; indeed, I won't."

"What news have you from the troop?" asked Landolfo in the same quiet tones again.

The director shrugged his shoulders. "The new clowns have asked for an augmentation of their salary for the next quarter, and, of course, I cannot pay them: the cashier calls out for money, and the audience is well nigh reduced to zero. The new company has naturally visited all the great towns in Central Germany, so as to spoil the game for us. Such low performances, too; they must needs get lions over, and will probably be having monkeys soon, I'll bet! What a downfall from our training of fine and noble horses!" he added indignantly.

"Engage a lioness; that would be a better attraction than anything else," said Landolfo with a hideous leer.

The director did not seem to follow this last remark; he was busied with the letters which Landolfo had placed upon the table. As he had finished one, a low curse passed across his lips. "This also," he said, throwing the paper away. "What has come over the girl? She is my best *manège*-rider, that Miss Elise, and has just given me notice. It's too bad, for I had acceded to her ridiculous pretensions. That man has evidently caught her also."

"What does she write?" asked Landolfo indifferently.

"Read for yourself. A lot of stupid phrases which I do not even understand. Now, that is really the crowning of the edifice."

Landolfo read the letter, and replaced it with methodic order upon the table.

"I thought so," he said, leaning back.

"What did you think? What does she want?" asked the director irritably.

"Westway"

LADIES' GENERAL OUTFITTERS and EXPERT MILLINERS.
guaranteed. O. GILL, Proprietress.Satisfaction
100 CASHEL STREET

Christchurch