

## Friends at Court

### GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR.

February 11, Sunday.—Quinquagesima Sunday.

„ 12, Monday.—The Seven Founders.

„ 13, Tuesday.—Of the Feria.

„ 14, Wednesday.—Ash Wednesday.

„ 15, Thursday.—Of the Feria.

„ 16, Friday.—Of the Feria.

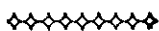
„ 17, Saturday.—Of the Feria.

#### The Seven Founders.

The Order of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin, commonly called Servites, owes its origin to the zeal and piety of seven Florentine merchants. After distributing their goods among the poor, they retired to Monte Senario, near Florence, where they dwelt in cells as hermits. This was in 1233, which is regarded as the date of the foundation of the Order. They subsequently became a monastic community under the special patronage of the Blessed Virgin. They adopted the Augustinian Rule, and for their habit wore a black tunic with a scapular and cape of the same color. Under St. Philip Beniti, the first general, the Order spread rapidly, chiefly in Italy and Germany. St. Juliana Falconieri is regarded as the foundress of the Servite Third Order. The Servites were approved by Alexander IV., in 1255. Innocent VIII. declared the Servites a mendicant Order, bestowing on them the privileges enjoyed by the other mendicants.

#### Ash Wednesday.

Ash Wednesday, the Wednesday after Quinquagesima Sunday, is the first day of the Lenten fast. The name *dies cinerum* (day of ashes) which it bears in the *Roman Missal*, is found in the earliest existing copies of the *Gregorian Sacramentary*, and probably dates from at least the eighth century. On this day all the faithful according to ancient custom are exhorted to approach the altar before the beginning of Mass, and there the priest, dipping his thumb into ashes previously blessed, marks upon the forehead of each the Sign of the Cross, saying the words: "Remember, man, that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return." The ashes used in this ceremony are made by burning the remains of the palms blessed on Palm Sunday of the previous year. In the blessing of the ashes four prayers are used, all of them ancient, and the ashes are sprinkled with holy water and fumigated with incense. The celebrant himself, be he bishop or cardinal, receives either standing or seated the ashes from some other priest, usually the highest in dignity of those present. In earlier ages a penitential procession often followed the rite of the distribution of the ashes, but this is not now prescribed.



### Grains of Gold

#### PENITENCE.

Grey days of Lent, of Passion-tide and pain,

There is a beauty in your silent hours;

Your tears are like the blessed silver showers

That bring each lowly dell to bloom again.

They wash away each spiritual stain

And come, as with great Pentecostal powers,

To freshen up these arid hearts of ours.

Dear days, blest days, ye never come in vain!

The solemn touches of your grey dove wings

Stir into deepening plenitude of power

Our dull desires. They shine, as those wings do,

With rose and emerald from a fire that flings

Unearthly radiance on each tearful hour.

Bliss of Forgiveness, warm us through and through!

—CAROLINE D. SWAN.



#### REFLECTIONS.

Accuse not another of a crime from which you cannot clear yourself.—St. Pacian.

Nothing can give me greater pleasure than to hear again and again what my beloved Master suffered for me.—St. Francis of Assisi.



## The Storyteller



### Alice Riordan

(By MRS. J. SADLER.)

It happened that evening that several of the boarders were absent, some on parties of pleasure, some gone to the country for the day; so that there was only young Richardson, aforesaid, and two elderly men of respectable appearance. Richardson was a good-looking young man of some six or eight and twenty, with a frank, open countenance, somewhat bronzed from exposure to the weather, and a well-formed, manly figure. He was, on the whole, a young man of whose attentions any girl in his own station might well be proud, and this Alice Riordan knew very well, hence the blushing and embarrassment attending on her aunt's communication.

Harry and Cormac were still sitting together in a small room adjoining the dining-room, and Lizzie told Alice to go in for them, which Alice was very glad to do, for more reasons than one. As she entered the room, her uncle shook his head with a warning gesture, and then, slapping Cormac on the shoulder, he arose: "Come along, Cormac, my man; here's Alice come to tell us that tea is ready."

"Well, I'm ready to go, Harry. Where are you, Alice dear?"

"Here, father," said Alice, taking his hand, and speaking in as cheerful a tone as she could command. "Aunt and I were long about getting the tea; but you must both of you forgive us this time; you know Uncle Harry told us to have a chat together," she added archly.

"And I'll go bail you took me at my word," said her uncle. "Get along there, you young witch; I suppose you were making a charm on my little Lizzie. Was she with you all the time?" he added, with a look of sly humor.

"Well, not exactly all the time, uncle: she came upstairs for something she wanted."

"To be sure she did; I saw her eye shining through the keyhole there. I declare to my sins, I don't know what to do with her; I wish she was as deaf as a stone."

"Fie, fie, uncle!" said Alice, reprovingly; "what great harm was it for her to hear what passed between you and my father? I suppose you weren't plotting treason—were you?"

"Maybe ay, and maybe no," replied her uncle, with one of his merry laughs; "but see, there's Mr. Richardson placing a chair for you, and Lizzie has on her vinegar face; so I see it's the best of our play to sit down at once and 'fall to,' as they say in the old country."

The evening passed away very pleasantly; Richardson took every opportunity of making court to Alice, and Alice received his attentions so graciously that Lizzie was delighted. Every now and then she would nudge Harry with her elbow, or call his attention to what was going on with one of her knowing winks. Even the two elderly gentlemen were made acquainted with her plans and wishes. "Now, Mr. Rogers, don't you think they'd make a very handsome couple? I declare, I think they were made for one another. What do you say, Mr. Green?"

Mr. Rogers thought it highly probable, and Mr. Green sagely observed that "more unlikely things had come to pass."

Cormac was the only one who knew nothing of the matter, he seemed unusually depressed; and though he entered into conversation with Richardson, and even argued religion for some time with Green, yet Alice and Harry were both painfully sensible that he was forcing a cheerfulness which he did not feel. About nine o'clock Alice approached him and asked if he did not think it time to go home. "Well, yes, Alice, I think we had as well be moving. We have a long walk before us."

Richardson proposed to see them home, and after some polite objections from both father and daughter, his offer was accepted, and they all three set out together. Harry and Lizzie went with them to the door, the former to tell Alice, in a significant tone, that he would be over next day to see them, as he had some business in Craig Street, not far from where they lived, and Lizzie to charge Richardson

**A. W. Bryant**

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