

Friends at Court.

BIOGRAPHICAL GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR.

(Written for the N.Z. TABLET.)

JULY 9, Sunday.—Seventh Sunday after Pentecost.
 " **10, Monday.**—St. Peter Celestine.
 " **11, Tuesday.**—St. James, Bishop of Nisibis.
 " **12, Wednesday.**—St. John Gualbert.
 " **13, Thursday.**—St. Eugenius.
 " **14, Friday.**—St. Bonaventure.
 " **15, Saturday.**—St. Henry II., Emperor.

ST. BONAVENTURE.

St. Bonaventure, the great light and ornament of the holy Order of St. Francis, for his extraordinary devotion, ardent charity, and eminent skill in sacred learning, is surnamed the seraphic doctor. He was born at Bagnorea in Tuscany, in the year 1221, of pious parents. He was christened by the name of John, but afterwards received that of Bonaventure, on the following occasion. In the fourth year of his age he fell so dangerously sick that his life was despaired of by the physicians. The mother in excessive grief had recourse to the Almighty Physician by earnest prayer, and going into Umbria cast herself at the feet of St. Francis of Assisium, with many tears begging his intercession with God for the life of her son. St. Francis was moved to compassion by the tears of the mother, and at his prayer the child recovered so perfect a state of health that he was never known to be sick from that time till the illness of which he died. The glorious saint, at whose petition God granted this favour, saw himself near the end of his mortal course, and foretelling the graces which the Divine goodness prepared for this child, cried out in prophetic rapture: '*O buona ventura*,' that is, in Italian, 'Good luck.' Whence the name Bonaventura was given to the saint. The devout mother in gratitude consecrated her son to God by vow, and was careful to inspire into him from the cradle the most ardent sentiments of piety, and to inure him to assiduous practices of self-denial, humility, obedience and devotion. Bonaventure from his infancy entered upon a religious course, and appeared inflamed with the love of God as soon as he was capable of knowing Him. His progress in his studies surprised his masters, but that which he made in the science of the saints and in the practice of every virtue was far more extraordinary. In 1245, being twenty-four years of age, he entered into the Order of St. Francis.

He was the friend of St. Thomas Aquinas, who asked him one day whence he drew his great learning. St. Bonaventure replied by pointing to his crucifix. At another time St. Thomas found him in ecstasy while writing the life of St. Francis, and exclaimed: 'Let us leave a saint to write of a saint.' St. Bonaventure was the guest and adviser of St. Louis, and the director of St. Isabella the King's sister.

At the age of thirty-five he was made general of the Order; and only escaped another dignity, the Archbishopric of York, by dint of tears and entreaties. Gregory X. appointed him Cardinal Bishop of Albano, and he sat at that Pontiff's right hand, and spoke first at the Council of Lyons. His piety and eloquence won over the Greeks to Catholic union, and then his strength failed. He died while the Council was sitting, and was buried by the assembled Bishops, A.D. 1274.

St. Bonaventure was a very prolific writer. Gerson, the learned Chancellor of Paris, said of them: 'They seem to me the most proper for the instruction of the faithful. They are solid, safe, pious, and devout; and he keeps as far as he can from niceties; not meddling with logical or physical questions which are foreign to the matter in hand. Nor is there any doctrine more sublime, more divine, or more conducive to piety.' Trithemius, in speaking of the writings of this great Doctor, says: 'Whoever would be both learned and devout, let him read the works of St. Bonaventure.'

ST. PETER CELESTINE.

As a child Peter had visions of our Blessed Lady, and of the angels and saints. They encouraged him in his prayer, and chided him when he fell into any fault. At school, he made great progress in study, but still longed for the heavenly favours of his childhood, and at the age of twenty left his home in Apulia (Italy) to live in a mountain solitude. Here he passed three years, assailed by the evil spirits, but consoled by angels' visits. After this, his seclusion was invaded by disciples, who refused to be sent away; and the rule of life which he gave them formed the foundation of the Celestine Order. Angels are said to have assisted in the church which Peter built, and unseen bells to have rung peals of surpassing sweetness, and heavenly music to have filled the sanctuary, when he offered the Holy Sacrifice. Suddenly he found himself torn from his loved solitude by his election to the Papal throne. Resistance was of no avail. After a reign of four months Peter summoned the cardinals to his presence, and solemnly resigned his trust. So strange an act was regarded with suspicion; he was placed in confinement, and thus, alone with God, he joyfully awaited his death, which took place A.D. 1296.

On May 31, the Rev. Father O'Connell, of Hay, celebrated the silver jubilee of his ordination as a priest in Carlow College, Ireland. Several addresses of congratulation were presented to him, and he was also the recipient of a purse of sovereigns.

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