

Friends at Court

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- September 2, Sunday.—Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost.
 „ 3, Monday.—St. Elizabeth, Queen.
 „ 4, Tuesday.—St. Rose of Viterbo, Virgin.
 „ 5, Wednesday.—St. Lawrence Justinian, Bishop and Confessor.
 „ 6, Thursday.—St. Rumold, Martyr.
 „ 7, Friday.—St. Eugene III., Pope and Confessor.
 „ 8, Saturday.—Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

St. Lawrence Justinian, Bishop and Confessor.

St. Lawrence Justinian, who was the first Patriarch of Venice, was born in that city about the year 1380. He was General of the Canons Regular of the Congregation of St. George, was appointed Bishop of Venice in 1433, and Patriarch in 1451. He built at Venice ten churches and several momasteries.

St. Rumold, Bishop and Martyr.

St. Rumold, Bishop of Dublin, returning from a visit to the tomb of the Apostles, interrupted his journey at Malines, in Belgium. During his stay he preached with much fruit in that city and its neighborhood, and was eventually assassinated by a man whose notorious crimes he had not hesitated, in the interests of morality, to severely stigmatise.

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on September 8. This festival was appointed by Pope Innocent XI., that the faithful may be called upon in a particular manner to recommend to God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the necessities of His Church, and to return to Him thanks for His gracious protection and numberless mercies. What gave occasion to the institution of this feast was a solemn thanksgiving for the relief of Vienna when it was besieged by Turks in 1683.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

AVE MARIA.

Hail, Mary, full of grace!
 The Angel's song
 We echo, as thy festival we greet;
 And on thy Birthday, holy Maid, repeat
 Both loud and long,
 Hail, Mary, full of grace!
 Here in our struggling race
 Toward the goal,
 Dear Mother, pray thy Son with strength to fill
 Us wearied with our striving 'gainst what ill
 Impedes our soul,
 O Mary, full of grace!
 Hail, Mary! Love and praise
 To thee we bring,
 Whom Gabriel the Archangel praised, and whom
 Christ Jesus loved, the Ouspring of thy womb.
 For aye we sing,
 Hail, Mary, full of grace!

—'Ave Maria.'

A little silence often saves much trouble.
 Suffering teaches the patient to win many victories.
 Heroes are scarce, but the man who makes his poverty respectable is one of them.
 Learn to put yourself in another's place and you will have mastered one of the secrets of good breeding.
 In the presence of true greatness mere talent and cleverness are thrown into the shade, as stars pale before the sun.
 When we sit in a day-dream, allowing our thoughts to roam where they will, while minutes and hours slip away in mere vacuity practically unmarked, it must not be imagined that this is meditation.
 There is an eloquence in the pious resignation, the contented look, the busy fingers of the poor artisan pursuing his honest and industrious life which is not to be found in all the bombast of the 'religious' hypocrite; and no quietly honest man of this kind can calculate the influence for goodness which he may exercise on society.

The Storyteller

NAOMI MARIA

(Concluded from last week.)

The little chapel was filled to overflowing; for Naomi had made many friends, and others were drawn hither by curiosity regarding her strange conversion. They waited anxiously, fearing disappointment; but at the appointed hour Naomi followed the priest into the church. Madame Claire's two little daughters, Lisa and Anna, dressed in white and bearing lighted tapers, led her toward the altar, the Sisters following in procession.

The girl was almost fainting with weakness; her face was whiter than the white dress she wore, but in her dark eyes burned the fire of a great resolve; and, wasted as she was with illness, there was in Naomi's face that day a beauty which, perhaps, it had never before possessed—the beauty reflected by the triumph of soul over body—the beauty written by suffering nobly borne.

To the questions asked of her in the name of the Catholic Church, Naomi answered with an energy which surprised all who listened; it seemed as if the last flicker of her life's strength was put into that vehement 'I desire Baptism.'

The onlookers waited breathless, and through the hushed stillness of the chapel rose Father Isidor's voice:

'I baptize thee, Naomi Maria, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

It was done: the cleansing waters had flowed over that fair head, and Naomi stood there in the unshaken innocence of infancy, a child of God, pure and untroubled, fit in that moment to enter even into the presence of the King.

It was a scene to touch all present—a scene to break down even the long-taught self-control which is the duty of the priest, and tears rose to the good Father's eyes. For if men tremble before the innocence of childhood, what must it be, to those who know God, to look into the soul of another and 'see there naught but His image! Many a time in the years of his ministry had the priest looked, untouched, upon hoary sinners broken with repentance; many a time had he seen, unmoved, tender women's tears washing the feet of the Crucified; but the thought of this child whom he had clothed in the spotless robe of innocence stirred his heart to its depths. Who was he that his hand should have been chosen to plant this lily in the garden of the Master?

'Ma petite, you are tired! You must go back to bed.'

It was Madame Claire who spoke, her arm round Naomi, in the room where the friends had assembled after the ceremony.

'No, I am not tired—at least I feel nothing. It seems to me as if my body did not belong to me any more. Come to the window, and let us look out over the mountains.'

'They are beautiful to-day. See how the light catches the white peaks against the blue!'

'Oh, the light, the light! How beautiful it is!' said Naomi. 'It seems to me to-day that I have been blind all my life, and that only now I see. My whole soul seems full of light. It is like passing from night to day. And the joy is so great!'

'God has been so good to you!' was all that Madame Claire could say.

'So good I can't understand it. It is all too great.'

'It seems to me,' said Madame Claire, 'that we who have always believed do not know what faith is. I think that if one could lose one's faith without sin, it would be worth while in order to understand a little what faith is.'

'I can't think how I lived without it,' answered Naomi; 'nor how I could have been happy in my foolish thoughts and speculations. All that I ever thought, felt, learned, seems to me, in the light of to-day, such utter emptiness and folly.'

'Poor little Naomi!' answered Madame. 'And all your grand philosophy!'

The girl laughed.

'It may have been of some use, after all. It helped me to live up to my ideals. And I suppose when we are faithful to our conscience it opens the door to higher things—though how God could have had such mercy on me I can never understand.'

'Come, dearie! You must really rest. If you are worse, I shall blame myself for letting you get up.'

'What does it matter—what does anything matter after to-day? It can be but of small importance whether I find God here—or there.'