

# Friends at Court

## GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- January 27, Sunday.—Septuagesima Sunday.
- „ 28, Monday.—St. John Chrysostom, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.
- „ 29, Tuesday.—Commemoration of the Prayer of Our Blessed Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- „ 30, Wednesday.—St. Felix IV., Pope and Confessor.
- „ 31, Thursday.—St. Peter Nolasco, Confessor.
- February 1, Friday.—St. Brigid, Patroness of Ireland.
- „ 2, Saturday.—Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

St. Peter Nolasco, Confessor.

This saint was a native of France. He founded the Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the ransom of Christians enslaved by the Moors, and to this project he devoted the considerable property which he had inherited from his father. He died on Christmas Day, 1256, in the 67th year of his age.

St. Brigid, Virgin.

St. Brigid, whose name is frequently, though incorrectly, spelled Bridget, is the patron saint of Ireland. She was born in 453, and according to an ancient Irish account of her life, was born at Fochart (now Faugher). Her father's name was Dubhtach. She was foundress and abbess of several convents, the most celebrated of which was that of Kildare ('The Church of the Oak'), which was erected in the year 490. She died in 523.

The Purification.

This is a festival observed in the Catholic Church in commemoration of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, according to the Jewish ceremonial, forty days after the birth of Christ. It is also called 'Candlemas' (that is 'Candle Mass') on account of the blessing of wax tapers, which are carried burning by those who form the procession which takes place afterwards. The symbolical meaning attributed to this ceremony is that the faithful should, with the holy Simeon, recognise in the Infant Jesus the salvation which the Lord had prepared before the face of the people—'A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel' (Luke ii. 31-32) and be admonished by the burning tapers which they are carrying in their hands, that their faith must be fed and augmented by the exercise of good works, through which they are to become a light to shine before men (Matt. v. 14-16).

## GRAINS OF GOLD.

### CHRISTUS CONSOLATOR.

To Thee I come, O loving Heart,  
 When griefs and fears oppress me!  
 Show me, O Love, how sweet Thou art,  
 Then comfort, solace, bless me!

I have no words wherewith to speak,  
 But only these: Thou knowest!  
 Yet most of all when I am weak,  
 Thy grace to me Thou showest.

With peace that none can understand  
 My spirit Thou enduest,  
 And countless mercies from Thy Hand  
 With ev'ry day renewest.

Shed, Lord, Thy light about my way.  
 When evening shadows lengthen;  
 And till the dawn of endless day,  
 In love Thy servant strengthen.

I have, on earth, but Thee alone;  
 In heaven, none beside Thee;  
 Safe to Thyself, O Love, mine Own,  
 Through light, through darkness guide me!  
 —Ave Maria.

The shy bird, happiness, vainly pursued by such a frantic throng of men and women, flies from the self-seeking and makes its home with the self-forgetful; and Love, upon whom it waits and with whom it bears immortal companionship, sits content and smiling by the hearth of those who serve for what they can give, not for what they can get.

# The Storyteller

## MR. PUFFER'S FIRST WIFE

(Concluded from last week.)

'You know, I kind o' liked that little humbug. From all she told me she'd had a hard life, and mebbe it was her needcessity that driv' her into the meejum business, but the Lord don't put no one under the needcessity o' doin' wrong to earn a livin', and I think it is wrong to humbug even them that is willin' to pay for the priv'lege o' bein' humbugged. She didn't do any rushin' business, but some one come ev'ry day to have their fortunes told or to have her go into a trance. 'Trance! The little trollop never done a thing but just throw back her head and shut her eyes and gasp a little and kind o' stiffen. It was plumb silly. Ain't it astonishin' how easy some folks is humbugged?'

'It certainly is, Mrs. Puffer.'

'Well, now, do you know that Puffer was among 'em? He was allus dabblin' in what folks call the "occult," and he was firm in the belief that there was something in all sorts o' nonsensical things that I know are tomfoolery. But he's a man you can't argify with. Set? Don't talk! Let that man once get a thing in his head, and there it sticks like a barnacle to the bottom of a ship. When a woman's lived seventeen years as his lawful wedded wife she gits familiar enough with his ways to know that there are times when silence is golden, sure enough.'

'I tell you if us women would only keep our tongues still at certain times there'd be fewer squalls on the sea o' matrimony and we'd gain more victories. I've won many a victory simply by keepin' my mouth shet. It's a turrible strain on the temper, but it pays in the end. I knew too well what Puffer's views about seeyances and such nonsense was, to say anything when I see him gittin' interested in Madam Antonia's performances. You know when a body gits far enough along in the'r belief in this occult bis'ness they kin believe just anything, and Puffer was that fer along. It was as plain as the nose on my face that Madame Antonia was humbuggin' folks; but it would have been no use to tell Puffer that. He thought she was wonderful, and I thought I'd let him think so, if it done him any good. Wa'n't that the best way?'

'I dare say it was.'

'It saves a lot o' wranglin' and kep' peace in the family. I tell you, but you have to bear and forbear if you want to escape trouble in the married relation! And I forbore when it come to havin' words with Puffer about his occult nonsense. Well, one day Madam Antonia was in my rooms chatterin' like a magpie, and all of a sudden she says:

'You're Mr. Puffer's second wife, ain't you?'

'How do you know that?' ast I.

'Oh, Running Water, my Injun control, told me,' says she.

'"Runnin' siddlesticks!" says I. "Na dirty-old Injun that never had anything to do with water of any kind ever told you that. Did your 'control' happen to tell you that Puffer was my second husband?'

'"La, yes!" says she, and after a lot more nonsense along that line she finally owned up that Puffer had been to her, wantin' to have his first wife called up for him to talk with. Well, some women would of got mad, but I didn't. I do think it's just as well to let the dead and the beautiful rest when it comes to callin' up dead wives and husbands and you are married ag'in. It's kind o' awkward, to say the least of it, and I'd no wish to call up Joel Peters, my first, when Hiram Puffer was in his shoes. Don't you see how it mightn't be pleasant?'

'That puts me in mind of a story I've heard of a man who was just as hasty and mean as he could be to his wife all their married days, and when she died he got repentant—as these kind will, you know—so he goes to a meejum and gits her to call his wife up. Then he says to her, says he: "Are you happy, dear?" And she says she is ever and ever so happy. Then he says: "Are you happier than when you married me?" and she says: "Oh, much happier!" Then he says: "Where are you?" and she kind o' jarred him by sayin': "I'm in purgatory." I reckon that fetched the interview to a sudden end.'

'But Puffer didn't seem to feel that way about callin' up Jane Lamson, her that had been his first. I was purty sure in my own mind that I knew just what he wanted to talk to her about. For years