

# Friends at Court

## GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- September 8, Sunday.—Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost: Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- „ 9, Monday.—St. Kyran, Abbot.
- „ 10, Tuesday.—St. Hilary, Pope and Confessor.
- „ 11, Wednesday.—St. Nicholas of Tolentino, Confessor.
- „ 12, Thursday.—St. Rose of Lima, Virgin.
- „ 13, Friday.—St. Sergius I., Pope and Confessor.
- „ 14, Saturday.—Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

### 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.

St. Kyran, Abbot.

St. Kyran, an Irishman, founded and gave a rule of life to many communities of monks in his native country. He established, among others, the famous Abbey of Clonmacnoise, on the Shannon. After his death, in 549, he was honored as principal patron of Connaught.

## GRAINS OF GOLD

### CONFITEOR.

Behold me at Thy feet again, O Lord!  
 Humbly to kneel—how can I dare to pray,  
 Or thank Thee for this grace Thou dost accord?  
 I can but wonder that Thou dost not slay.  
 My weight of infamy doth press me down,  
 The load of guilt that I can bear no more;  
 Prostrate in bitter shame before Thy frown,  
 I can but murmur low—Confiteor!

Black is the record of the rebel soul  
 That openly contemns Thy law divine,  
 Proclaiming earthly joy its only goal  
 Throughout this life. But blacker still is mine;  
 For unto me the Tree of Life was shown,  
 And I have lived amid the fruits it bore;  
 The Treasure of Thy temple I have known  
 Thankless, indifferent—Confiteor!

In deepest shame bowed down before Thy Face,  
 The wretch to whom Thy mercy still allows  
 The gift of life and many a greater grace,  
 Recalls the treachery, the broken vows.  
 My presence doth Thy temple but defile—  
 How shall the traitor knock upon Thy door?  
 Basely unworthy, vilest of the vile;  
 Confiteor, O Lord—Confiteor!

—'Ave Maria.'

Sorrow is sorrow wherever you find it, and no bank account can purchase immunity. A grave is a grave, whether there is a costly monument above it or only a headstone of marble. When you reckon with actual experience you discover they are independent of wealth or poverty and come to all alike, and when you look at the hearts of men you find the same measure of human nature in them all. Now, when we take our departure, what shall we carry with us?

He who seeks strength will seek the strong. The soul finds itself in the atmosphere of greater souls, in touch with the things and thoughts that are infinite. For spiritual strength there must be touch constantly with spiritual being, the constant nearness in thought and desire to those unseen forces and that life which even the most unthinking must realise at times.

Of all the passions, jealousy is that which exacts the hardest service and pays the bitterest wages. Its service is to watch the success of our enemy; its wages to be sure of it.

# The Storyteller

## AT LAST

'O spotless maiden, hail to thee!' rang out in rich, full tones from the music room. Joseph Harrington paused on the stairs to listen. Never had he heard a voice so sweet, and he wondered who the singer could be. It was one of the last rehearsals for the Vincenzian Hospital benefit concert. Joseph had come in late and was on his way to Father Stephen's room for a book he had left there.

There had been much confusion this last week, caused by the sudden illness of the soprano. The manager had despaired of finding a substitute at so late an hour.

Evidently they had at last succeeded, and Joe Harrington was more than glad of the golden promise in that rare young voice. They had all worked too hard for this concert to see it a failure.

He entered the music room a little curious to see the new acquisition. Smiles greeted him on all sides, for he was a general favorite. Smiling in return, he glanced from face to face, seeking the stranger. When he found what he sought he caught his breath in sharp surprise.

Over by the organ, facing him, a tall, slender girl was standing, listening attentively to the instructions of the organist. Her face was as rarely lovely as some pictured saint, a clear-cut oval in its frame of dark hair. But it was not her beauty alone which so caught and held the attention. There looked from those sad, clear eyes a white young soul, troubled, but unsullied.

A low prelude on the organ and that voice rang out again, filling the room with its thrilling sweetness. 'O spotless maiden, hail to thee, who deign'st our guiding star to be.' The breathless hush was the best applause. The face of the singer was lifted up, and her eyes saw some lovely vision. 'To point to heaven's felicity.'

As the last low Ave Marie died softly away—the listeners came back to earth with a sigh.

After the rehearsal Joseph Harrington was presented to the fair young singer, and talked with her a while. To his surprise, he found that she was not a Catholic. She had been educated at Immaculate Conception Academy, she said, and to that fact was due her presence there that evening.

To his cousin, Sister Ignatia, teacher of music at the academy, Father Stephen had written of his dilemma about a soprano for the concert. Sister Ignatia had told him of this old pupil of hers, who had graduated some years before, and whose home was but a short distance from St. John's Cathedral.

Mary Kingsley proved to be an earnest, eager worker; as anxious for the success of the concert as those who had been interested from the first.

During the rehearsals and in the days that followed Joseph Harrington met her frequently. As he came to know her better he found that the admiration he felt from the first was more than justified. Her beauty of face was no mere accidental physical perfection, but the outward semblance of the beauty within.

There was a nameless, mysterious something about her which he found himself constantly trying to solve. She was so frankly fond of pleasure, so girlishly gay and light-hearted, yet reserved and quaintly dignified. But it was not that either. It was an unfathomable something, a fleeting seriousness of expression, a look in her eyes, now there, now gone, puzzling, baffling.

Her voice as he had first heard it rang ever in his ears. He had heard others sing that 'Ave Marie,' but no one else put into it that indefinable expression of childlike confidence and loving tenderness that made it a veritable prayer.

He never saw her look quite so lovely as she did when she sang that song. He asked her once what it was she saw that made her face light up and her eyes grow bright. Was it some girlish dream of 'heaven's felicity?' She smiled and shook her head. Her answer was as puzzling as everything else about her.

'I see a little convent chapel, dimly lit and shadow-filled; a flower-decked shrine and a statue of a lovely, slender woman, crowned with stars, a crescent moon beneath her feet. I sing to her. Do you know, Mr. Harrington, no flowers have ever smelt so sweet as the flowers in that shrine. Their fragrance comes back as I sing.'

'But you are not a Catholic, Miss Kingsley.'

'No'—slowly, was it regretfully?—And there came