

## Friends at Court

### CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- May 16, Sunday.—Fifth Sunday after Easter. St. Brendan, Abbot.  
 „ 17, Monday.—St. John Nepomucene, Martyr. Rogation Day.  
 „ 18, Tuesday.—St. Venantius, Martyr. Rogation Day.  
 „ 19, Wednesday.—St. Peter Celestine, Pope and Confessor. Rogation Day.  
 „ 20, Thursday.—Ascension of Our Lord. Holiday of Obligation.  
 „ 21, Friday.—St. Felix of Cantalicio, Confessor.  
 „ 22, Saturday.—St. Paschal Baylon, Confessor.

#### St. Brendan, Abbot.

St. Brendan was a native of Ireland, and a disciple of St. Finian. Passing into England, he established there two monasteries. On his return to Ireland he continued the same good work, and founded, among others, the famous abbey of Clonfert. He died in 578, in the ninety-fourth year of his age. According to a tradition accepted by some historians, St. Brendan voyaged to America, and landed in, or near, the present State of Virginia.

#### St. John Nepomucene, Martyr.

In the Sacrament of Penance, so indispensable is the obligation of secrecy, and so far does it extend, that the priest may say with an ancient writer: 'What I know by Confession, I know less than what I do not know at all.' St. John, a native of Nepomuc, in Bohemia, and a priest of the City of Prague, was a martyr to his fidelity in observing this sacramental secrecy. As the inscription on his tomb states: 'Because he had faithfully kept the seal of Confession, he was cruelly tormented, and thrown from the bridge of Prague into the river Moldau, by the orders of Wenceslaus IV., Emperor, and King of Bohemia, A.D. 1383.'

### GRAINS OF GOLD

#### AN ANGEL UNAWARES.

Suppose for every act of love and duty  
 An angel in the path of life should lay  
 A lovely rose of sweet perfume and beauty—  
 Ah, even then, how bare would be the way!

Suppose for every kindly word unspoken,  
 For every fault which careless hands had done,  
 For every resolution made and broken,  
 A thorn beneath our erring feet had grown.

Ah! then the way would be one stretch of anguish,  
 With only here and there a flower to cheer;—  
 Our feet would falter and our spirits languish,  
 And life would be a burden hard to bear.

But seldom are we outwardly rewarded  
 According to the deeds which we have done.  
 'The pure in heart' are by the world discarded;  
 The wicked harvest where the good have sown.

And yet to every heart in darkness hidden  
 There comes an angel, whom we cannot see,  
 Who strives to keep us from the paths forbidden,  
 And in the narrow way where faith may be.

His name is Conscience, and he brings us roses—  
 Sweet roses, borrowed from the brow of Peace,  
 Or thorns on which remorseful thought reposes,  
 Regrets whose sharp tormentings never cease.

Then let us strive temptation's storm to weather,  
 Let every thought and every deed improve,  
 Till Conscience finds no cruel thorns to gather,  
 But crowns the soul with joy, and peace, and love.

That time is the worst employed which we give up to regrets, unless we learn from them lessons for the future.  
 Ah! there is no telling, but perhaps we might not sow quite as recklessly if we would only bear the reaping time in mind.

The fountain head of social good or evil, of vice or crime, or of honor and virtue, is in the home; and the wife and mother make and unmake the home.—Bishop Spalding.

None of us is so humbly placed that he may not do something in behalf of Catholic truth. The philosopher Balmeiz gives us the motto: 'Truth is Catholic; proclaim it ever, and God will effect the rest.' There is no more effective way to advance the interests of our holy religion and to hasten the coming of the golden age that would follow the evangelisation of the world than by encouraging good, wholesome literature.

## The Storyteller

### HOW THE REWARD CAME.

On the narrow road, covered with coarse rubble, that leads from the high forest country, by many turnings and windings, down a steep slope to the village, was heard the sound of fierce, half-suppressed grumbings and curses. An old, crooked little man, in dilapidated leather breeches and tweed jacket, holding a short pipe in his toothless mouth, was tugging away with angry impatience at a low wooden sledge heavily loaded with logs of wood. It had stuck between the sharp-pointed stones, and refused to move in spite of all endeavors. The old man cursed and swore between his empty jaws, and poured out the stream of his fury with such celerity that it would seem as if his purpose was to make a record in profanity. Again a desperate pull; the sledge did not stir; and again a most horrible oath.

As he spoke, there sounded behind him a sonorous voice, full of gentle but earnest warning:

'But, my man, how can you curse so?'

The old man looked up, and slowly took off his fox-skin cap.

'The new parish priest!' he murmured, and then pointed to the sledge. 'Your reverence thinks I shouldn't swear. Just look here! This is the fifth time it has stuck since I left the top of the hill. Could anything be more aggravating?'

'You are certainly Rupert Bodsteifer, known as the "devil's Rupert," because you are always saying bad words. I have heard of you. You swear because your sledge has stuck fast—'

'Do you expect me to sing?'

'You swear under all circumstances.'

'Because I'm always getting stuck fast, whatever I do.'

'You never go to church.'

The old man threw an obstinate glance at the priest, and murmured peevishly:

'I'll do that when I'm happy; I wait for happiness all my life, and it doesn't come.'

The priest sternly replied: 'Why do you grumble, man, that happiness does not come to you, while all your life long you refuse to come to Him Who is the Fountain of all happiness—God, Who rewards the good and—'

'Does He reward the good?' broke in the old man, as he replaced his fur cap on his gray head. 'I can't say. All my life I've never stolen or robbed or done harm to anyone, and yet every bolt from heaven falls on my house. Don't shake your head, Father, but stop a moment. I was a brave soldier in the Kaiser's army. I had married a wife, and always worked faithfully and zealously. We had built a house; it was burned over our heads. We built it again, and thought that the two best and finest cows in the valley belonged to us; we lost them. We began again, and with hard toil got a field—the best soil on the hillside—and when the fruit was hanging on the boughs, down came a land slide of the overhanging rocks, and field and fruit were gone for ever. Our little vineyard was devoured by grubs, our cabbage patch by worms; our field down by the mill, ever since it belonged to me, has produced nothing but weeds. Nature has given me no reward for all my sweat and labor.'

'Nature does not reward where God does not bless, and God does not bless where man does not pray.'

'Other people don't, Father, and still are lucky. Down in Tobelthal; that fellow Markl is certainly a homicide, drunkard, rascal, usurer, who oppresses people, and is a thief; but he has thirty cows on the mountain, the biggest farmyard in the district, and a house like a castle. Ten years ago he was a common servant. He has not only cursed, he has committed many crimes.'

'Is the man still alive?'

'I don't exactly know. He was in prison two years ago for smuggling. He got twenty years or thereabouts, I think.'

'And you envy him his luck? He had his luck from wickedness; but when the devil lends a groschen he demands a thousand ducats as interest. Look at Merkfelsbader here in the village! He is the richest man hereabouts—'

'Twenty years ago he was poorer than I,' interrupted the old man; 'and he's not a bit more industrious or honest.'

'But he prays instead of cursing, and so blessing comes upon his fields and his house; for happiness passes away, but blessing stays. His son has studied and become a priest.'

'My son had that in his mind—he is in the town; but it takes money to study, and he has become a clerk. Just