

## Friends at Court

### GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR.

- January 20, Sunday.—Second Sunday after Epiphany.  
SS. Fabian and Sebastian, Martyrs.
- „ 21, Monday.—St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr.
- „ 22, Tuesday.—SS. Vincent and Anastasius, Martyrs.
- „ 23, Wednesday.—St. Raymund of Pennefort, Confessor.
- „ 24, Thursday.—St. Timothy, Bishop and Martyr.
- „ 25, Friday.—Conversion of St. Paul, Apostle.
- „ 26, Saturday.—St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr.

#### SS. Fabian and Sebastian, Martyrs.

St. Fabian was elected Pope in 236, and governed the Church for fourteen years. His life, like that of so many of the early Popes, was closed by martyrdom, A.D. 250.

St. Sebastian was an officer of high rank in the Imperial Guard. Owing to his virtue and courage, he was much esteemed by the Emperor Diocletian, and was enabled by the influence thus acquired to protect numbers of his persecuted fellow-Christians. He was beaten to death with clubs about the year 288.

#### St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr.

St. Polycarp, a disciple of St. John the Evangelist, governed the important See of Smyrna for 70 years. He is believed to have been the Angel or Bishop of Smyrna commended by Our Blessed Lord in the Apocalypse (chap. ii.). He was martyred in 169, being then about 100 years of age.

#### St. Vincent and Anastasius, Martyrs.

These two saints, though commemorated on the same day, suffered at different times and in distant countries. St. Vincent, a deacon, was a native of Spain. After enduring torments that are well-nigh incredible, he died of his wounds at Valentia, A.D. 304.

St. Anastasius, a Persian monk, after having been cruelly tortured, was strangled in 628.

#### Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.

St. Paul was at first a violent persecutor of the Church. In fact, at the very moment when the grace of God touched his heart he was on his way to Damascus, with authority to seize any persons whom he might find professing the new faith, and send them in chains to Jerusalem. After his conversion, St. Paul devoted all his energies to the propagation of the Christian religion, and spent his life in carrying the glad tidings of redemption to the nations that till then had sat "in darkness and in the shadow of death."

## Grains of Gold

### FAITH.

Across unchartered ways,  
The course of my ark lays,  
And though the waters round it rising high,  
With thunder, storm the sky,  
Unfaltering it sails  
Abreast the wanton gales.

Oh, Thou, Celestial Dove,  
Give my soul wings of love,  
Fleet wings of love to soar  
To Heaven's distant shore,  
That from the flowers blooming there

It may returning bear  
A leaf of hope to me  
As symbol of eternal verdancy.  
Oh, happy day, when it will not return again!  
I shall know then  
The flooding tide of days on which I have been cast  
Has ebbed at last.

—CATHERINE M. BRESNAN, in the *Missionary*.

## The Storyteller

### Knocknagow

OR

#### The Homes of Tipperary

(By C. J. KIOCKHAM.)

#### CHAPTER XLVII.—BILLY HEFFERNAN WONDERS WHAT IS "COMING OVER" NORAH.

Billy Heffernan had run off over ditches and hedges in a straight line, with his eyes fixed upon the chimney of Phil Laby's old house, and never stopped till he stood behind Norah's straw chair. And then Billy Heffernan did stop very suddenly, and made a foolish pretence of having walked in very slowly and carelessly, and with no object in the world except to pass away the time. The instantaneous change from break-neck speed and breathless haste to a lazy lounge, as he moved towards Phil Laby's shop-board, caused Norah to smile. He took up a piece of chalk and commenced writing the letters of the alphabet in round-hand on the lap-board very carefully and deliberately till he came to the letter *g*, and then Billy ventured to glance sideways at Norah, sitting in her straw-chair, with her wasted hand on the head of the rough terrier.

Now, it occurred, at the last moment, to Billy Heffernan, that to communicate the joyful news of Mat Donovan's safety too abruptly to Norah might give her a shock that would prove injurious to her. And, in his own way, he set about correcting the mistake he had made. But, as he glanced at Norah, and saw how calm and collected she was, he thought she must not have heard of the accident to Mat Donovan at all, and resolved to go on with his writing till her father and mother arrived. To his great surprise, however, before he had got half-way to the end of the lap-board, Norah said:

"Well, Billy, why don't you tell me all about Mat?"

He turned quickly round, and to his great astonishment saw not the least symptom of anxiety or agitation about her; but, on the contrary, she seemed as if trying to suppress a smile.

"She knows nothin' about id," thought Billy Heffernan. "Begor, I'm glad uv id; for I was afear'd it might frighten the life out uv her. An' 'twas well she tuck no notice uv the way I ran in. 'Twas well I didn't tumble up against her, I was in such a pucker to make her mind 'asy about Mat."

"Billy," said Norah, "why don't you tell me all about what's after happening to Mat Donovan? Nelly was here with me when the report went about that he was killed, and she was terribly frightened."

Her apparent indifference about the matter astonished Billy Heffernan beyond expression; and he stared at her with open mouth for nearly a minute before he was able to reply.

"He's all right," said Billy at last.

"Oh, yes, I know that," returned Norah quite calmly. "But he was in danger."

Billy Heffernan's astonishment now took a different turn; and, as he looked into her dark eyes and pale, spiritual face, he began, with that proneness to superstition for which he was remarkable, to fancy that she had supernatural knowledge of events passing beyond the ken of mere bodily senses. She seemed to know what was passing in his mind, and the covert smile about her lips and in her eyes tended to strengthen Billy Heffernan's half-formed suspicion that she must be in communion with those invisible beings of whose existence in earth and air he had no more doubt than he had of his own. But, notwithstanding the plenitude of his faith in such matters, it is worthy of remark that Billy Heffernan always held out stoutly against the "black dog"—which piece of infidelity procured for him the undying enmity of Kit Cummins.

"You're wondering at me, Billy," said Norah, giving the smile full play at last, and revealing her ivory white teeth; which somehow had the effect of imparting a deeper shade of melancholy to her look. "You think I'm a witch or something of that kind."

"Begor, if you're anything at all id must be somethin' good," he answered seriously.

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