

FRIENDS AT COURT

CLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR.

- 4, Sun.—Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost. St. Francis of Assisi, Confessor.
- 5, Mon.—SS. Placid and Companions, Martyrs.
- 6, Tues.—St. Bruno, Confessor.
- 7, Wed.—Feast of the Holy Rosary.
- 8, Thurs.—St. Bridget of Sweden, Widow.
- 9, Frid.—SS. Denis and Companions, Martyrs.
- 10, Sat.—St. Francis Borgia, Confessor.

St. Bruno, Confessor.

St. Bruno, founder of the austere Carthusian Order, was born at Cologne about 1030. He was one of the most learned men of his age, and wrote several valuable commentaries on the Sacred Scriptures. He died in 1101, in a monastery which he had established in the mountains of Calabria, in Southern Italy.

Feast of the Holy Rosary.

In 1571 was fought the great battle of Lepanto, which saved Europe from the Turks, and gave the death-blow to the Ottoman power. In memory of this victory, gained at the very moment when the faithful were reciting the Rosary for the success of the Christian arms, Gregory XIII ordered the present feast to be celebrated.

St. Bridget, Widow.

St. Bridget belonged to the royal family of Sweden. From childhood she was remarkable for charity, love of refinement, and a distaste for worldly enjoyments. On the death of her husband she divided her property amongst her children and withdrew into a convent which she herself founded. She died in Rome in 1373, at the age of 71, after her return from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

GRAINS OF GOLD

"SWEET ST. FRANCIS."

In his threadbare robe of brown,
Went St. Francis through the town.
Almost were his labors done,
Crown and palm were nearly won.
Loving were his words and sweet
To the people in the street.

Sick and poor, and lame and blind,
To them all the Saint was kind.
Even tiny, twittering birds
Stayed their flight to hear his words.
Beggars kissed his garment's hem,
Brothers, sisters called he them.

Feeble were his steps and slow,
Though the roses were ablow.
Ruddy the stigmata gleamed,
On his head the sunlight streamed.
As Assisi's streets he trod,
With him went the peace of God.

In his cord and robe of brown,
Went the dear Saint through the town.
Friend of all the friendless he
Saint of holy charity.

Dear St. Francis, may we be
Folded in Christ's Fold with thee!

—Ave Maria.

The Storyteller | **The Truce of God**
A TALE OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY.

(By GEORGE HENRY MILLS.)

CHAPTER X—(Continued.)

The gloomy aspect of the future was also capable of furnishing the youth with sufficient food for reflection. The death of Rodolph spread consternation over Saxony and Suabia: both circles were crippled by internal dissensions, and unable to profit by their victory. Inspired by this, and by his rival's death, and encouraged by the attitude and successes of the Lombards, Henry meditated an invasion of Italy, and the conquest of Rome itself. He reorganised a powerful army, and penetrated Lombardy, leaving Frederick of Hohenstaufen to hold Suabia in check, while Saxony was convulsed by the rival schemes of Otto and Herman.

Never before had the Holy See seemed in such imminent danger. England and France

but the sudden death of Otto of Nordheim laid his hopes in the dust, and Henry, for the third time, invested the eternal city. Hitherto, the Romans, encouraged by the Pope, had made an heroic resistance, and the besiegers had suffered incredibly from their desperate sallies, as well as from the diseases that decimated them. But the fidelity of the citizens was beginning to totter beneath the protracted warfare, and many sighed for a period to their calamities. Henry failed not to profit by these dispositions, and poured in thirty thousand golden florins to inflame them.

The horizon grew darker and darker—the Pope more winning, more eloquent, more determined. Matilda did not fail him in this crisis. The knight of the azure cross had already won the confidence of the princess by his valor, his prudence, and his piety, and she now selected him as the instrument of her generosity. She pointed to a large amount of silver, saying that she intrusted him with the dangerous and difficult duty of conveying it to Gregory. Gilbert gladly accepted the perilous commission. He loaded a number of mules with the treasure, concealed beneath vegetables, and disguising himself as a peasant, took a guide and set out for Rome. During a dark and stormy night he contrived to pierce the hostile lines and enter the city by the Lateran gate.

Gilbert found the Pope seated in the midst of an assembly. He could at last feast his eyes upon the wonderful and sainted man whom he had all his life loved and venerated. When the Pontiff rose and spoke of the virtue and fortitude that ought to sustain them in this crisis, he seemed endowed with supernatural power, and moved all present to tears. It seemed as though his soul foreknew it was the last time his voice should be raised in defence of his grand and holy cause.

Another year passed by; the festival of Easter was approaching. Henry was meditating a return to Germany, when a deputation of the citizens arrived in his camp, offering to surrender the capital. The Lateran gate was opened, and the imperial army began to enter the city. The Roman soldiers, finding themselves betrayed, flew to arms, and Gilbert de Hers was once more contending with the warriors he had met at Fladenheim and the Elster. Godfrey de Bouillon fell wounded before the desperate resolution of the besieged, and as he was brought to his knee, vowed a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. But, outnumbered and confused, the defenders were driven into the citadel, and Henry, with his queen at his side, entered in triumph. The next day Guibert of Ravenna was installed in the Lateran palace in the See of St. Peter, and consecrated on the twenty-fourth of March, by the bishops of Modena and Arezzo. His first act was to crown King Henry in the Vatican. Gregory retired to the castle of San Angelo, and the giddy populace greeted the anti-pope with

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looked coldly on, and the emperor of the East sympathised with his brother of Austria.

Gregory alone awaited the storm calm and fearless, relying upon the sacredness and justice of his cause, neither dismayed nor discouraged by the fickle course of human events. He deplored the spirit which arrayed itself against truth, but he found in the recollection of the trials of the Apostles and their successors abundant consolation for himself and his friends. Florence, Padua, Cremona, Milan had fallen before the Austrian invader. Lucca swelled the triumphs of the tyrant. Fortress after fortress was wrested from Matilda; Henry sat down before the gates of Rome at last, in the plains of Nero and opposite the fortress of St. Peter. Yet the sublime Pontiff displayed no symptom of uneasiness, though half of Europe was against him.

Gilbert's first impulse was to fly to Rome, but the approaches to the city were all in possession of the enemy. The noble Matilda could ill spare a good lance, and the Romans then displayed so much resolution and gallantry, that the German army was repulsed in every assault. To the young knight's heart, wounded by the siege of Rome and misfortunes of Matilda, the tidings of the reconciliation at home were like a sweet balsam. And though the blessed intelligence was blended with the account of the Lady Margaret's death, it was not the less welcome. Gilbert had long since ceased to regard the Lady Margaret with human love. He revered her as one sacred to heaven, upon whom death had already set the seal of eternity, and, far from weeping over her early grave, he exulted at her triumphant flight to the judgment-seat of God.

Two long years crept by, and the imperialists were still before Rome. Gilbert looked anxiously for succor to Suabia and Saxony,

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