

or the rugged month, on account of the weather being generally stormy and boisterous. These winds dry up the soil which has been soaked by the rains and thaws of February. Hence the old proverb, "a peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom," that is, if this month be dry, it portends a plentiful season, on account of the early dry weather being favourable to corn on clay lands, of which England chiefly consists. When this month is open and mild it is bad for all young crops; hence it is very common to hear farmers say—"March flowers make no summer bowers," and that a "wet March makes a sad harvest." It was subsequently called by the Saxons *Lent-monat*, or the lengthening month, because the days then began to exceed the nights in length, and it is from this that the word Lent is derived.

Lent is one of the most solemn feasts in the Christian Church, and was appointed to commemorate, by means of fasting and prayer, Christ's temptation and miraculous fasting in the wilderness. This fast can be traced back to a very early date in the Church. Originally, it seems to have lasted only forty hours, referring to the time between the crucifixion and the resurrection; but gradually those forty hours became forty days, referring to the forty days fast of Moses, Elijah and Christ. The first Sunday in Lent is called Quadragesima Sunday, because it is forty days before Easter. Herrick, the English poet of the seventeenth century, gives the following excellent directions for "The Keeping of True Lent":—

"Is this a fast, to keep
The larder lean
And clean
From fat of veals and sheep?

Is it to gild the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish?

Is it to fast an hour,
Or ragged to go,
Or show
A downcast look and sour?

No; 'tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat
And meat
Unto the hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife,
From old debate
And hate;
To circumscribe thy life;

To show a heart grief-rent,
To starve thy sin,
Not bin;
And that's to keep thy Lent."

The word Lent is derived from the time of the year in which it is observed. Lent in the old Saxon language signifying "Spring" is now used to signify this "Spring Fast."

Ash Wednesday, the first day in Lent, is so called because in former times notorious sinners appeared at church barefooted and clothed in sackcloth in token of humility or repentance. The palm-branches consecrated in the church on the Palm Sunday of the previous year, were burnt to ashes and placed on the altar in a vessel filled with consecrated water. The worshipper then approached clad in sackcloth. The priest then took up some of the ashes on the end of his finger, and made the mark of the cross on the forehead of the worshipper, saying, *memento, homo, quia cinis es, et in pulverem reverteris* (remember, man, that thou art ashes, and unto dust will return). In England, soon after the Reformation, the use of ashes was discontinued as a "vain show," and Ash Wednesday thence became only a day of marked solemnity, with a memorial of its original character in a reading in the Church Service of "A

Commination, or denouncing of God's anger and judgments against sinners." In some places, this day used to be called *Pulver* Wednesday, that is, *Dies Pulveris*; and by some of the ancients it was called *Jeiunii Caput*, or Head of Lent (*lit. Fasting*).

Annunciation.—The 25th of March is honoured and celebrated throughout the Christian world under the name of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, or Lady Day. It is held in modern remembrance in commemoration of the visit paid by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary.

Among the principal saint days in this month are St. David's Day (12th), and St. Patrick's Day (17th). St. David was the Apostle and Patron Saint of Wales, and Welshmen still keep his Festival with great rejoicings, wearing leeks in their hats in commemoration, it is said, by their historians, of their having, under their King Cadwallader, gained a famous and notable victory over the Saxons at Hothfield Chase, in Yorkshire, in A.D. 633, when they wore leeks in their hats by his order as a distinguishing mark or badge.

"In Cambria, 'tis said," tradition's tale,
Recounting, tells how famed Menevia's Priest
Marshaled his Britons, and the Saxon host
Discomfited; how the green leek bands
Distinguished, since by Britons yearly worn,
Commemorates their tutelary saint."

The 17th is a day dear to all Irishmen, for it is dedicated to Ireland's Patron Saint. The Saint, however, is claimed to be a Scotchman from being born near Dunbarton, and to have founded many churches before going over to Ireland. On this day Irishmen wear the shamrock, or trefoil. The reason of this custom is that St. Patrick, when explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, which they were reluctant to believe, is said to have plucked a leaf of this grass as not only representing the divisibility of the Divinity into three distinct or equal parts, but also its union in one original stem. He died in A.D. 493, at the good-old age of one hundred and twenty, and was buried in the cathedral city of Down, in the same grave with St. Bridget and St. Columb, the Apostle of the Picts. For some pious reason the Reformers left St. Patrick's name out of the calendar, but there is little likelihood of his day being forgotten by the Saint's adopted countrymen.

REVIEWS.

THE CHURCH WORKER. A magazine for Sunday School Teachers. Vol. X., 1891. Price 2/4.

OUTLINE ADDRESS FOR SCHOOLROOM AND SEPARATE SERVICES. 3rd Ser. Price 2/.

LESSONS ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK. Price 2/.

MODELS AND OBJECTS FOR SCRIPTURE TEACHING. By the Rev. J. G. Kitchin, M.A., Hon. Curator of the Church Sunday School Institute's Museum. Price 1/6.

THE UNREASONABLENESS OF UNBELIEF. By the Rev. A. J. Harrison, B.D. Price 1/6. London: Church of England Sunday-school Institute; Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

The publications of the Church of England Sunday-school Institute are worthy of all commendation, as they are carefully adapted to the work and higher tone of our Sunday-schools. The books enumerated above should give an excellent equipment to one of our teachers. No. 1 contains readable and useful papers upon topics that are of interest to teachers and many besides, and has also different series of lessons on the Bible and Prayer-book. No. 2 will be of great value to clergy as well as to laymen, seeing that its collection of outlines for addresses are drawn out at considerable length, and are adapted to many occasions connected with the Church's work and social purposes. Not the least important and interesting is a series of fourteen lessons upon "What the Village Church Said," going over in

detail the several parts and ornaments of a church; in this series there is a vast amount of information for the children of the Church. No. 3 has fifty-two lessons on St. Mark's Gospel, and each has a tripartite form, which thus gives the passage a very full treatment: there are (a) the sketch of the lesson; (b) side lights on it; and (c) illustrations. Some views and plans are added to make the text still clearer, aided by the brief explanatory notes, which are concise and pointed. We have scarcely seen a more commendable volume than No. 4, which every teacher should have and study. The antiquarian notes, for the scripture interpretation, are in plain and simple language, and the illustrations are most appropriate and telling. Of a very different character and aim is No. 5, but as well calculated to secure its end. It descends into the arena of controversy, yet rather to direct by coming to a real knowledge of the difficulty from the objector's point of view, than to score a victory. It is a book for the young men who are exposed to criticisms of the faith and to doubting upon God's ways. As Lecturer of the Christian Evidence Society, our author has his time usually taken up among sceptics, and his experience is of the utmost value. The anti-Christian feeling that is so common now-a-days, is not so much against Christianity itself as against caricatures of it. The volumes themselves are well printed and handsomely bound.

A CONSECRATION SERMON. The Living Temple of Christ's Church and the Two Witnesses of the Word Written, and the Sacraments. A sermon preached at the consecration of the Rev. J. L. Nicholson, D.D., as Bishop of Milwaukee, by the Right Rev. C. C. Grafton, S. T. D., Bishop of Fond Du Lac. Pp. 30. Milwaukee: The Young Churchman Co.; Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

In its careful balance, and in the precision of its theological language throughout, there is every thing to admire in this sermon, and none but a trained theologian could have preached it. It is an honour to the vestrymen of St. Mark's Church, Philadelphia, where it was preached, that they requested to have it published. It will amply repay the most careful perusal, and even protracted study. It is beautifully printed on excellent paper.

A PERSONAL QUESTION. Why should you not be confirmed when the bishop visits this parish? By the Rev. G. W. Shinn, D.D. Pp. 28. Price 5c. New York: Thomas Whittaker; Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

Its title sufficiently shows its purpose, and it is thoroughly to the point. It is good for lending or distribution; it will also provide useful heads for a familiar and earnest address.

THE NEW CREATION. By the author of "Our Family Ways." Pp. 128. Milwaukee, Wis.: The Young Churchman Company; Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

The "devoted Sister of the Church," to whose pen we owe these readings, is doing a very good work in presenting the doctrinal and sacramental system of the Church in a plain and interesting form. We read *Our Family Ways* with much pleasure, and the present work goes over part of the same ground, but takes up more specially the sacramental aspect of the Church's position. The starting point is the New Creation in Christ Jesus, which is traced through baptism, confirmation, holy communion, and the present high priesthood. It will make a very suitable present for a young Churchman.

ARROWS FOR THE KING'S ARCHERS. Analytic Outline Addresses upon Religious, Temperance, and Social Topics, with some courses of Addresses for Special Seasons. By Rev. H. W. Little. Pp. 149. Price \$1.00. New York: Thomas Whittaker; Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

For those who are busy and know how to use a good sermon outline, this volume is of great value. The sketches are clear and plain, dwelling upon well-known points of Church teaching, and not running after curious questions in theology or morals. They are to be commended for their