

The Church Guardian

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CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY.

- FEB. 2nd—Septuagesima. Purification of St. Mary the Virgin.
- " 9th—Sexagesima.
- " 16th—Quinquagesima. (Notice of Ash Wednesday).
- " 19th—Ash Wednesday. (Pr. Pss., M. 6, 32, 38. E. 102, 130, 143 Com. service).
- " 23rd—1st Sunday in Lent. (Notice of St. Matthias and Ember Days).
Ember Collect daily.
- " 24th—St. Matthias. A. & M. (Athanasian Creed).
- " 26th—Ember Day.
- " 28th—Ember Day.

ORIGIN OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

Canon Boyd, preaching of St. Oswald's Church, Durham, on the eve of St. Oswald's Day, referred to the spiritual ancestry of the English Church people of the North. He said they were the children of Oswald, of Aidan, of Bede, of Benedict Biscop, of Hilda, and many other saints like unto them.

Surely when they look back to their glorious fathers in the Church of England, and especially in these northern dioceses of Durham and Newcastle, when they saw through all the vicissitudes of English history, from the troubled days of Oswald down to the days in which they now lived, that this Church of God had lived on from generation to generation; when they realised the fact that they that day confessed their faith in the words in which Oswald and Bede confessed theirs, that they were living that day under the ministry of that continued line of priesthood which reached from Oswald's day to the present; that they were still bathed in the same bath of regeneration as those saints were bathed in, and still ate of the bread of which they ate, and drank of the chalice of which they drank, at God's own board, at God's own Eucharist, surely it would stir up within them a double feeling, a feeling of gratitude and a feeling of resolve—a deep feeling of gratitude to God for that, through all the crisis of English history—through the

crisis of the rebellion of the Commonwealth—they still maintained this grand old English Church in *unbroken continuity*. They could not lose heart though multitudes gathered around them, and though voices raised the cry of "Down with it, even to the dust!"

The recollection of the story of St. Oswald and the other saints associated with him corrected a very false impression common amongst English people, and which did a great deal of harm. If they were to ask most people how Eng and was converted to the faith, they would say that a certain good Bishop of Rome, St. Gregory, sent a certain holy man, whom he created an Archbishop, and this holy man, St. Augustine, came to Kent, and there he preached the Gospel and established a Church, and from Kent the Gospel of Jesus Christ went on from kingdom to kingdom in England until at length it was established throughout its length and breadth. He himself not long since heard of an historic play, the title of which was "The Conversion of England," and this play represented the conversion of England as being due entirely to the Roman Mission.

Now, what was the effect of believing this? The effect was that it was believed that they owed to Rome the greatest debt of gratitude that one people could owe to another people or another Church; that from the first time at which the Church existed in England it was practically the daughter Church of the Roman Communion, and that, however necessary the Reformation was under the circumstances, it yet practically was the daughter rising up and smiting in the face the mother that gave her birth.

The whole thing was *utterly and absolutely a fiction*. There was no portion of England which owed its Christianity directly to the Roman Mission, except the county of Kent and certain portions of the county of Middlesex. When the King of what they should call Yorkshire wedded the Christian daughter of the Christian King of Kent, Paulinus came with her, and brought with him also some other priests and ministers, and he did preach the faith there to win converts to Christ. He did build a church there, but when the moment of danger came *Paulinus fled*. He did what the present missionaries in Central Africa would not do, and had been justified in not doing. When Paulinus fled the people recently won to the faith were not established in it, the influence passed away, and the whole of the people of Yorkshire and Bernicia, that was Darham and Northumberland, relapsed into heathendom, and they continued in this state until at length missionaries came from Iona.

Iona was a missionary station that was established by the Church of Ireland. Where did the Church of Ireland get its Christianity from? Why, strange to say, originally from the Church that was existing before the Saxons desolated that part of the country near to Iona itself. St. Patrick went from Scotland to Ireland to preach the Gospel there and to establish the Church of Ireland. The Scottish Church was desolated and destroyed through the power of the invader, and then St. Columba came from the Church in Ireland and reestablished the Church in Iona and its district.

St. Patrick, as a matter of fact, therefore gained his Christianity through British Christianity, and the latter, traced to its source, was distinctly Oriental, and not in any sense Western.

The Reformation as an essential principle was no new departure. It was but a movement whereby English Churchmen *went back to the position of the Church of their fathers*. A priest, who had recently thought fit to submit to Rome, had published a paper, the title of which he set forth as reasons for submitting to the Church of his fathers. Canon Boyd contended that that priest had not submitted to the Church of his fathers. He had deserted the Church of his fathers. He had deserted the

Church of Aidan, of Oswald, of Bede, of Hilda, and of Chad, and had yielded obedience to an intrusive Episcopate.

It was their veneration for antiquity that would make them true to the Church of their northern saints. Not only did this remembrance of St. Oswald fill them with gratitude to God for His goodness to them, and make them resolve to be loyal to their inheritance, but it would save them from being fascinated by the false lights of Roman controversialists, and would keep them firm and true to the old Church of their fathers.—*Guardian*.

THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER ON AGNOSTICISM.

IN THE CHURCH ECUMENIC FOR FEBRUARY.

The Bishop of Manchester, preaching at St. Saviour's, Bamber Bridge, near Preston, took his text from the words; "Wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts i. 4). In these days, he said, we had to encounter a very different theory of the origin of religious belief from that given in the chapter from which the text was taken. There were people who said that it was merely the latent instinct in man which had created the purer and more spiritual forms and shapes of religious life which history had known. From Demos to the demi-god, and from the demi-god to the Divine Personality revealed to Abraham, all the different forms, it was alleged, had been created by the spirit of man, by his latent religious instinct. In other words, God had not created man, but man had created God; and we were not to look to the kingdom of God, but to the kingdom of man for all progress in happiness and prosperity. It was very easy to say such things. That theory, as a theory, was as good as another as a mere expression of opinion; but what was the use of theories? Their use was to explain *facts*; but that theory described nothing, and explained *nothing*. What conclusion were they driven to if they accepted that theory? Why, to this. That so long as men lived in the illusion that there was a Divine power they were wiser and better, and that when they rid themselves of that illusion they became more foolish and worse. A man must be strangely constituted who could believe such a theory as that. Religion was simply a bond to bind the soul to God, and if God were an illusion religion was the bond that bound a man to an illusion and must itself be an illusion. How could anyone believe that, in the face of the religious instinct that was in the breast of all the human race? There was no race on earth that did not have the feeling of dependence upon a higher power. He knew that travellers had testified to finding races without the religious instinct, but he said fearlessly that those reports had never borne the scrutiny of strict investigation. It was said that the Zulus had no such instinct until Bishop Hannington proved that they believed in a great ancestral god. It had been stated more recently that the aborigines of Australia, who shared with the Hottentots the reputation of being the lowest of the human race, had no religious instinct. That was totally false. But even the man who knew them best thought so for fourteen years, but when he became as it were a member of their tribes he discovered to his amazement that they had a religion which no woman of the tribes might know under penalty of death. It was not true that there was a tribe anywhere on the earth's surface that did not know and believe that there was *something diviner and higher than itself*, on which it must depend. From the days that men carved their hatchets out of the flint they had felt that there was a *Being* higher and diviner than themselves, which would open their eyes and support their wills in determining to do what was