THE CALENDAR.

The Roman Calendar, from which our own is derived, was established by Romulus. He divided the year into ten months only, making it begin on the first of March, and thinking the Sun would make his course through all the seasons in 304 days. He named the months March, April, May, Quintilis, Sextilis, September, &c., the last six being named from their numbers. Numa Pompilius reformed this calendar, adding two months more—January and February—which he placed before March, so that his year began on the first of January, and consisted of 355 days. He made an intercalation of 45 days, which he divided into two parts, intercalating a month of 22 days at the end of two years, and one of 23 days at the end of four years. This month he called Marcedonius. These intercalations were ill observed by the priests to whom they were intrusted, and the calendar soon fell into confusion. It was corrected at times by the magistrates, but no important change was made until the time of Julius Cæsar. Cæsar, assisted by Sosigenes, a mathematician of Alexandria, established the Julian Calendar, in which the average year consists of 365¼ days. He ordered the new year to begin on the 1st of January, 45 B. C., being the day of the new moon, immediately following the winter solstice of the previous year. To introduce the new system it was necessary to enact that the previous year, 46 B. C., should consist of 445 days; hence it was called "the year of confusion."

The month Quintilis was called Julius, in honor of Julius Cæsar, and Sextilis was afterwards changed to Augustus, in honor of Augustus Cæsar.

The Julian Calendar was a great improvement, but was a little erroneous, and in 1582, in the time of Pope Gregory XIII., the error amounted to ten days. Gregory corrected the calendar by taking ten days from October, 1582, and established the following rule: "*Every year whose number is not divisible by* 4 *without a remainder, consists of* 365 *days; every year which is so divisible, but is not divisible by* 100, *of* 366; *every year divisible by* 100, *but not by* 400, *again of* 365; *and every year divisible by* 400, *of* 366."

This rule was soon adopted in all Catholic countries, but was not adopted in England until 1752, when the error of the Calendar amounted to 11 days, which were taken from September of that year. It is now used in all civilized countries except Russia, where the Julian Calendar, or Old Style, is still retained. The rule involves an error of one day in about four thousand years, and is therefore sufficiently accurate for all common purposes. To see what the rule should be, we observe that the mean tropical year equals 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 47.8 seconds.