

The Church Guardian

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CALENDAR FOR MARCH.

MAR. 3—1st Sunday in Lent.

" 6—
" 8— } Ember Days.
" 9— }

" 10—2nd Sunday in Lent.

" 17—3rd Sunday in Lent.

" 24—4th Sunday in Lent. [Notice of Annunciation.

" 25—The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

" 31—5th Sunday in Lent.

THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER ON THE CLAIMS OF ROME.

(From the Scottish Guardian.)

Preaching at Manchester Cathedral on Sunday week, the Bishop of Manchester continued the discussion of the questions—raised by him at his recent Diocesan Conference—as to what evidence there was either that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome or that his prerogatives as Apostle, whatever they might be, descended to his alleged successors in that see. The Bishop said St. Jerome, in his lives of illustrious men, made the statement that "Simon Peter . . . himself chief of the Apostles, after having been Bishop of the Church of Antioch . . . pushed on to Rome in the second year of Claudius (i. e. A. D. 42), and held the sacerdotal chair there for twenty-five years." In these words he stated the belief of the Church of Rome. Let them ask what historical basis there was for it. It was plainly inconsistent with the Scriptural notices of the period referred to. In the year A. D. 58, that was sixteen years after St. Peter was supposed to have become Bishop of Rome, St. Paul wrote a letter to the Romans. In that letter he said: "So have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: but as it is written, To Whom He was not spoken of they shall see, and they that have not heard shall understand" (Rom. xv. 20-21.) That was the Apostle's practice. If, then, St. Peter had been Bishop of Rome for sixteen years, they might be sure that he would not go to Rome to preach the Gospel and to impart to them Apostolic gifts. Yet this was precisely what he said he hoped to do. "For I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established" (Rom. i. 11.) This compelled them to strike out sixteen years of St. Peter's supposed episcopate.

Next, they might be pretty sure that St. Peter was not Bishop of Rome before the end of St. Paul's imprisonment in that city, viz. before A. D. 63. For during that imprisonment St. Paul wrote many letters to Gentile Churches and to individuals. In these, especially in his letter to the Colossians, greetings were sent to his correspondents from saints in Rome, but no mention of any kind was made of St. Peter, who whether present or absent, must according to the Roman hypothesis, have been the believer of most power and influence in the Church. This was to him inconceivable. And thus once

more they must strike out five additional years from St. Peter's supposed episcopate. During twenty-one, then out of the twenty-five years, he certainly was not Bishop of Rome. But if they came to such a conclusion as this, of what value could they hold that testimony to be which contained as an essential part of it the statement that St. Peter's episcopacy lasted for twenty-five years? Roman apologists had urged that the most ordinary prudential considerations must have hindered the early Christians from allowing St. Peter's movements and official acts as head of the whole Church to be made known to the heathen authorities. To that he replied that St. Paul was not writing to the heathen authorities but to Christian Churches.

Roman apologists often ignored the alleged period of St. Peter's episcopate, and contented themselves with an endeavour to establish the fact. But indeed, the bare fact was only one degree less improbable than its alleged duration, for it was utterly inconsistent with all which they knew of the general character of St. Peter's ministry. The Bishop pointed to many passages of Holy Scripture as showing that the hypothesis of St. Peter's bishopric of Rome was inconsistent. Were there, he asked, any Scriptural quotations which looked the other way? There was not one. The only expressions to which he had seen reference made was not alleged to prove that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome, but only founder of the Church there. As, however, they were cited to exclude St. Paul as a founder, they perhaps deserved examination. The assertion that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome was opposed by the earliest and most reliable records of ecclesiastical history. The very earliest reference to St. Peter's work at Rome was made by Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, about 170 A. D. He said in a letter written to the Roman Church, "You have by such an admonition bound together the planting of Peter and of Paul at Rome and Corinth. For both of them planted and likewise taught us in our Corinth. And they taught together in like manner in Italy, and suffered martyrdom at the same time" (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* ii. 25.) That was in many ways a very remarkable passage. It showed the looseness with which the earliest fathers used such words as "founder" and "founding;" and so loose a usage of words showed them how cautious they should be in interpreting such words too strictly. Again the planting of Peter and Paul was said to be the same at Rome and at Corinth. But who ever argued that because St. Peter and St. Paul planted the Church at Corinth either of them was Bishop of Corinth? If such phrases showed that either of them was a Bishop of Rome or Corinth, they showed that both were—a thing impossible in the early ages. Again, Tertullian, writing about thirty years later, told us that "as the Church of Smyrna recounteth that Polycarp was placed there by John," so "that of Rome doth that Clement was in like manner ordained by Peter" (*De Prescript. Her.* xxxii.) His only remark on that point was that Tertullian knew no relation between Peter and Clement which was not equally true of that between John and Polycarp. But whoever thought that because John ordained Polycarp, therefore John was bishop of Smyrna? Why then should it be assumed that because Peter ordained Clement he was bishop of Rome?

In his address to the Diocesan Conference he had quoted a passage of Irenæus in which they found the same relation preserved between the two great Apostles of the Roman see. Irenæus told them that "the blessed Apostles having founded and built the Church, committed the episcopal office to Linus. To him succeeded Anacletus (elsewhere called Cletus, or Anacletus), and after him Clement succeeded; in the third place from the Apostles" (*Her.* iii. 3.) They had seen what Irenæus meant by "founded." He

meant that the two founders, Peter and Paul, assisted in the establishment of the Roman Church. What the one did the other did. And on the authority of this passage they had no more right to say that Peter was Bishop of Rome than that Paul was. The supposition that either was was absolutely excluded by the statement that Clement was the third. Both Apostles were thus excluded from the enumeration of the Roman Bishops. That was the case in the year 180, and he (the Bishop) thought he should be able to show conclusively that all later statements that Peter was Bishop of Rome were mistakes founded on a forgery. This list of the early Roman Bishops was universally accepted after him; it was accepted by Epiphanius in the East and Rufinus in the West, and was contained in the Roman liturgy to the present day. Every careful student of Patristic literature had perceived that at a very early period the mistake had in some way been introduced that Clement was ordained by St. Peter as his successor in the Roman see. Tertullian, at the beginning of the third century, had heard and believed the story. Obviously it was in direct conflict with the correct statement of the fact. St. Peter died in 67 A. D. and St. Clement became Bishop of Rome in 90 A. D. How, then, could St. Peter have ordained him twenty-three years after his own death? "Accordingly," says Dr. Salmon, "another list of Roman Bishops was published, which puts up Clement to the second and pushes down Anacletus to the third place" (*Infallibility*, p. 355). It did more. It took Cletus and Anacletus to be two persons, instead of two names for one person, and made the imaginary addition a Bishop of Rome. No one attributed deliberate fraud to the Roman Church. The false statement was not invented by that Church, but came to it from without, and the only fault committed consisted in the too easy acceptance of what fell in with its own desires. Its own true tradition made it impossible for it to claim St. Peter as its first Bishop. He was no more its Bishop than St. Paul was. He was pointedly excluded from the succession. But in the new story that had come to it both these difficulties were removed. St. Peter was separated from St. Paul, and he was called Bishop of Rome. Such a report was most welcome, and it was eagerly received. No doubt it created immense difficulties, but difficulties might be met by more or less ingenious speculation.

(To be continued.)

A TIMELY LENT.

By the Right Reverend FREDERIC DAN HUNTINGTON, S.T.D., Bishop of Central New York.

How is one Lent, as it comes to the Church, different from another? Each year the Lenten season has something different in the expression of its face. The Kingdom of God is the same; no statute in the law of God has been amended or revised; the deep sharp line between right and wrong has not shifted right or left; human nature has not been transformed; no item is added to the black list of vices to be killed or devils to be cast out; no unheard-of blossom in the floral of graces is to be gathered. Yet the Lent of 1895 will not be to any one of us, to conscience, heart, will, character, what any Lent heretofore has been. The Voice that calls will not be changed; but if we listen anxiously there will be accents and there will be specifications, in the warnings and appeals, that we have not heard before.

It is the conditions that are new—conditions of society, industry, trade, property, politics. In these varying scenes the changeless principles of the eternal Gospel must have their ap-