

the second day of this month, the heathens themselves not only underwent a lustration, or purification, by sprinkling with branches of hyssop dipped in water, but they also offered sacrifices to Pluto, the infernal deity, on behalf of their ancestors and relatives. Ovid in his "Fasti" has the following:

"In ancient times, purgations had the name of Februa, various customs prove the same; The Pontiffs from the *ter* and *flumen* crave A lock of wool; in former days they gave To wool the name of Februa. A pliant branch cut from a lofty pine, Which round the temple of the priests they twine, Is Februa called; which if the priest demand, A branch of pine is put into his hand; In short, with whatsoever our hearts we hold Are purified, was Februa termed of old; Lustrations are from hence, from hence the name Of this our month of February came."

The Saxons called it Sprout kele, or Spring-wort, that is, the time when the young cabbages, or coleworts, begin to sprout. It was the first herb that in this month began to yield out wholesome sprouts, and consequently gave it the name of Sprout kele. During the six hundred years that Rome was without physicians the people used to plant a great many of these worts. February used, even recently in the Netherlands, to be called Spruckel. It may be added that throughout Scotland this mode of using colewort, or kail, is continued to the present day, and that there is now no cottager so poor who does not cultivate his kail yard. The name of this month, however, was afterwards altered to Sol-monat, or Sun-month, on account of the sun's showing for a longer period than during the preceding month, and because its increasing warmth causes the plants to vegetate. But Bede explains the word Sol-monat to mean pancake month, because in the course of it cakes were offered up by the Pagan Saxons to the sun or Sol, or soul, signified "food or cakes."

Candlemas (2nd February) — candle, mass, Saxon *moessa*; candle feast—is an established festival in the Church under the name of the Purification of the Virgin Mary, or Christ's presentation in the Temple. In an old chronicle of Henry V. we read, "On Candlemas days it shall be declared that the bearynge of candles is done in the memorie of Christ, the spirituall lyghte, of whom Simeon did prophecy, and it is redde in the church that day."

The Romans on this day went about the city carrying torches in honour of their goddess Februa, the mother of Mars. In Roman Catholic countries mass is performed on it by the light of wax candles, emblems of that splendour and purity it was intended to commemorate, and processions are made by torchlight, and all the candles and torches to be made use of in their churches during the whole ensuing year are consecrated on this day. In Rome the Pope himself performs the ceremony in the Quirinal. Pope Sergius "commanded that all the people should go in procession on Candlemas day and carry candles about with them burning in their hands, in the year of our Lord 684." The ceremony was prohibited in England by Order of Council in the year 1584, the second year of the reign of Edward the Sixth, by advice of Archbishop Cranmer.

Among the Greeks the festival goes by the name of Hypaparte, which denotes the meeting of Christ with Simeon and Anna in the Temple; in commemoration of which occurrence it was made a festival in the Church by the Emperor Justinian the First, A.D. 542. He is said to have instituted

it on the occasion of an earthquake which destroyed half the city of Pompeiopolis. The name of Purification was given to it in the ninth century by the Roman Pontiffs. Candlemas Day was a favourite one for making prognostications of the weather, and many a farmer used to regard this day with anxiety, and, regardless of the falsehood of the prediction in former years, would be elated or depressed according as the weather was propitious or otherwise. "There is a general tradition," says an old writer, Sir Thomas Browne, "in most parts of Europe to the effect that if the sun shines brilliantly on Candlemas Day, hard frost is coming."

"Si Sol splendescat Maria purificante,
Major erit glacies post festum quam fuit ante."
Which has been freely translated:—

"If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,
Winter will have another flight;
But if it bedark with clouds and rain,
Winter is gone and will not come again."

SHROVE MONDAY

is the Monday following the first Sunday before Lent (Quinquagesima Sunday). It used to be called "collap" Monday, because originally it was customary to regale on eggs and collaps—"collap" being a term for slices of bread or salted meat, from *clop* or *colp*, representing the sound of a lump of something soft thrown on a flat surface, as "steak" signifies a slice of fresh meat; and, as Lent was approaching, our ancestors used to cut up their meat in slices, and preserve it till the season of Lent was over, by salting or drying it.

SHROVE TUESDAY,

the day after Shrove Monday, is the next after the first new moon in February. In times when the Catholic religion prevailed, the people were expected to qualify themselves for a more religious observance of the following season of Lent by confessing their sins on this day to their parish priests in order to receive the Sacrament. This custom of confessing to the priests at this time was laid aside by the English Church at the Reformation. This practice was popularly called *shriving*, hence comes the word Shrove. That none might plead forgetfulness, the church bells were rung at ten o'clock, which custom is still continued, though confession is no longer practised; and it is now vulgarly called the "pancake" bell, as pancakes were the general dinner after the confession, a custom which is still very commonly observed in England. A curious custom is still observed at Westminster School, London. The cook, bearing a huge pancake of substantial make, enters the schoolroom, and throws it over a high bar, which separates the Upper from the Lower School, into the mob of boys all eager to catch it. The object is to get possession of the cake, and the boy who succeeds in doing so receives from the Dean of the Abbey the honorarium of one guinea. The cook receives two guineas.

On these Shrove days, in process of time, the most wanton sports were tolerated, provided a due regard was paid to the abstinence commanded by the Church; and from that source has now sprung the Romish Carnival and all its attendant revelries, appropriately derived from *Carni Vale*, farewell to flesh, in allusion to Lenten season, which was to commence on the following morning. From the loose pastimes of the age in which the Carnival originated is also to be traced the exploded diversion of cock-fighting.

VALENTINE'S DAY.

The fourteenth of February is immortalized as St. Valentine's Day. There were several bishops

of that name, but the most celebrated was a bishop in Rome in the third century who suffered martyrdom, by being beaten to death with clubs and stones, under the Emperor Claudius the Second, about A.D. 270, in consequence of his refusing to renounce his faith, and was consequently enrolled among the martyrs of the Church, his day being established before the times of Gregory the Great. "On this day birds begin to pair," is an adage applied to this anniversary, and is alluded to by Shakespeare in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, act 4, scene 1:—

"St. Valentine is past,

Begin the woodbirds but to couple now?"

And this idea is thus expressed by Chaucer in his *Assembly of Fowls*:—

"Ye know well, how, on St. Valentine's Day,
By my statute and through my governance,
Ye doe chose your makes (mates), and fle away
With them, as I pricke you with pleasaunce."

Hence probably arose the custom of sending on this day letters containing professions of love and affection. In Pagan Rome, during the festival called the Supercalia, it was customary for youths to draw names in honour of the goddess Februa Juno, on the 15th February; and when paganism was abolished the honour was conferred on St. Valentine, who was famous for his love and charity.

REVIEWS.

THE LACHES OF PLATO. By Rev. Arthur Lloyd, M.A. Port Hope: Williamson, 1891.

Mr. Lloyd possesses the two primary qualifications for a translator of Plato. He is an excellent and accurate scholar, and he has an admirable command of classical English. Consequently, he has given us here a first-rate translation of Plato's *Dialogue on Bravery or Manliness*. Socrates is (as always) the principal character; and Laches, who gives the title to the book, comes next. It is a dialogue well adapted for study by those who have not broken ground in Platonic philosophy. Professor Lloyd prefixes an excellent introduction, giving an account of the general contents of the work and the *Dramatis Personæ*.

MAGAZINES.—*The Expository Times* (January).—This excellent periodical, which we have often commended to our readers, holds on its way successfully, and is full of excellent and useful practical matter. One of the most interesting things in the present number is the account of a curious discovery made in Egypt, proving that there were kings at Jerusalem in very early times, corresponding with the description of Melchizedek given in the Book of Genesis. The introduction to Bishop Ellicott's addresses on the Old Testament is given here, and will be followed by the remainder of his work. Whether we agree with the Bishop or with the Critical School, this contribution will be read with interest. *The Critical Review* (January).—This admirable quarterly fulfils all the promise of its early numbers, and keeps its readers quite abreast of the theological literature of the age. Pfeidner's recent contributions to philosophical theology are reviewed by Dr. Fairbairn. Professor Whitchursh examines Dr. Cheyne's Lectures on the Psalms, and Professor Ryle, Dr. Driver's Introduction to the Old Testament. Professor Ryle is sympathetic, Professor Whitchursh is cautious. An interesting notice is given of the new Nicene and post-Nicene Library, which is now put forth as a sequel to the excellent ante-Nicene Library. This publication is most useful for all students of theology.

BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW.

The Council report every encouragement in preparing for the coming Convention, the programme for which is now in a pretty well completed state, and will be as follows:—

Friday, February 12th, 10.30 a.m.—Holy Communion at St. James' Cathedral, with charge to the Brotherhood by Rev. Canon Du Moulin.