

So without doubt before those human eyes
 Appeared on that first Easter Day the Lord ;
 No phantom vision from the midnight skies—
 In daylight done to death, at dawn restored.

The sun of Easter shone upon that Face,
 Which is the Sun of Heaven ; they heard His tread
 Who shakes the skies in thunder, quickening pace
 To join in converse those who thought Him dead.

More glad, more certain, than the sweet Spring's token,
 With burning hearts they listen to His voice ;
 They handle, and they see that Body broken,
 And in His life for ever young rejoice.

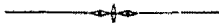
Now pasque flower, Lenten lily, clear proclaim
 The primal Easter morn ; for had He stayed
 In Joseph's tomb, where after death of shame
 With tears and hopeless sorrow He was laid ;

Seeing His hand alone can clothe the side
 Of the black wintry woods with leafy gleam ;
 Seeing His voice alone can loose the tide
 Of melody from bird and rippling stream ;

Hope then would die, and dark despair remain ;
 Spring would desert the dead world's naked shore ;
 But hope lives on, and spring returns again,
 For the great Lord of Life is risen to die no more.

A. E. MOULE

Written in China.



The Month.

THE month of March, up to the time when this magazine went to press, had furnished few incidents of serious importance. The prospects of the Education Bill were extremely doubtful, and the hope of the measure being carried through during the present Session was growing less. Of course, every year's delay increases the difficulties of the weaker voluntary schools ; but it is hardly fair to blame the Government without recognising the difficulty of their position. They cannot work impossibilities. The war still occupies so much of the time of Parliament that, with the rearrangement of Procedure to complete, the amount remaining for constructive legislation is not great.

The appointment of Bishop Copleston, of Colombo, to the See of Calcutta has been received with general satisfaction. His difference with

the C.M.S. in his early Ceylon days is a matter of history, but he has long since made a name for himself as one of the most efficient of missionary Bishops. The name of Bishop Hodges, of Travancore, has been associated with the vacancy in the See of Colombo. The death of Bishop Bousfield, of Pretoria, removes a prelate whose episcopate was one long struggle against difficulties. Twice the work of his diocese had been broken up by war, but his own courage and industry never failed. It may be remembered that even when he was being driven from Pretoria by the Kruger Administration he found time to send a considerable centenary gift to the C.M.S.

“The Report of the Fulham Round Table Conference on Confession and Absolution,” edited by Dr. Wace, with a Preface by the Bishop of London, was issued too late for consideration in the present issue of the *CHURCHMAN*. The April number will contain an article on the Report. To the same number the Rev. N. Dimock will contribute the first of two articles on “Apostolical Succession and Non-Episcopal Communion,” with especial relation to the proposals of Canon Hensley Henson.

It is only possible at present to indicate a few points in the Report. Speaking generally, it is a clear vindication of the position which Evangelical and all moderate Churchmen have taken up in regard to Confession. The cause of the extreme Anglicans is left without a leg to stand on.

1. The Conference agreed that the words from St. John's Gospel, “Whosoever sins ye remit . . . retained,” are not to be taken as addressed only to the Apostles or the clergy, but as a commission to the *whole Church*, and as conveying a summary of the message with which it is charged. The Church does this by the administration of God's Word and Sacraments, and by godly discipline.

2. The Conference agreed, however, that the discipline of private Confession and Absolution cannot be shown to have existed for some centuries after the foundation of the Church. It grew out of the abuse of the godly discipline of public penance which the Communion Service refers to as existing in the Primitive Church.

3. In view of all this, the Conference agreed that our ordination formula could not be regarded as in itself inculcating the duty of private Confession and Absolution.

4. The Conference agreed, however, that our other formularies permitted such Confession and Absolution in certain circumstances.

5. But the Conference could not agree as to the extent to which these formularies encouraged Confession.

6. Nor could the Conference reach any agreement as to the value of Confession as an aid to the spiritual life.

The Bishop of London, in his short Preface to the Report, says that the admission that Confession and Absolution are under certain circumstances permitted by our Church “is all that the great majority of the parish priests of the Church of England who ever make use of it wish to maintain.” But it will be seen in a moment that the *permissive* use is by no means that which is inculcated in the special literature of the extreme Anglicans. It should be added that it is impossible to read the Report without recognising the important and most valuable contributions to the discussion made by Dr. Wace, Dr. Gee, and Mr. Drury. The Bishop of London in his Preface also pays a well-merited compliment to “the ability and fairness which marked the whole conduct of Dr. Wace in the chair.”

The financial position of the societies which end their year at March 31 is always a subject of some anxiety at this time. In the case of the Church Missionary Society the position is of more than ordinary difficulty. Humanly speaking, there seems little hope of averting a heavy deficit, and yet the Society's Committee has been encouraged by its supporters to continue the policy of sending out to the mission-field all approved candidates. In that policy, of course, lies the key of the situation; for, short of giving up some considerable mission, it is only by sending out fewer men that an effective reduction of expenditure can, and even then not immediately, be obtained. During the current year the Society's payments have been watched with even more than ordinary jealousy and care, but there seems no probability that the savings thus effected will bring about an equilibrium between expenditure and income. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the last few years have been, financially, a trying time. We have only to look at the comparatively humble sum produced by the Bicentenary effort of the S.P.G. to see what the influence of the war on foreign missionary income has been.

Reviews.

NONCONFORMIST HISTORY.

Sketches in the Evolution of Congregationalism. By ALEXANDER MACKENNAL, D.D. London: James Nisbet and Co.

A History of the Plymouth Brethren. By W. BLAIR NEATBY. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

IF Canon Hensley Henson's proposals in regard to intercommunion with Nonconformity are to be sympathetically considered, it is essential that Churchmen should know something of the history and principles of English Dissent. We are grateful, therefore, for any works which set before us in the spirit of the historian the origin and progress of the familiar Nonconformist organizations. Dr. MacKennial's book is an excellent specimen of the kind of work needed. It is not too long and not too elaborate. Originally delivered as the Carew Lectures in Hartford Theological Seminary, Connecticut, the book has something of the picturesqueness of treatment natural to such a method of delivery and not unwelcome to the reader. It is in no way an exhaustive or comprehensive work, but it will very well serve the purpose of the English Churchman. Dr. MacKennial traces in an interesting way the origin of Congregationalism, and has a particularly interesting chapter on the relations of Congregationalists and Anglicans. Those who are weighing Canon Henson's proposal to acknowledge the separate Churches of Nonconformity will note Dr. MacKennial's reminder (p. 157) that Wesleyan Methodism came but slowly to the idea of total separation; for "down to the middle of this [the nineteenth] century Wesleyan Methodism repelled the idea of constituting itself a Church." And again:

"The next noteworthy fact about the Evangelical Revival is that it is sprung out of the Church of England, not out of eighteenth century Dissent. John Wesley was the descendant, through both his parents, of Presbyterian clergymen ejected from their livings on Black Bartholomew Day, 1662. His father and mother had voluntarily and conscientiously, and at some cost of feeling, gone back to the Establishment before their