

THE MONTH.

THE Lambeth Conference has been in session. It is an impressive assembly, says the *Guardian*, "impressive in itself, and yet more impressive in its contrast with all that most men could have anticipated in bygone generations for the Anglican Communion."¹

In an able article on the programme of the Conference, the *Record* says :

But the great problem of all, which every year and almost every month is rising into more urgent prominence, concerns the relation of authoritative Christian teaching towards the latest discoveries in science and the new or revived ideas in physics and philosophy. Religion is being called to give an account of itself and to show its credentials in an age when nothing is taken for granted, and when the means of testing historical evidence are somewhat different in nature and much greater in amount than formerly. . . . It is here that the Protestant Reformed Churches have, as it seems to us, their greatest opportunity. If only they knew the day of their visitation, the future of religion is with them. They will be the instruments used by God to keep alive and to enlarge the knowledge of Himself in the world. They are free—hence the supreme folly of the recrudescence of Romanism—from the superstitions which the Mediæva Church adopted, and which only the dim twilight of knowledge could tolerate. The great Western Church of Rome is committed body and soul to principles and ideas which the facts of nature as now ascertained have made simply impossible.

On Saturday, the 30th, at Canterbury Cathedral, the Primate formally welcomed the Bishops.²

The Conference was opened on Tuesday. Of the 141 Bishops who have accepted the invitation of the Archbishop, 130 were present when Holy Communion was administered, at eleven o'clock in the Palace Chapel.

A large number of the Bishops were present at interesting gatherings at the Church Mission Society's House and the Bible House. At the Bible House the concluding speaker was his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, who said :

Lord Harrowby has welcomed the Bishops from all parts of the world and myself to my great honour and joy, to this house. I have been delighted with the bright and beautiful idea of asking us to meet here with the outspread Bible for our symbol. We have among us, by God's providence, one whom I should like to join with us in acknowledging the Society's courtesy, Mar Gregorius, a Bishop of the Syrian Church. If there is one thing to emphasize what has been said about the common unity and agreement of the Christian Churches in one thing at least, it is shown by the presence of Mar Gregorius. It is surely a thing which ought to stir us to have here a prelate who is heart and soul with us from the Patriarchate of Antioch, where the disciples were first called *Christians*, a prelate who in his daily prayers uses the language of Abraham, "the father of the faithful." We rejoice to think that there is a voice on earth answering to the voice of heaven, the one sound which has gone out into all lands, a sound which is going out day by day from this house and from other centres, a voice which is going out unceasingly into all lands. And it seems to me that to-day in the Bishops that come thence we have, as it were, the echo of that sound returning whence it went forth.

A deeper and more important spiritual truth it is that, whatever the differences o

¹ When Fuller had finished his great work he began his Letter to the Reader with these words : "An ingenious gentleman some months since in jest-earnest advised me "to make haste with my 'History of the Church of England,' for fear (said he) lest "the Church of England be ended before the history thereof." In the chaos and tyranny of 1655 the words might well have been said with simple earnestness, but a century later men might have had still better ground for thinking that the end could not be far off.—*Guardian*.

² The Bishops were entertained at lunch at St. Augustine's College. Divine Service began at three o'clock.

Christians, there is one point of agreement in their common reverence for the Word of God, in their love and study of the Scriptures. We can even go beyond that. It has been said most truly that there are heart-breaking divisions among Christians. There is one mitigation of the sorrow. That consolation is the common reverence and love for the Holy Scriptures felt by all Christians. There are two great things, this common point of agreement and this high consolation. And then, thirdly, in the far-distant hope of the future, there is one basis of union on which we must all come together again, the Word, which can never pass away.

Three hundred years ago a few learned schoolmen determined that they would plunge themselves deep into the study of God's Word, and, cost what it might, they would know what God's Word said. They did come to know what it said. And the meeting of those few schoolmen studying God's Word has proved the foundation of Evangelical teaching throughout the world. This teaching is spreading, and the conviction of its truth is deepening in every heart. Let us not only take comfort in the thought that there is something in which we can agree, but let us in our prayers and hopes look confidently to the fact that in the Holy Scripture and its teaching, when deeply and thoroughly understood, is the basis of our reunion in the future.—*The Record*.

At the annual meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel some most interesting papers were read.

In reply to Lord Harrowby, questioning the Government as to Eastern Equatorial Africa, the Premier said that our agreement with Germany was the best possible for civilization and commerce.

The action brought by Mr. O'Donnell, at one time a prominent Parnellite, against the *Times* for alleged libel, contained in the famous articles on "Parnellism and Crime," which appeared in that journal last year, came to an abrupt termination: verdict for the defendants.

A remarkable letter from the Pope to the Irish Bishops has been published. Leo XIII. is apparently resolved that the official condemnation of boycotting and the Plan of Campaign shall not be evaded. He has doubtless been informed that there is a good deal of quiet opposition to, or disregard of, its injunctions, although public denunciations of the rescript are no longer heard. But the letter lately read in the Roman Catholic chapels shows that the Pope is bent on vindicating the authority of the Vatican. The Bishops are admonished in terms from which there should be no escape. They are to "take all necessary steps that no room be left for doubt as to the force of this decree. Let it be understood by all that the entire method of action whose employment we have forbidden is forbidden as altogether unlawful. Let your people seek to advance their lawful interests by lawful means."

The annual meeting of the Church Defence Institution was held at the National Society's House, the Earl of Harrowby in the chair. In opening the proceedings, Lord Harrowby said:

He had endeavoured to take as calm and impartial a view of disestablishment and disendowment as he could, but the more deeply he thought upon it the more appalling did the catastrophe which such a measure would produce appear to him. There was nothing whatever to make him believe that the Christianity, the morality, and the religion of the country would not suffer terribly from the change that would be brought about; and hence it was that he hailed with satisfaction both the work of this Society and the basis on which it took its stand. The great object was to rally the Church quite independently of political considerations, and in doing so it asked no questions save whether those who were associated with it were faithful to the Prayer-Book and Articles. It was the more necessary that all should unite in defence of the Church at this juncture, because that had happened which at one time they would have thought impossible—a section of the Liberal Party had inscribed on its banners, as one of the things it had in view, an attack upon the Church in Wales.—*Guardian*.