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Manager and Editor.

The Rev. ROBERT V. McKIBBIN, M.A., has been appointed Special Representative and Field Correspondent of THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN; and we commend him to the kind offices of ministers and members.

Ottawa, Wednesday, 22nd Aug., 1900.

Mrs. Anna Ross, Principal of the Presbyterian Ladies' College, Ottawa, is contributing a series of suggestive articles on "A Large Prayer," to which we direct the attention of our readers. Next week will be published an article from the pen of Rev. Prof. Jordan, D.D., entitled: "God's gentleness and man's greatness." It will repay careful perusal.

Show a man it will be to his advantage to reach a given point first, and he will immediately look around to see if there is any other man who has a chance to reach that point before he does. And from that moment, one-half his energy is spent upon trying to prevent a possible rival from beating him, instead of putting all his strength into an honest effort to outclass others.

We had the opportunity to examine the private library of a bright young lady recently. She passes for one who is interested in Christian and philanthropic work, and has the reputation for being somewhat literary. But her private library was worse than chaff. There was not one book in fifty that was worth a moment's serious consideration. Most of them were poetry, many were scums, and one could not help the thought that the few good ones were there for the sake of appearances.

J. H. Ecob, in the August number of Harper's Monthly, writes a most interesting article on dangers in church methods during the century now nearing its close. In the matter of church music, in the style of church architecture, in the social side of church life, but more than all, in the manner of presenting truth there has been almost a revolution. But the change has come about gradually, a result of development in thought and character. The article is a most suggestive one, and with its historical side few will quarrel. With all of its inferences many will not agree.

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### THE DUTY OF MISSIONARIES.

The confusion and commotion in China has brought a large amount of criticism upon missionaries and the movement which they represent. Some critics blame the missionaries for the whole trouble; and even Lord Salisbury at a missionary meeting, hinted that the missionaries caused a great deal of perplexity and care to civilized governments. A summary of his speech appeared in these columns two weeks ago. Then we have conflicting statements which lay the blame on Roman Catholic missionaries and upon Protestants according to the source from which they spring.

After these general declarations we meet the more specific announcement that the missionaries ought to have died at their post. It was just as much their duty to do that as it is the duty of a ship-captain or a leader of an army to sacrifice himself for the sake of those under his care. Now it is very easy for the arm chair critic, sitting in a comfortable corner, to give off hand deliverances as to the duty of missionaries, and to talk glibly about dying at the post of duty. However, there is this great truth behind it that the Christian religion is worth dying for; and that the man who is called to be a missionary must have the spirit to count it an honour, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for His name. The apostle Paul had that spirit but he did not run recklessly into danger; and he showed wisdom as well as enthusiasm in his action. We venture to say that when the whole history of this terrible business comes to be written it will be seen that many missionaries have died faithfully at the post of duty. We do not claim perfection for the missionaries but we think that most of them have tried to act in the way that seemed best for China as well as for themselves.

Now that so much has been said about the missionaries and an attempt is made to put the whole blame on them, it is just as well to bear in mind a few important points. First, this is not a purely anti-missionary movement; it is an anti-foreign crusade, we do not mean to imply that missionaries, as such, are popular and that China receives the gospel with open arms; but we do say, distinctly and deliberately, that if all foreigners had been as careful in their conduct as the missionaries have been, the anti-foreign feeling would not have attained its present bitterness. The missionaries have had to suffer the consequences of the deeds of Europeans with which they have no sympathy. It is the action of the powers more than missionary effort that has kindled the present bitterness. The French government which is not particularly religious at times, demands official positions for Roman Catholic priests in China, and this wounds Chinese pride to

the quick. Chinamen have been killed in riots in America and there was no redress; but when two German Priests were killed in a riot the Emperor put out his "mailed fist" and seized one of China's best ports, and a fine piece of territory. Then the Chinese look upon the missionaries as the advance agents of scheming foreign governments, and say "they come to seize our country." The mission-ary may protest. "We seek not yours but you," but in vain. There is too much to confirm the fears of the Chinese patriot and to keep alive the agitation against "the foreign devils." As a matter of fact the help of governments has hindered the movement rather than advanced it. Missionaries are but men; and some of them may act indiscreetly and we have no doubt but that the severe criticism accorded to them now will have an wholesome effect. We do not, however, think for one moment that they are open to the charge of folly, selfishness and cowardice, which have been so freely flung against them.

### CONVERSATION AS AN AID TO PREACHING.

A good conversationalist is more rare than a good preacher. Of course, we mean a preacher in the technical sense of that word, and not as synonymous with "pastor," or "minister." A good preacher is the man who puts his message well, who not only hears it clearly himself, but who tells it out clearly and convincingly to others. Such a preacher is not always born with the silver tongue. He is often a development, and good conversation may have a considerable share in the making of him.

A good talker may not be a good conversationalist. There are few who have not been bored with the mere talker, who spake on and on and said nothing. His counterpart in the pulpit is the glib speaker. Talking answers us when we do not care to think, as the bright novel does if we are alone. Conversation awakens our interest, enlists the faculties of the mind, makes us think and draws us on to give expression to our thought. To put that thought in the best possible form is to converse at our best. The continuous effort to put our ideas clearly and forcefully develops the conversational faculty, till the most trivial of these carries a certain weight.

We do not say that all who converse well would preach well; but we do say that the preacher who strives to be at his best in conversation will preach the better for it. The quick adaptation which the ready conversationalist finds necessary in speaking to different persons in the same aisle, the ready tact which conceals the change from all, will be an invaluable training for presenting a point to a varying audience and in pressing it home to different minds.