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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, 14th Nov., 1900.

The Sunday Rest Association of the Continent of Europe differs from our own Lord's Day Alliance in the fact that it does not concern itself with the religious aspect of the question. The recent International Congress of the Association held in Paris was the most successful of the Congresses yet held. The topic that created the most active discussion was that of the interference of the State for the purpose of securing the Sunday Rest Day. That the State should give the Sunday to its own employees for their rest was agreed by all, but many considered that if the State decreed that all employers of labor should be compelled to give their employees the rest day, it would be interfering with personal liberty. It was finally resolved that the State should protect the liberty of every citizen in the matter of the day of rest.

What passes for hard thinking is often no more than an idea struck off at white heat that may never have before occurred to the mind of the one who utters it. In the rush of the present day the mind of most every man is in a state of fusion all the time. In response to a question suddenly put, utterance is given to what passes for the outcome of months of thought. The one who has spoken it is told so often that he has thought it out that in time he comes to believe that he has done so. As a matter of fact he has never once thought round the subject upon which he has spoken, far less has he thought his way through it. A secular paper, sometimes a religious paper, interviews a busy man to discover his views upon some subject. He may not have given five minutes serious thought to it before, but offhand he gives an opinion that passes current for a conviction. These, when published, are widely different as possible, yet it is gravely intimated that the wide divergence of opinion shews that many men have been anxiously thinking upon the question under discussion, and therefore it ought to receive the immediate attention of those responsible for its solution.

THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN

A GREAT DANGER.

The Nineteenth Century, for October, contains an article by Lady Wimbome, on "Ritualism and the General Election," which is worthy of careful reading by those who take an interest in the religious life of England, and surely that includes a great many who dwell outside the motherland. The general election is over, and as it turned out it was a "khaki" election, and many important questions were swept aside in the tumult raised by the war controversy. The Reformed Church of England perhaps did not go far enough in the revolt against Rome, but the Reformation within that Church was real as far as it went; and it will be a loss to the whole world if the Ritualists can succeed, as they have against them much of the highest learning and finest intelligence of their own Church, as well as the common sense of the English people. These are forces that they have not properly measured and reckoned with. However, their aim is quite clear; the writer of this article quotes the following passage from the Church Times, of March the 24th, 1871:

"We are contending, as our adversaries know full well, for the extirpation of Protestant opinion and practice, not merely within the Church itself, but throughout England. We do not care one solitary straw whether a man preaches in surplice, gown, coat, or shirt-sleeves, so long as he does not preach any sort of Protestantism."

There is no uncertain sound about that; it expresses boldly the well defined aim of the Ritualists; this pretended indifference to the outward forms is, however, the mere rhetorical form. During all these years the same journal has persistently advocated the Romanising of the Church services. They have succeeded in transforming the ceremonies in a large number of the churches, and have in many of them even introduced the Mass and Confession. A Society has recently been formed by a Church of England clergyman, at Sheffield, called the League of the Holy Mass, all the members of which undertake to hear from one to six Masses a week. Both the Ritualists and their opponents recognise one thing, namely, that the Mass is Catholicism and Catholicism is the Mass, that is, Roman Catholicism. Attempts are also made with some measure of success to re-establish monastic life, with the view of training young men for the ministry; and the teaching in some of the theological seminaries is of a decidedly Roman type. Well, then, might Cardinal Vaughan say that "the ritualistic clergy of this country are the real fishers of men who are bringing England back to the true faith, and that this is the direct answer to the prayers of holy men throughout the last three centuries." There is plenty of documentary evidence that we cannot quote or even allude to now, but it is evident that a dangerous situation has been created, and that the rulers of the Church have allowed matters to drift too far. "The country despairing of redress from those who alone without danger to the Church could have dealt with the evil, has now taken the issue into its own hands." May we not reiterate the appeal to the Conservative Party not to mistake the supreme importance of this question, but to respond to the desire of the people and

"thus keep in their hands the solution of a difficulty which is pregnant of such tremendous changes?" This is the question of one who knows the facts and has the well-being of the Church at heart; but the victorious Conservatives are in danger of ignoring such appeals. The lady who makes this appeal shows her clearness of vision in the following passage:

"It is to the character of its religion that the Anglo-Saxon race owes the position it occupies in the world to-day, and so deeply ingrained is the principle of freedom in the English nature—freedom which asserts and includes the right of private judgment and unimpeded access to the throne of Grace—that the stars in their courses must change before the English nation yields to priestly sway. We cannot believe in the Romanising of the nation, but we tremble for the fate of the Church. Unless the tide of Ritualism which is now flowing with unabated force through its channels can be stemmed and arrested, unless those reformed doctrines which our ancestors died to vindicate can be maintained, the Protestant feeling of the country will declare her unworthy of the proud position she occupies to-day; and those who love her most will only be able to mourn a ruin so great, and sadly even that if the Establishment and Protestantism are found incompatible with each other there is no question as to the side on which their lot must be cast."

THE WORLD IS BETTER.

If Christ were to come to the earth to-day would He find the world as He would wish it to be? Certainly not! If Christ were to come to you to-day, if He met you as you stepped into your office would He find your life as He would wish it to be? There is no need to answer that question. But if Christ were to come to-day would He find the world any better than it was when He first came? He most certainly would. The influence of His life and teaching, the power of that life in the lives of men and women now on the earth is more in evidence than it has ever been before.

That we still see much to deplore is not necessarily an evidence that there is more sin in the world than there was in former generations. It may be, we believe it is to be because the light in which we walk is clearer. We have seen forms dimly, we see them now in their real character and they are hideous. The natural inference is that sin has become more abundant, and acting upon this inference some have built up theories of the fulfilment of prophecy and the near approach of the consummation of all things. May it not be that we have grown more sensitive to the presence of evil, and this because there is more of good in our own life.

The Evangelist, New York, in the course of an article on "The Tolerance of Christianity" says: "If a man can say—I think of Christ as the Saviour of men, I trust Him to make me right with God, I accept the divine forgiveness of sins offered through Him, I choose Him, as the Guide of life, and will follow Him day by day—that man is a Christian, no matter how erroneous or defective his theology may be." Not many would care to dissent from that statement, fewer still, we hope, would think of imposing doctrinal tenets upon any man or women who desired to be received as one coming out upon the side of Christ. But even if these were imposed and their acceptance refused, the refusal would not make that person the less a Christian.