

nature. They forget the form and are unfettered by it. They like it because accustomed to it, and their minds may be more or less distracted when deprived of it.

No man should be judged, as to his attitude toward God, by the circumstances or forms amid which he worships, whether with a simpler or more ritual complex.

It remains true, however, that the ages and churches of a simpler worship have been those of a purer faith. The greatest revolt from ceremonialism that the world ever saw was the establishment of Christianity and its protest against Jewish legalism and ritual. Especially is it true that the reaching after more of form is a token of decaying faith. Spiritual growth never shows itself by elaboration of ritual or larger adoption of human rite, but in a closer walk with God, a more faithful imitation of Christ; and whether Presbyterian apes Anglican or Anglican apes Rome, it is in both as true a token of decaying spiritual life as was the Jew making broader his phylactery and larger the border of his garment, tithing with ever growing scrupulous care, mint and anise and cummin, to the neglect of weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy and truth.

"The Free Presbyterian Church."

The old time keen theological acumen of Scotchmen, that can split the shadow of an imaginary theological hair, and the steadfast adherence, at any sacrifice, to what they think is right, no matter how small it be, is not wholly of the past. The few men in the Highlands who came out from the Free Church, some months since, because they thought she countenanced error, may have been mistaken, but their sacrifice was worthy of commendation.

They formed themselves into a Presbytery. This in turn was divided into two,—the Northern and Southern Presbyteries, so that they could have a Synod. The latter Court held its first meeting in Inverness a short time since, as the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church.

One troublesome subject was the education of their students for the Ministry. None of the existing Colleges in Scotland or Ireland are deemed quite safe to send them to. It was proposed that three ministers should take one each of the three students, and train them, but finally a committee was appointed to take the whole respon-

sibility of training the students during this winter.

In an age of union it seems a little out of place to be recording secessions; and in this instance the microscopic cause, and almost microscopic result, has furnished food for churchly jest.

But secessions have been, and in their time and place may still be, the path of duty, if not of glory, and in the measure in which these men followed duty, their Act was as worthy of commendation as when the Free Church herself came out in '43.

Rome at Oxford.

History repeats itself. Rome is getting back to Oxford, for the first time since the Reformation. The Duke of Norfolk, a Roman Catholic pervert from the Anglican church, has purchased a site on which a Roman Catholic college is to be erected in that ancient university centre. The Oxford movement was Romeward, now Rome is moving to Oxford. As to results, prophets vary. Some think it will Romanize Oxford, others the opposite. There is no doubt what the intention is and what the effort will be. The result too may be safely predicted, to this extent, viz., that the gap will be lessened. Common activity in that centre of intellectual life will tend to assimilate all. If Protestantism is true to itself the assimilation will be in the direction of light and truth, otherwise the contrary. The resultant of the combining forces in the measure in which they combine will be determined by their respective strength.

Our Hymnal at Oxford.

More than Rome is going to Oxford, Our New Hymnal is on its way there, to be printed and bound in the best style of the Oxford Press. Will it serve as an antidote to the new R. C. College? Let us trust that the visit will have no effect on the Hymnal, other than to insure good printing and binding. A number of tenders was received by the Hymnal Committee, but none compared, in price and quality of workmanship combined, with that of the celebrated Oxford Press; and in a few weeks we may expect to have our new Hymnal, in paper, print, and binding, that will make it, while moderate in price, a thing of beauty and a joy—until the next revision.