

## THE CALGARY DIOCESAN MAGAZINE.

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### EDITORIAL.

#### Thoughts on the Late Ritual Decisions.

The decision of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in the matters of Incense and Processional Lights has already in itself become a part of the history of the past, but to judge by the voluminous correspondence which has steadily flooded the press since the pronouncement was given, it must needs be a bold imagination which would conjure up all its effects as seen in the future.

What impresses one most, perhaps, in all this correspondence is the change of attitude in the Ritualistic party, or rather the evidence which it gives of the existence of a Ritualistic party quite distinct from the High Church school. The members of the latter, we believe, still walk in the footsteps of the original Tractarians, who, after all, only banded on ideals which had never ceased to exist in the Church of England, and who in so doing laid a great deal of stress on the old-fashioned virtue of submission to

to those whom the Divine Providence has set over us.

In matters of faith and moral duty the individual conscience is to be reckoned with, but in matters of external observance and of ritual there seems to be little or no room for modification of the law of obedience. The Church has the right to "decree rites and ceremonies," and to her overseers appertains the interpretation of such and the resolving of doubts and scruples. The ritual, or the method of showing externally the devotional spirit, in every church becomes in course of time more or less tinged with the personality of its membership: unconsciously perhaps, but nevertheless in a very manner. So that even in so stereotyped a communion as that over which the Bishop of Rome exercises authority, each national church shows in spite of its servitude a certain individuality. Where the Church has become, as in England, the ally of the State, this influence takes a more definite form, finding expression in the popular assemblies. And the Church, listening to that voice, will, if she be wise, be heedful, that by sacrificing things indifferent she may bring into greater prominence the principles of truth.

The danger of the Ritual controversy is that these indifferent things usurp in men's minds the place of "religion pure and undefiled." The use of meaningless names, such as "Mass," and the seeking after foreign sentimental devotions to the disparagement of our noble Church services, betoken the prevalence of a type of mind which may rightfully be called