

be denounced at the street corners by self constituted judges and accusers of their brethren. Against this superstition about ritual let us most emphatically protest. It is the duty of every minister of the Gospel to lift up, in these dangerous days, a warning voice against such exceeding want of charity, and to ask with the indignant Apostle, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand." (*Rom. xiv. 4.*)

True while thus claiming Christian liberty and the right properly to exercise private judgment about these matters, it is not said that every one may do just as he pleases. Ritual observances are of two kinds, general and congregational, or special and personal. The former, "every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change and abolish," and it is the part of loyal obedience to accept these without scruple, "for whosoever through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly." (*Art. xxxiv.*) Such are these, which the Church of England has ordained of kneeling to pray, bowing at the name of Jesus, standing to sing; also the ornaments of the Church, and of the ministers, at all times of their ministration, and various ritual acts.* Without going into any details about these, or pronouncing any opinion upon points which may soon be questioned, I would say this much, that unquestionably the lawful† ritual of the Church of England, is fuller and more ceremonial than what we see commonly practised in most of our Churches. I feel quite confident that any one who

* *e.g.* The sign of the cross in Baptism,—giving the ring at Holy Matrimony, &c., &c.

† The term "lawful" may mean either permitted or commanded by law. I believe the statement above to be true for both meanings of the word."