

RITUALISM.

A friend has sent us the following temperate and judicious paper in which, we think our readers will be interested:—

There is but one position that a Churchman can take which he may be sure of, which will keep him safe against every aggression; and that is the Prayer-book; and by this, I mean the whole Prayer-book, and nothing but the Prayer-book. There is no other possible ground for union; and this is authoritative ground for us all. But we see the Prayer-book departed from, and that in two directions. While one rides over the Rubrics, appointed usages, aye, and canons too, in utter indifference to the Church's law; another while he keeps the whole law, goes beyond the law, and adds to it ceremonies, forms and practices hitherto unheard of. How is the balance to be cast between them? I say, not in an unhesitating sense of justice and fairness in the matter, if the one is to be tolerated, so is the other. The Church's liberality of allowance must be equal towards the two extremes. I do not like either. But the one, I see is permitted, and has always been permitted, and that extreme would fain judge and condemn the other. It is doing so, most bitterly and virulently. I do not see the fairness of this treatment. "Thou hypocrite! first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote of thy brother's eye." At present thy vision is all distorted and jaundiced. Thou hast no more right to judge thy brother than thy brother to judge thee—a Rubric violated by diminution is quite as bad as a Rubric violated by excess. So far I am prepared to defend this new Ritualism. In all fairness, churchmen should have as much liberty in one direction as the other. Liberty seems to be established on the one hand; then concede it on the other. But for myself and for my parish, I choose neither. I have but one rule; and by that I abide—whatever the Church has appointed, I fulfil; and wherever, (as is true in some matters of form), the Church has given no direction, I follow the usage which is approved by the best authorities. —*Bishop Southgate.*

ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

BY RICHARD WILTON, M. A.

On "Mary Short," Wife of the Lord Bishop of St. Asaph.

As through St. Asaph's quiet streets I went,
I saw a sculptured fountain softly flowing—
A cherished name inscribed above it, showing
What tearful memories with those were
blent.

To the cathedral next my steps I bent,
Where in rich glass the same deep grief was
glowing:

While strown upon a grave, flowers* freshly
blowing,
Showed sorrow's early tenderness unspent.
Thus by three touching symbols was re-
corded

A Husband's life-love to his Sainted Wife—
Through lonely years like precious treasure
hoarded:

A love as ceaseless as that fountain stream-
ing,
Like flowers fresh-gathered, still with fra-
grance rife,
And to old age with chaste and radiant
gleaming.

An Incident at the Communion Table.

At the Lord's Table waiting, robed and
stoled,

Till all had knelt around, I saw a sign!
In the full chalice sudden splendours
shine,

Azure and crimson, emerald and gold.
I stopped to see the wonder, when behold!
Within the cup a countenance Divine
Looked upwards at me through the trembling
wine,

Suffused with tenderest love and grief
untold.

The comfort of that sacramental token
Time from memory can no'er erase:
The glass of that rich window may be
broken,

But not the mirrored image of His Grace,
Through which my dying Lord to me has
spoken.

At His own Holy Table, face to face!

* Every day, for nearly twenty years, the Bishop, in passing from his palace to prayers at the cathedral, has scattered flowers on the grave of his wife.