

THE CRY OF RITUALISM.

In reading the secular newspapers one can hardly fail to notice how frequently this cry is raised, how incessantly we are furnished with news of the "Ritualistic" doings of some Anglican clergyman or other. Judging from the telegraphic and other reports of the secular press, one would think that this fearful epidemic of which we get such accounts from the old country had—like the Colorado beetle—spread over all Canada. We are continually agitated by reading of the "great commotion in the parish of A, owing to the 'Ritualistic' practices of the Rev. X." But when we come to investigate the matter, to enquire of friend or eye-witness, we are surprised to find that the whole of this "commotion" resolves itself into some petty squabble between the clergyman and a parishioner about the position of the melodeon, or the shape of the pulpit, or some equally silly matter.

Of course no one can tell who is responsible for these absurd cries—probably some irresponsible individual—but my present object in writing is to urge on all churchmen, "High" and "Low" alike, to unite in discountenancing this very foolish and mischievous proceeding. And I say this, not in the interest of the High Church school alone, but of the church at large. My sincerity may be questioned, but I think all candid minds will see the reasonableness of this appeal; for we may all be sure of this, that false alarms invariably tend to defeat their own object.

I do not mean to say that there is no such thing as an excessive and pernicious Ritualism. I should be extremely grieved to see reproduced in this country the Mariolatry, the worship or "cultus" as they call it of the Saints, the worship of the Host, for such I fear it practically is in some churches of the old country. That there are such dangers I fully admit; but I repeat, *The very worst way to meet such dangers is to raise false alarms.*

We all know, or ought to know, that very suggestive story of the Shepherd boy, who, for mere amusement, would rush to the neighbours every now and then crying, "Wolf! Wolf!" and when a crowd would gather to assist him in attacking the terror of the flock, he would laugh at them for being what is vulgarly called "sold." By and bye, however, when the wolf *did* come in reality, he appealed to his friends in vain; "No," said they "you have deceived us with that cry too often." And so, for his folly in raising false alarms, the poor lad had to suffer the destruction of his flock by the dreaded beast. Just as it will be with the cry of "Ritualism!" That I may not seem to exaggerate I will instance two out of several which have lately appeared in the papers. It was only last week that we read in the DOMINION CHURCHMAN, of an application by the Rector of Wood Church, near Birkenhead, England, "to decorate the ceiling and walls of the said church and chancel with chosen texts of Scripture," being opposed by the churchwardens on the ground that it was a move in the direction of Ritualism, and would raise an outcry among the parishioners. The Chancellor was surprised, as well he might be, at texts of Scripture being denounced as the beginning of Ritualism.

Christ Church, Belleville, has been in a fearful state of ferment. Piteous appeals to "Wake up for God's sake!" are scattered broadcast among the members; because of the "Ritualistic" leanings of the Incumbent, the Rev. R. S. Forneri. Now, I happen to know Mr. F. personally, and have a high regard for him as a God-fearing, Christ-loving man, and an energetic and useful clergyman. His views too, on

controverted points, are most decidedly "Evangelical," and opposed to my own. *He* Ritualistic? Well, it turns out that this "Ritualism" cry is raised because he has furnished the Mission Chapel after the pattern of churches in Toronto served by *Church Associationists*!! Is it not too bad that a devoted and spiritually-minded clergyman should be harried and worried, and his usefulness hampered, by such silly nonsense? (See Mr. F's published sermon, "Wake up.")

Now let me, as I said before, appeal to all parties in the church, "High" and "Low." What will be the ultimate effect of such constant cries of "Ritualism" on the general public? We may be sure a revulsion of feeling will certainly come some day, when men will say: "Well, if this is Ritualism, what a fuss about nothing!"

It is all very well to guard the flock from the wolf; but our neighbours will be disgusted if, every time they run to our assistance, they find our wolf to be only a hedge-hog. It is a thing to be thankful for, that our "faithful laity" are ever on the alert to "nip in the bud" aught that is evil—that we have faithful watch-men on the walls of our Zion. But those very watch-men will be voted a nuisance by and bye, if the citizens are continually aroused from their beds with the cry of "Wake up for God's sake before it is too late!" and when they assemble on the battlements to repel the enemy, lo! they find that the watch-dogs have been barking at their own shadows! G. J. Low.

BAPTISM, ITS MODE, SUBJECTS, AND GRACE.

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(Continued.)

The first passage is that which occurs in St. Matt. xix. 13-14, St. Mark x. 13-14, and St. Luke xviii. 15-16, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Now this term Kingdom of Heaven, although used with reference to the church triumphant in glory in some places, is also used by our Lord, as denoting the "Church militant here in earth," the gospel dispensation, *e. gr.*: The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net cast into the sea, which gathered fish of all kinds, good and bad; to a field which grows both wheat and tares, etc. In this sense it is used here, and our Lord after rebuking those who would keep back children from coming to Him, declared that they (little children) belong to his kingdom or church. This expression means not merely that the members of his kingdom must be like little children in their dispositions, though that is true, but that little children are members of His church, the original word is *toiotoun*, not merely those of similar dispositions, but of such, referring to what has gone before, viz., little children. Now if little children belong to the Kingdom of Heaven, they have a right to the rite of initiation. If the covenant include them, they have a right to the seal of the covenant. The next place that we will draw your attention to, is in the 28th of St. Matthew. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." These words contain our Lord's institution of the sacrament of holy baptism, and deserve our closest attention. In the authorized version, the word *teach* is used twice in this passage; it seems that our translators here followed the vulgate, which reads, "*Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos*:" "and from this translation," says

Bp. Beveridge, "I verily believe the error of the Anabaptists and Antipædobaptists took its first rise. For apprehending our Saviour to say, according to this translation, 'Go ye and teach all nations, and then baptise them.' They presently inferred that persons ought first to be taught and then baptised, and in consequence that children not being capable of the former cannot be so of the latter. But if they had understood and consulted the original they would have found no such thing, for *mathe-teou* never signifies to teach, but only to make a disciple. And the Syriac and other oriental translations constantly render the word. And, therefore, it is observable that in all the Eastern Churches this heresy was never heard of, nor anywhere else, but only in such places where the vulgar Latin prevailed, which plainly shows that it was grounded at first only upon that false translation of the word, *mathe-teou*, by *docete*. The passage reads then, 'Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, etc.' Now all nations were to be discipled, therefore infants are included, as they form a large, if not the largest part of all nations, and how are they to be made disciples? By baptising them, then they were to be taught the doctrines of Christianity and those moral duties that became their calling: and the comforting assurance of Christ's continual presence in his Church, is added to stir up the zeal and increase the devotion of his Apostles. But that this command of our Lord includes infants, is further seen if we consider the persons to whom it was addressed. Our Lord here spake to his Apostles who were all Jews, and therefore accustomed to view infants as capable of being taken into covenant with God, in the rite of circumcision. To them our Lord says, 'make disciples of all nations.' Now, I ask any thinking man, how would the Apostles understand this command? would they not with all their previous knowledge of God's gracious dealings with infants, under the Mosaic economy, with all their preconceived notions of the mercy of God extending to his people, and to their seed after them, interpret this command in its widest sense, as including infants? And would not our Lord, had he meant to exclude infants, have said, 'baptise all nations, but be sure you exclude those in infancy.' But no such hint of a limitation of God's mercy is to be found; we may therefore safely conclude (which is the only rational conclusion to be drawn from the word) that our Lord intended his church to be as comprehensive under the new, as it had been under the old dispensation. One other point of importance is, this baptism was not a new ordinance peculiar to Christianity, but one that had been practised in the Jewish Church for many years. When a Heathen became a proselyte to Judaism, he was baptised, and not only he, but all his family participated in this ordinance. Now with this fact in their minds, is it possible that our Lord's Apostles could misunderstand his words, as though he meant to exclude infants when he uses the most comprehensive term possible, 'all nations,' and they had always viewed infants as forming a part of the church of God. Would our Lord not, I ask again, have dropped some hint if he had intended so entirely, as these fanatics pretend, to alter his plan of dealing with mankind? The next passage that demands our attention is in the 16th of St. Mark, and the 16th verse. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." I shall not enter into the question as to the genuineness of this passage, though the best MSS. do not contain it, and the best critics have decided both on internal and external evi-