

is certainly remarkable that so many of the churches have of late unmistakably gravitated towards ritualism. This has not been of set purpose nor has the movement been instigated by the clergy. The faith of the people has been shaken in the older systems of dogma by modern discoveries and the modern view of the world, which is gradually emerging out of these; but their faith in Christ and what Christ taught has grown stronger. They find it difficult to reconcile his maxims with modern ecclesiasticism or with the business methods so generally practised by the Christian Church; but with the growth of discontent grows faith and hope in Christ. Men are no longer satisfied with dogmatic theology and sermons; they demand a substitute; they find it in ritualism, which appeals to their senses and to their feelings, while they are groping about for a more substantial basis of belief. Emotionalism is a safer and sounder stepping-stone from the old theology to the new than materialism. It is a prominent feature of Episcopalianism, but its growth is appreciable everywhere and it has influenced even the Presbyterian Church.

The Church in all its branches, without distinction, has always been a social and economic force, but less under Protestant influence than in the Roman Catholic Church before or since the Reformation. In the Middle Ages the Church was the only eleemosynary agent which extended organized charity to the poor or educational facilities to the masses. During the so-called Dark Ages it numbered among its members the great scholars; and its teaching orders, male and female, have always devoted themselves, some to communicating elementary education, others to the advancement of learning. The sick were nursed by nuns; prisoners and captives were relieved by the followers of St. Francis and by other monks, during those many generations when war and strife seemed to leave no place for pity in the human breast. And it was when these services were most required that these orders lived most nearly up to their ideals.