

The
Cure for Ritualism.



LONDON :
A. HOLNESS, 21, PATERNOSTER ROW.

THE CURE FOR RITUALISM.

It is but yesterday that the enthusiasm of superstition asserted itself in a pilgrimage from this land to the supposed bones of a questionable "Saint?" Hundreds, in their "voluntary humility," kissed the glass case where, gaudy in tinsel and gay robes, lay the wax figure covering the bones. Before this relic, the noble and the educated, as well as the poor and the ignorant, prostrated themselves. They sang and wept in their frenzy. They tore up handfuls of grass, plucked leaves, and filled their pockets with earth, to carry home their treasures from the spot which the crafty priests called sacred! Pitiabie spectacle of

unsatisfied hearts and consciences !
Earnest yet deluded men and women ;
the sport of their own rejection of
Christ at the Father's right hand !
Yet worse than the shame of their
folly — worse than their worship,
which has not in it even “ any honour
to the satisfying of the flesh ”—their
despise to Christianity, their degrading
the high and heavenly gospel of God
to the base level of heathenism. For
in what, save name, differs the relic-
worship, and the priest-service of the
heathen, from that which “ en-
lightened ” countries still call christian
religion ?

Did they but know Christ in glory
as their Life—were the hope of their
souls to be like Him as He is—relics,
priests, and ritual would be swept out
of their hearts in a moment ; swept
clean away by the Spirit of God as
loathsome and abominable to the soul,
as utterly hateful to Christ. “ The

weak and beggarly elements” of Judaism are, saith the Spirit of God, repugnant to christianity; but what language shall describe the mixture of Judaism and Paganism which is now called christian faith?

We ask, what is the deliverance from the sense-entrancing religiousness which leads souls captive to priests and relics, and chains them down, heart and mind, to the things of the earth? “If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?” is the question of God, which supplies the answer.

Christ, in His perfect obedience to God, kept the law (He fulfilled it) and observed the feasts; but He has died to temples and earthly religion. He has gone up on high. He has entered heaven itself, and there He now is, the centre of a new worship; and more, He is the Head, and from

Him personally, by His Spirit's agency, all spiritual nourishment and direction come to the "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" upon earth.

When Christ died to the rudiments of the world—to everything which is of the earth and sense, His people died with Him. They are with Him dead to meats, to drinks, to holidays, new moons and Sabbaths; dead to the shadow, but in Christ—alive from the dead, seated on high—they live in the fresh atmosphere of the new creation, and are fed by Himself.

What have these ordinances to do with the new life which is ours, who believe in the risen Christ? Who, knowing Christ in glory, would care to touch—would lower Christ so as to kiss—the glass case of a wax figure, wherein were shrined certain bones tied together with gold wire? The dignity of the Risen Man refuses

with contempt, yet, the while, with compassion for those who do such things, the childish invitation.

It is not for us, whose "life is hid with Christ in God," to stoop to the level of the hapless heathen, to lower the might and the magnificence of "Christ in you the hope of glory," to any sort of earthly ceremonial.

Reader! be sure of this; it is only as in Christ that God accepts you; anything lower is death. God views man either as in Adam, or as in Christ—as dead in self, or alive in His Son. Do you know Christ—Christ in heaven? The way to His glory is His cross. Do you believe on Him who "was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him?" Do you know Him who was crucified for sinners, but who lives for evermore? A risen and glorified Jesus is the truth for the day. This shall save you

rom countless delusions ; * this, as God's spirit fills your heart and mind therewith, shall preserve you in the midst of Satan's wiles. "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, set your affection on things above," set it not on the rudiments of the world, set it not upon music, or stained glass, or incense, or priests, or gorgeous robes ; set it upon the Risen Christ and His heavenly things. And thus delighting in the Man at God's right hand—having Christ in your heart as the hope of glory—having likeness to Him on high for your prospect, your destiny—you shall be emancipated for ever from every thrall, whether of doubts or fears, infidels or priests.

H. F. W.

