A plea for fuller ritual in the M. E. Church

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In our aversion to thedead formalism of ourmother church we have suffered from a reaction in the direction of anunattractive barrenness ofform. We have acted upon the principle that simplicity consists in freedom of form—rather than appropriateness. It is not our design or desire to advocate the introduction of elevations, prostrations, genuflections, adorations, cense—and swinging up-
but simply such an addition to our present form of public service, as will give to the people the means of deriving the greatest benefit from it. Our plea will rest (1) upon an appeal to the naturalness of ritualism. There is something in human nature which calls for it—loves it, needs it. It is seen from the rudest form of fetishism to the most gorgeous temple worship. Symbols have always been the doors through which man has gone out of himself. & through which the
world has come in to being. This is especially true of many religious nature— & as seen from the sacramental tree of knowledge in Eden down to the day of Pentecost when "each lonely forehead was mitred with heavenly flame." It is seen in the mysteries Isis & Osiris, Demeter & Persephone. The works of art are so many expressions of this nature & hence proofs of our statement. Marble & canvas, organ & temple, have all combined to give fine expression to this part of man which alone could say them under hearsest tribute.
Ask in her beauty has been
wedded to holiest utility
from the high altar of this
union there ascends the
holiest incense of the worship
ing soul.

Our plea rests upon an
appeal to the history of this.
The highest point of Jewish
history, the culmination of
priestly and kingly glory was the
reign of Solomon. Here the
temple in its splendor, the
glam of gold and silver, the
chanting of the psalms—all
impressed the worshipper
that the Lord was in his
Holy Temple.
Every type & symbol burned
the heart toward that One
whose body was the perfect
temple - in which "dwelt the
fulness of the Godhead"
In him nothing was destroyed
but all was fulfilled. Ritual
itself was baptized into a
new life - that it might
bear to the world on this
side of Calvary - the baptized truths
of the Old Economy - not the
earnings of Mt. Calvary, but the
blessings of Mt. Sinai! Not the
threatenings of Sinai - but the
benedictions of Olivet - The
leaves Prayer - baptismal formula
- apostolic benediction, joined,
The nucleus of a ritual for the Christian Church. Around this were gathered such additions as were necessary to meet the demands of the growing church. Development of doctrine, after the Lutheran Reformation. The ritual was not abolished but purified and it became once more the channel through which spiritual blessings were carried to the people. An appropriate, expressive and impressive ritual being in harmony with our natures and our best natures—being in harmony also with the history of the
Church — the best part of that history. It must be in harmony with the greatest spirituality of church and individual. If it is something which nature calls for — not its use — but its abuse, will conflict spirituality — God's blessing upon its proper use in the Church of the past was an assurance that its proper use would receive that blessing today — Its abuse is no excuse for its abuse — The fact that Father O'Flannigan used a prayer book is no ground for breach of Smith's vow that he carry nothing but a volume of Matthew Henry.
The fact that the Miserere
Palestina - is sung in the
Pope's private chapel - is not
the most satisfactory precedent
to Brother Jones' resolution
that his praise shall be
wasted forth only in the
time of windhams

There is no intrinsic merit
in unattractive plainness nor
is there an inherent connection
between ugliness & holiness.
For the doctrines that our church
has to serve up to the people
we need more subtle means.
For the great common people &
children to grasp the great
body of doctrine which our church
holds out "time - time must be more handled. The almost uniform reception of children into institutional churches & the difficulty of receiving & keeping them in case - is owing in no small degree to the presence in theirs & absence in ours of full secl. Children brought up in the chi - make stronger & hence greater spirituality. To chi

Unexpectedly - hastily, seriously submitted...