

## ON THE LITURGY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

“ Though a Protestant Dissenter, I cannot be insensible of its merits. I believe that the evangelical purity of its sentiments, the chastised fervour of its devotions, and the majestic simplicity of its language, have combined to place it in the very first rank of uninspired compositions.”

ROBERT HALL, Leicester.

The generally acknowledged, and, in many cases, justly appreciated, excellency of our National Liturgy, might seem to render any discussion of its claims to our veneration and regard almost superfluous. But as nothing, however excellent, is allowed to pass unassailed by those whom prejudice or party-spirit has armed against it, and the Liturgy has in this respect shared the general fate; a few remarks on the subject may not be deemed out of place in an early number of the Christian Sentinel. It is not, however, our intention to engage in any extended or laboured discussion either of its numerous excellencies, or of the objections which have at various times been raised against particular parts and expressions in its different offices. Nor would we be thought, in our endeavours to maintain the honor of the Liturgy, to be the champions of every *single word* contained in it. We are its cordial admirers, but not its blind idolaters. We do not forget that it is a *human* composition, and that *perfection* is not therefore to be expected from it. There are, perhaps, a few parts—*very few indeed*—which would admit of improvement; but we do not see into whose hand it could be safely trusted in the present day of innovation and speculation, when what is venerable and approved, too often, for that very reason, becomes suspected; and when it requires considerable firmness to stand the charge of prejudice and bigotry, with which those who hold fast *the good old way* are not unfrequently assailed. “ The creed of a nation is an awful deposit: and we greatly fear, that, if ever cast into a modern crucible to be purged of its dross, it will lose much of its pure gold in the process. We are content, therefore, to take it as it is; and remembering our infirmities, and those of our species, we are rather disposed to wonder it is so good, than to complain it is no better. Every day’s experience shows that it is perfectly competent, under the Divine blessing, to produce, to revive, and to sustain a spiritual religion.”

The object of this communication is, to furnish the members of our own communion with some general arguments for the use of a Liturgy in the public service of the Church; and to endeavour to impress their minds more deeply with a sense of their inestimable advantage, in possessing such a *form of sound words* as that provided by the National Establishment.

That Liturgies were regularly used in the *Jewish Church*, both before and at the time of our Saviour’s incarnation, is, I believe, universally admitted by those conversant with its history. That the public