

COMMUNICATION ON THE LITURGY.

REV. SIR,—The article from the *New York Churchman*, inserted in the last number of the *Church Chronicle*, points to an important testimony on the part of Congregational Dissenters to the value of the Liturgy. But I suppose there is hardly a parish priest in the Diocese, whose experience will not bear me out in saying, that amongst ourselves, Dissenters of all denominations are complaining of the barrenness of extemporal worship, and the desirability of a form of prayer. The allusion at the end of the article to the Rev. H. W. Beecher's father and mother may not be intelligible to all the readers of the *Chronicle*, and I therefore send you the following explanation of it. Mr. Beecher writes thus from Scotland to his congregation upon the Liturgy:


"The services began. You know my mother was, until her marriage, in the communion of the Episcopal Church: this thought hardly left me while I sat grateful for the privilege of worshipping God through a service that had expressed so often her devotions. I cannot tell you how much I was affected. I had never had such a trance of worship, and I shall never have such another view until I gain 'the gate.' I am so ignorant of the Church Service, that I cannot tell the various parts by their right names; but the portions which most affected me, were the prayers and responses which the choir sang. I had never heard any part of a supplication—a direct prayer—sung by a choir; and it seemed as though I heard not with my ear but with my soul. I was dissolved; my whole being seemed to me like an incense wafted gratefully towards God. Throughout the service, and it was an hour and a quarter long, wherever an 'Amen' occurred, it was given by the choir, accompanied by the organ and the congregation. Oh! that swell and solemn cadence yet rings in my ear. Not once did it occur in the service, from beginning to end, without bringing tears into my eyes. I never knew, I never dreamed before of what heart there was in the word Amen. My soul, then thou didst magnify the Lord, and rejoice in the God of thy salvation."

Could a member of our Church more touchingly express the beauty of our Liturgy; or could those who dissent from us complain of the coldness and deadness of our service, if it were always (as Mr. Beecher heard it) chorally performed? The above is quoted in a pamphlet written by Ebenezer Bailey, (*"Conformity to the Church of England,"*) in which he lays before his friends the reasons which led him to withdraw from their communion. The testimony of one who was a Congregational teacher at home may well supplement that of the popular American preacher; albeit the one speaks of the Church, the other of her Liturgy. In his preface, Mr. Bailey writes: "A Congregationalist of the strictest sect, I was, in consequence, the subject of many strong and noxious prejudices against the establishment; but on the occasion of the now late Non-Conformist Bicentenary, I was called upon more carefully to examine the subject, and I became convinced that the Anglican Church, instead of being the unscriptural thing I had fancied it to be, bears upon it *God's own signature.*" "The growing conviction of my mind is, that the majority of dissenters have never impartially examined both sides of this question."

And again, in his second edition, "I find, by a large number of letters I have received since the issue of my first edition, that I am but one, among hundreds of dissenting teachers, who have, within a few years, returned to the good old ark of the Church of England: from which, on the responsibility of our forefathers, we came out, seeking a resting place on a wide watery waste, but finding none." There spoke out an honest dissenter!

Your obedient servant,
M. A.

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 The Rev. W. Belt requests that all letters and papers intended for him be addressed simply "SCARBOROUGH," instead of Highland Creek, Scarborough, as heretofore.