

*M.* Most willingly. I do not like the prescribed form of public prayer, which the minister and people must use, without the least variation or change, through their whole life time. When I became a communicant, I endeavoured as faithfully and as diligently as I could to like it, but the task was above my power. For the very idea of a form appeared to me utterly inconsistent with the nature of worshipping that God who is a spirit, and who requires men to worship him in spirit and in truth, and not by set forms. I do not object to the subject matter of the prayers, which are in a very high degree unexceptionable, but only to the form. Being a form it banishes the inspiration of the spirit, it represses the devout breathing of the pious soul, and is a thick cloud betwixt us and that blessed spirit who helpeth our infirmities with groans that cannot be uttered. I have just been reading an essay, in your magazine, "on the Liturgy of the Church of England," and though it has some things in favour of precomposed prayers which I am not able to refute, I am not yet convinced, that either learning or talents, can make any thing more of a written service, than a mere body without the spirit.

*E.* I thank you heartily for this account you have given me of your feelings toward the divine service of our church. We differ, in our opinions, very widely, but if we keep within the bounds of charity, and use gentleness and candour in our language, we may discuss our differences to mutual comfort and edification. When you have time, I beg you will re-peruse that article on the Liturgy. The writer, equally unknown to me, as he is to yourself, has produced unquestionable authorities, which, to my mind, at least, prove that the Jews and the primitive church used forms of prayer. He has shown you the advantages of set forms, and the disadvantages of the contrary practice, which, as he reasons justly and forcibly, and with a christian spirit, should induce you to bring your prejudices and dislike to a most strict account. I will now, with your permission, observe, in addition to what he has said, that it may very justly be doubted, whether there ever was a regularly organized society of God's people, from the time the law was given by Moses, until the period of the Reformation, Jewish or Christian, that ever presumed to perform the public worship of God, without the use of precomposed form or liturgy. The very high priest, whom God himself appointed, was not permitted to perform such a simple act, as blessing the people, except by the use of a prescribed form. Indeed, every single act, connected with the Old Testament worship, was formally and particularly prescribed. Many examples and precepts of the Old Testament, especially the book of Psalms, show what the approved practice of the Jewish Church was. Our Saviour was a constant attendant of the temple and synagogue worship where opportunity served; where the service, as the writer before you clearly proves, was precomposed and formal. Was he there, think you, as a spectator, or as a worshipper? If, in the lat-