

MIXING UP SERVICES.

A LETTER in our last issue affords an illustration of the ignorance which so generally prevails as to the structure and order of the services of the Prayer Book. We do not in any way blame the writer of that letter because he, like the majority of our people, seems never to have been taught the simplest lessons in regard to the Church's Liturgical forms. Indeed the very occasion of his writing proves how strangely indifferent and careless some clergy are as to their manner of conducting Divine service. The incident ought to teach them that while their congregations are giving a complacent assent to their general policy and teaching, there are some who are sufficiently instructed in well nigh all our Churches as to know how the services are ordered to be conducted, and reverent enough to be irritated and shocked at such acts of impropriety as are only too commonly practised by a certain class of clergy. In this case a protest was made through our columns against the removal of the Offertory during the Communion Service. The Warden it appears one Sunday night went to the Altar rails, asked for the alms dishes to be handed to him, received them from the priest who was celebrating Holy Communion, and then walked into the vestry with the Offertory, and after a moment or two passed out of the Church carrying with him the Offertory money. The warden says this was not done during the service of Holy Communion. He makes this denial under the impression that this service does not commence until non-communicants have retired. This, however, is an utter delusion. The staying in or going out of certain persons does not denote either the beginning or ending of any service. In this case the custom of the Church in question is to tack on the opening of the service of Holy Communion just before the end of Evening Prayer, to interject it between the Sermon and Benediction. It is a highly irregular bit of ritualism usual in Churches where Holy Communion is celebrated at night. But because the opening portion of the Service is interrupted at this Church in order to give certain persons a chance to go away, it certainly does not follow that the Service of Holy Communion has not been commenced. It is for the rector of that Church to explain how he reconciles his obligation to obey the order of the Prayer Book with the practise of beginning the Service of Holy Communion before that of Evening Prayer is concluded. Indeed it would be interesting to hear from him, wherefrom he gets his authority for following up the Service of Holy Communion immediately after Evening Prayer?

We are none the less convinced that some modifications in all our services are grievously needed. The mixing up of Morning Prayer with Holy Communion is a lamentable mistake, and quite as irregular as the insertion of the opening parts of the latter Office into that of Evensong.

In all these Offices or Services, there is a need for some rubric touching the collection

and presentation of alms, as the custom is now universal of having an Offertory at every Service. There needs, too, a much larger degree of freedom in compressing the Services for special occasions. The order of administering Holy Communion needs reform, it is eminently unsuitable to modern necessities where large numbers of communicants assemble. We know well that this is a very tender spot with most of our clergy, but although their sensitiveness in regard to any innovation is worthy of all respect, it is none the less notorious and patent, that when there are large numbers of communicants the present ritual is needlessly burthensome to the celebrants, and tedious, and oppressive to recipients. The Roman rite is cut down one half by the restriction of the Cup to the Priests, who shorten the celebration by such a rapid utterance of the ceremonial phrases that they cannot be followed by any hearer. We could not tolerate this in the Church of England, but we should hail such a change as would render the utterance of the phrases on giving the Sacramental elements less monotonous, mechanical, wearying, and wasteful of time when large numbers are present. The extreme rapidity with which the words are addressed to each communicant, borders closely upon irreverence, and the confused sound caused by several clergy repeating over and over again the same phrases independently of each other, often in almost breathless haste, is anything but solemnising, indeed the "rail-ful" system is far more impressive than hurryscurrying repetitions of the sentences to several hundred communicants.

If the custom were universally observed of keeping each service intact, the effect would be to increase the attendance at Church, as it would heighten the enjoyment and edification of worshippers.

THE SCOTTISH LITURGY.

BY A CONTRIBUTOR. NO. I.

THE Episcopal Church in Scotland is contemplating a revision of its Communion Office, and it may be of some interest to our readers if we devote a few papers to a subject that has an interest to all Churchmen. We find something similar being pursued in the American Church, and the one movement may in some measure be taken to illustrate the other. The design has for some time been occupying attention in Scotland, and in the *Scottish Guardian* for August 23 there is a rather bulky "Supplement," containing a "Pastoral letter addressed by the Bishops to the Presbyters of the Scottish Church," and the "Second Draft of the Scottish Liturgy" as intended for authorisation in 1889. This public action by the Bishops is proof that the matter is to be gone into, and this is the usual time for the Diocesan Synods being held, where the question will be taken up. The mode of procedure in Scotland is worth some notice. There are three Ecclesiastical Courts, two for ordinary administration, and one for legislation. The Diocesan Synod, consisting of the Bishop and his clergy, is held annually, or

oftener, if need be. It usually considers only the needs of the diocese, but, as regards the matters to be legislated upon, it discusses them fully, and reports to the Episcopal Synod: it also elects clerical delegates for the General Synod. The Episcopal Synod is composed solely of the Bishops, and is held as often as required for the welfare of the Church, the Primus presides. The General Synod consists of two Chambers. The Upper Chamber consists of Bishops only, and its chairman is the Primus: the Lower Chamber consists of the Deans and the clerical delegates from the seven dioceses, and chooses its own Prolocutor who is chairman. In none of these assemblies is there any representation of the laity, and, except in *foro conscientia*, their resolutions have on this account no binding force on the laity. The Bishop of each diocese will naturally bring the question of revision before his Diocesan Synod, and this Second Draft will be discussed *seriatim* by the Synods. There are many points in this Draft that will cause a very keen discussion as they touch some of the points of Eucharistic doctrine, but, as they do little more than touch them, the milder counsels may prevail. When it seems good to the Episcopal Synod, fortified in their wisdom by the consensus of the clergy in their Synods, to summon together a General Synod for the purpose of legislation, the Diocesan Synods will be again convened, the questions at issue in the Office and Canons brought definitely forward for resolutions, and delegates will be chosen. These General Synods appear to be formidable undertakings, as the occasions when they meet are "few and far between." It is feared that the Bishops and clergy assembled there may suddenly be filled with a desire for change, and introduce unheard of innovations. But in this respect the Church is quite safe, as the Synod is usually composed of the oldest and slowest and safest of the clergy.—J. G.

DR. LIDDON ON THE PROPHECY OF MARY.

IN a sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral, Dr. Liddon considered at some length the third strophe of the *Magnificat*, commencing with the words "He hath shewed strength with His arm." He observed that at times of special joy or sorrow the human soul was often elevated out of the narrow sphere of its immediate surroundings and borne upwards on a wave of feeling, so that it was able to look out over larger fields of truth. It was under similar influence that Mary uttered the prophecies which they were considering. She passed from the narration of God's dealings with herself to consider the ways of His providence in the destiny of nations, and indeed the same principle pervaded the dealings of God with nations as with the soul, the difference lying in the scale of application. No principle was so widely confessed and so often forgotten as this providence of God. And yet it alone could explain much which took place around them. One of the uses of the historical books of the Old Testament was to make us view all history