

PREFATORY NOTE TO SECOND EDITION

When the several Presbyterian Churches in the Dominion were united in the year A.D. 1875, in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, a large Committee was appointed to deal with all matters necessary for the complete organization of the Church. In the following year a report was submitted to the General Assembly by this Committee regarding Ecclesiastical Procedure, and a special Committee was appointed to put the matter that had been prepared into complete form for presentation to the next Assembly. The Rev. George Bell, LL.D., was Convener of that Committee. After presenting interim reports for two years, the Committee in 1879 made its final report, which was adopted with instructions to the Committee "to avail themselves of the suggestions of Presbyteries, for the purpose of making the Book of Forms as complete as possible; and to publish the book, thus amended, as a useful guide to the office-bearers of the Church." Before the end of that year the book was published.

The first issue of the Book of Forms being exhausted, the General Assembly of 1883 appointed a Committee with instructions "to revise the book and so to modify the rules of procedure as to bring them into conformity with the legislation of the Church enacted since the approval of the book in 1879, and to remove other imperfections." This Committee presented its work and reported to the Assembly from year to year. In 1887 the book, as revised, was sent down to Presbyteries for their consideration, and additional changes were thereafter made in view of the criticisms and suggestions of Presbyteries. The final report was presented to the last General Assembly, and recommendations were adopted, viz. :

1. "That the Book of Forms, as now submitted to the Assembly, be approved and adopted as a useful guide for the members, the office-bearers and the Courts of the Church in the transaction of ecclesiastical business."