

rectory for Worship was substituted for "the Book of Common Order," at the Westminster Assembly, was "to meet the preferences of the English Puritan divines," which the Scotch Presbyterians were willing to do on all points not essential to the faith.

The Directory for Worship, adopted by our Church in 1788, and amended in 1789 and in 1886, while it disapproves "of *confining* ministers to set or fixed forms of prayer," says nothing against their voluntary use, or the preparation of an order of service which shall be helpful to the congregation in public worship. On the contrary, it protests against "mean, irregular and extravagant effusions" (Chap. I, 4); it speaks of prayer and praise as "the more important duties" not to be interfered with by unduly long sermons (Chap. VII, 4); and it gives such careful directions for the conduct of public services in an orderly manner, as naturally to suggest that a collection of good and proper forms would be helpful in the carrying out of these directions.

2. Coming now to the consideration of the present condition and needs of worship in our Presbyterian Churches, your Committee desired first of all to know the facts, and, second, to come into touch with the general feelings and wishes of the whole Church, as far as possible.

The opinion is prevalent that there has been a movement among Presbyterians in the direction of a more thoughtful and beautiful worship; and that this movement, beginning in the Sabbath-schools with various "exercises," and proceeding among the churches with "orders of service" and more or less elaborate forms, has become so widespread as to need recognition, wise guidance, and perhaps some measure of prudent restraint. This prevalent opinion your Committee shared. But we wished to know certainly whether the opinion was in harmony with the facts.

Therefore we sent out a letter of inquiry to the churches, including as many as the facilities at our disposal would enable us to reach without laying too heavy an expense upon the Assembly's fund, and covering as far as possible the different regions of our country. To this letter a great number of valuable replies have been received. By the diligence and skill of the Stated