

Simple Forms and Services is to be prepared, along certain lines, and submitted to the General Assembly for approval and disposition. On the first of these points we are ready to present a full Report. On the second point we have to present a partial Report.

I. The general consideration of the subject of methods and forms of public worship in the Presbyterian Church must include, first, an historical study, and second, a careful investigation of present conditions and needs.

1. Historically, we observe, what every intelligent Presbyterian knows, that the use of forms of service was practically universal among the early Calvinistic or Reformed Churches. In Switzerland, in Germany, in France, in Italy, in Holland, in Scotland, and in England service-books were prepared for the use of the various congregations by the leaders of the Reformation. In these books are found directions for the order and conduct of public worship and the administration of the Sacraments, and prayers expressing, in language drawn for the most part from the Holy Scriptures and the fathers of the primitive Church, the desires and petitions of an assembly of Christians holding the Reformed Faith. The Genevan Liturgy of John Calvin, the "Book of Common Order" of John Knox, the Calvinistic Liturgy of the Church of Strasburg, the Christian Ordinances of the Netherlands Congregations, the Liturgy of the Palatinate, the "Prayers on the Psalms," published in the Scottish Psalm-book of 1595, "Hermann's Consultation," compiled by Bucer and Melancthon—these and many other books of like character afford ample proof that the use of orderly forms and services, not only for the conduct of public worship, but also for the guidance of families in their daily prayers, is historically in harmony with Presbyterian principles. It was with such a form that Calvin celebrated his last communion; the reading of such a prayer cheered John Knox in his dying hour; and Admiral Coligny was engaged in repeating the beautiful liturgy of the Reformed Church in France when he was murdered on the morning of St. Bartholomew's Day.

In most of the Reformed Churches, holding the same faith and order with us, the use of these ancient service-books, modified to meet present needs, still continues. The chief reason why a Di-