

EXTEMPORE PRAYER

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This volume owes its existence to the conviction:

That in free-worshipping churches the weakest part of church service is generally public prayer.

That in many theological colleges the attention devoted to training men for the office of public prayer is inadequate.

That, as a result, the prayer-life of the church is affected; for the purpose of prayer, and its power in solving life's problems, are not well understood; and though the church is rich in the volume of its prayers, it is not so rich in the quality of its praying.

That, inasmuch as liturgical worship tends to formalism, public prayer—like preaching or pleading at the bar—should be the free expression of a suitably disciplined advocate.

That present-day tendencies conflicting with prayer, such as prevalent speculation, criticism, and freedom of thought, on the one hand, and a strong drift toward ritualism on the other, make it increasingly necessary to keep right in our vital communion with God.