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PREFACE.

SINCE the publication of the author's large work on Parliamentary Procedure some years ago, he has been in constant receipt of enquiries on various points of order that have arisen from time to time in municipal and other meetings, and has consequently seen the practical necessity that exists for a relatively short treatise that is directly adapted to the special wants of municipal councils, public meetings and conventions, religious conferences, shareholders' and directors' meetings, and societies in general. Such a treatise will necessarily supplement the large work just mentioned, which is exclusively devoted to parliamentary procedure and government, and to which reference can be made in those complicated and difficult cases which can alone be treated in such elaborate books. In the practice of many societies and public bodies in this country some confusion appears to exist with reference to the true meaning and object of "the previous question," and of such motions as "to lay on the table," "to postpone definitely," or "indefinitely," and "to reconsider," which are drawn from the procedure, not of our own legislative assemblies, but of assemblies in the United States. I have attempted in this treatise to give such explanations as will aid in preventing confusion or doubt in the application of these methods of procedure. In this way, the author hopes he will meet the wants of that large number of persons, who, in this country of popular institutions, are immediately interested in the methodical progress of business, and naturally wish to make themselves conversant, as easily as possible, with the principal rules and usages