

**POCKET EDITION OF THE
MANUAL OF PRACTICE AND
PROCEDURE IN THE UNITED
FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**

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Pocket Edition of the Manual of Practice and Procedure in the United Free Church of Scotland
by Various

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UNITED FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Published by Authority of the General Assembly

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PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

1916

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1916

P R E F A C E

THE Publications Committee of the General Assembly, in concert with the Assembly Arrangements Committee, has deemed it expedient to publish this edition of the *Manual of Practice and Procedure* in a cheaper and more handy form than the standard edition issued in 1905.

As the General Assembly has given no authority to revise the *Manual*, the chapters which constitute its main part are reprinted as they appear in the larger volume. The Appendix to this edition, however, contains all important Acts of Assembly passed since 1905, the knowledge of which may be considered necessary for the proper discharge of ordinary ecclesiastical business; and the Index has been revised and brought up to date.

It is hoped by both Committees that the wide circulation of this edition of the *Manual* may conduce to a more widespread knowledge of, and interest in, the work of the Church; that it may affect beneficially the conduct of the business which comes before her Courts; and, in the words of the Preface to the larger book, that it may 'serve also to exhibit the developed working of the Presbyterian System, which our forefathers established on the great fundamental principles laid down in the New Testament for the Church of Christ.'

March 1916.

NOTE

In the Preface to the larger edition the nature of the book is explained as follows:—

“The Churches which by their union in October 1800 formed the United Free Church of Scotland, had each a volume containing details of the procedure employed in conducting the business of the Church in its different courts. The “Practice of the Free Church of Scotland” was drawn up under the direction of a Committee of Assembly, who say that they had “endeavoured to indicate what appears to be the approved practice in each of the Courts.” The General Assembly in issuing the work “authorised it as a useful guide, but declared that they did not propose to decide authoritatively any controverted point” by means of it. On the other hand the volume of “Rules and Forms of Procedure of the United Presbyterian Church” was clothed with Synodical authority as a legislative declaration of the manner in which the business of the Church was to be carried on. During the negotiations which preceded the Union differences of practice in points of detail emerged, several of which were under the consideration of the Union Committee, and were settled for the United Church by the “Plan of Union.” But it was felt at once to be essential to the smooth and harmonious working of the new organisation that the same sort of guidance which had been furnished for the separate Churches by

the volumes referred to should be provided for the United Church by a similar publication. A Committee was accordingly appointed by the Assembly of 1901 "for revising Rules and Forms of Procedure." The circumstances, of course, demanded that this instruction should be taken in its widest sense as embracing not merely a revision of one or other of the previously existing publications, but also the revision of the rules themselves, in so far at least as the practice of the two Churches had differed.

'The result of the Committee's work, which has been submitted before final approval to the Presbyteries of the Church, is contained in the succeeding chapters.'

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CHAPTER I

THE KIRK SESSION

SECTION I. CONSTITUTION AND OFFICIALS

1. The Kirk Session of a congregation (hereinafter designated 'the Session') consists of its minister or ministers and ruling elders.

2. The ruling elders are elected by the members of the congregation who are in full communion, and they are ordained and admitted by the Session: the minister is ordained and inducted by the Presbytery, and he is directly accountable to it for the discharge of all the duties of his office. Admission to Office.

3. The elders are elected for life, and hold office till they cease to be members of the congregation, or their resignation is accepted, or they are deposed or otherwise removed from office. If an elder has absented himself from the meetings of the Session for a year without due cause, the Session may, after giving him notice for his interest, find that he has ceased to be one of its members. Elders are, as all other members of the congregation, under the jurisdiction of the Session. Tenure of Office.

4. It belongs to the Session to determine the number of elders required by the circumstances of the congregation, and when it is expedient to call upon the congregation to elect additional elders. (See Sect. IV., page 14.) Number of Elders.

5. The minister is the moderator of the Session. At the first meeting of Session after the date of his admission to office by the Presbytery a certified intimation of his admission Moderator.