

The Making of the  
**Westminster  
Confession**

by B. B. Warfield



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# Confession, and Especially of Its Chapter on the Decree of God

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## Table of Contents

[Preface](#)

[How the Confession Was Made](#)

[The Framing of a New Confession of Faith](#)

[The Work of Preparing Proof-Texts for the Confession](#)

[Tabular Statement of Each Chapter](#)

[Chief References Made in Baillie's "Letters](#)

[The Formulation of the Third Chapter](#)

## Preface

It is the purpose of this article to give as clear a view as possible of the process by which the Westminster Confession was made. In prosecuting this purpose two tasks present themselves. One concerns the modes of procedure of the Assembly in framing the Confession; the other the course of the debates by which it was beaten out. We shall attempt to give some account of both matters. The latter offers so wide a field, however, that we shall be constrained to deal with it by sample - and, for reasons which will readily suggest themselves at the present juncture, we shall select the third chapter of the Confession as the sample to be dealt with. We shall therefore try first to trace the formal procedure of the Assembly in framing the whole Confession, and to obtain some adequate conception of the labor and time that was expended on it; and then, taking up the third chapter, we shall essay to reconstruct as fully as may be a picture of the actual work of the Assembly in producing it.<sup>2</sup>

## I. HOW THE CONFESSION WAS MADE

The amount of time consumed directly on the preparation of the Confession of Faith was certainly very great. But even this does not completely represent the pains expended on this task. To estimate that fairly, there should also be taken into account the time and care given formally to other subjects, which yet necessarily conduced indirectly to the perfecting of the final statement of doctrine. Nearly all the labors of the body, from its coming together on July 1, 1643 till the completion of the Shorter Catechism on April 12, 1648, may without exaggeration be said to have had a doctrinal side; and much time was spent in direct doctrinal discussion. None of this discussion that was precedent to or contemporary with the formulation of the propositions incorporated into the Confession was lost labor with respect to it. There were in particular three or four of the tasks of the Assembly, however, which bore so immediately on its preparation for framing the Confession that they deserve especial mention in this connection.

Among these the first in time to occupy its attention was the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles to which it was set on first coming together.<sup>3</sup> This was the main work of the Assembly from the 8th of July to the 12th of October, 1643, and it necessarily led to a somewhat thorough review, at the very outset of its labors, of the doctrines of God and the Trinity, the Person and Work of Christ, the Scriptures and Rule of Faith, Original Sin and the Freedom of the Will, Justification and Sanctification - the main topics on which the first sixteen Articles touch. Lightfoot's "Journal" contains very little record of the debates that were held in the course of this revision,<sup>4</sup> and we should perhaps be in danger of underestimating their reach and thoroughness, had not some fuller intimation of them been preserved in the manuscript Minutes and some specimens of their nature in the published speeches of Dr. Featley. It is evident that very careful and thoroughgoing work was done, of which the text of the revised Articles themselves gives but meager suggestion. All this told afterward on the formulation of these same topics in the Confession of Faith. "The keen and lengthened debates," remarks Dr. Mitchell, "which occurred in the discussions on these Articles could not fail to prepare the way for a more summary mode of procedure in connection with the

Confession of Faith. The proceedings then were more summary, or at least more summarily recorded, just because the previous discussions on the more important doctrines of the Protestant system, and especially on that of Justification by Faith, had been thorough and exhaustive, and pretty fully recorded."<sup>5</sup> There does not even lack evidence that in framing the very language of the Confession, regard was had to the *minutiæ* of the work done on this former occasion. Now and again little points of phraseology, for example, are taken over into the Confessional statements from the revised Articles,<sup>6</sup> such as serve to show that the Divines kept their former labors fully in mind in the prosecution of their later, and were perfecting their work in full view of all that had previously been done.<sup>7</sup>

Of far less importance, but perhaps worth mentioning in this connection, was the work done by the Assembly in the spring of 1645, in defining for the House of Commons "the particulars of that ignorance and scandal for which persons should be excluded from the sacrament."<sup>8</sup> At this time, also, though in a more summary manner, the Assembly had occasion, prior to its entrance on the actual preparation of the Confession, to review in a systematic exhibit all the chief topics of a dogmatic system.<sup>9</sup>

Many topics which touched on the subjects treated in parallel portions of the Confession were also debated in the preparation of the Form of Government; and, we may be sure, this was not without consciousness on the part of the debaters that their investigations would bear double fruit. We meet, for example, on May 6, 1645, before any part of the Confession had come before the Assembly, a note like this: "Debate whether to bring this under the head of government or a Confession of Faith." And accordingly the proposition thus debated was in substance actually incorporated into the subsequently framed Confession.<sup>10</sup> Similarly the long debates on the *jus divinum* cannot fail to have borne fruit both for the Government and for such chapters of the Confession as that on "The Church and Church Censures," then in process of framing.

Finally the labors of the Assembly in preparing its Catechism, so far as they were carried on before the Confession left its hands, were of

course of use to it in preparing the Confession also. In some sense, these labors began indeed as early as December, 1643: but the matter incorporated into the Catechism does not seem to have come before the Assembly itself earlier than September 14, 1646, from which date until January 4, 1647, the substance of the original Catechism was reported as far as that project was prosecuted by the Assembly.<sup>11</sup> During this period the Assembly was in the process of its review of the text of the Confession, and had reached a portion of it for which the debates upon the Catechism could afford little or no aid.<sup>12</sup> The scrutiny of the substance of doctrine for the Catechism therefore could serve as a help in the formulation of the Confession only in so far as the members of the Committee at work on the Catechism were moulding their opinions by it. In the general Assembly the influence was the other way about. In fact, Baillie tells us that on the reporting of the first matter for the Catechism, the Assembly fell on such "rubbes and long debates" that it was purposely "laid aside till the Confession was ended, with resolution to have no matter in it but what was expressed in the Confession, which should not be debated over againe in the Catechise."<sup>13</sup> The subject is nevertheless worth mentioning here as indicating afresh how repeatedly the Divines were, in committee or in full house, led to go over the whole series of doctrinal statements either prior to or parallel with their work in formulating the Confession: all of which repeated reviews of the matter to be placed in the Confession of course were of use in its formulation for that purpose.

If there ever was a document, therefore, whose contents might be expected to exhibit that genius, the essence of which consists, we are told, in *taking pains*, it assuredly is the Westminster Confession of Faith. And when we read its exquisitely balanced phrases, and are moved with admiration for the perfection of the guarding which it gives to its doctrinal propositions on this side and that, we are reaping the benefit of these repeated reviews which the Assembly was forced to give the whole matter, perhaps even more than of the minute scrutiny it lavished on the formulation of it on the final occasion of its actual incorporation into the Confession. And when, after this, and in the light of all the experience gained by such repeated reviews of the material, first the Larger Catechism and then the Shorter Catechism were elaborated, it is not at all strange that a precision of definition was attained which has called forth

such praises as these documents, and especially the Shorter Catechism, have received from the most varied quarters.

The framing of a new Confession of Faith was a portion of the task that devolved on the Westminster Assembly through the provisions of the Solemn League and Covenant, by which an engagement was entered into for bringing "the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of Church government, directory for worship and catechising."<sup>14</sup> The prosecution of the work of uniting the two Churches in a common Confession of course involved the substitution of a new Confession, agreed upon by both Churches, for those previously in use, whether in Scotland or in England; it accordingly rendered the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles, on which the Assembly had been engaged during the first months of its labors, no longer *ad rem*. No doubt the persistency of the Commons in securing the insertion into the "Ordinance" calling the Assembly of a clause setting forth as one of the objects in view the procuring of a "nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland,"<sup>15</sup> although more particularly referring to the point of "Government," affected in some degree the whole work of the Assembly and bore fruit even in its revision of the Thirty-nine Articles. But the particular instructions given regarding the revision of these Articles limited the Assembly to "vindicating and clearing" them "from all false calumnies and aspersions," and the Assembly itself looked upon this work accordingly as "relating only to the Church of England."<sup>16</sup> When now, on the 25th of September, 1643, the Solemn League and Covenant was taken, the whole situation was changed. Parliament was now committed to that policy of uniformity in religion for the whole country for which the Scots had been unwearingly pressing ever since their Peace Commissioners had gone up to London early in 1641, and the Assembly considered its work on the Articles as entirely set aside by the subsequent order, as it itself expresses it, "to employ us in framing a Confession of Faith for the three kingdoms, according to our Solemn League and Covenant."<sup>17</sup> It was only with great reluctance and with protestations of their insufficiency that it placed in the hands of the Parliament, when subsequently required to do so, the Articles so far as they had been revised by it.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, the severer task of forming a new Confession of Faith for the whole kingdom was not at once entered upon. A still more severe and, in the judgment of all alike, a still more pressing task required attention first - the framing of a unifying "Government" for the Churches of the whole kingdom. This great labor was begun on October 12, 1643, and consumed the energies and time of the Assembly for many months. The first motion toward undertaking the new Confession was made apparently on Tuesday morning, August 20, 1644. Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, lately arrived from Scotland, appeared in the Assembly on August 14, bringing letters from the General Assembly; and in presenting them he emphasized "the general desire of all the nation of Scotland for the hastening of the work in hand" - that is, the work of completing the uniformity in all its parts in accordance with the Solemn League and Covenant. In his response Dr. Burgess added his voice to Warriston's: and "Mr. Henderson also spake to the same purpose, of forwarding and hastening our work. Whereupon it was ordered, that the grand committee should meet to-morrow."<sup>19</sup> The report from the Grand Committee came in on August 20, and contained five resolutions designed for expediting the work. The second of these proposed "a committee to join with the commissioners of Scotland, to draw up a confession of faith." No order, however, was as yet come from Parliament "to enable us to such a thing,"<sup>20</sup> and the proposition, therefore, caused some debate; but it was at last determined upon, and a committee of nine, consisting of Drs. Temple, Gouge and Hoyle, Messrs. Gataker, Arrowsmith, Burroughs, Burgess, Vines and Goodwin, was appointed to take the work in hand.<sup>21</sup> Two weeks later, Lightfoot tells us further, "Dr. Temple, chairman of the committee for the drawing up of a confession of faith, desired, that that committee might be augmented."<sup>22</sup> This also was done, and there were added the names of Dr. Smith and Messrs. Palmer, Newcomen, Herle, Reynolds, Wilson, Tuckney, Young, Ley, and Sedgewick. Baillie congratulates himself that thus the preparation of the Confession had been "put in severall the best hands that are here," and that "the heads of it being distribute among many able hands, it may in a short time be so drawn up, as the debates of it may cost little time."<sup>23</sup>

It was not until the next summer, nevertheless, that any portion of the Confession came before the Assembly.<sup>24</sup> In the spring it seems to



have been taken up in earnest, but progress was still slow.<sup>25</sup> Baillie informs us under date of April 25, 1645, that some reports had already been made to the Assembly.<sup>26</sup> We hear of it in the Minutes for the first time, however, on Monday, April 21,<sup>27</sup> and then after a fashion that hints of pressure brought on the Assembly for completing the work. The Scotch Commissioners, returning on April 9 from their visit to the Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland,<sup>28</sup> had had presented by the Grand Committee to the Houses of Parliament and the Assembly of Divines alike a paper setting out the satisfaction of their Kirk with the parts of the Uniformity already prepared, and urging that "it is with no less zeal and earnestness desired and expected by that whole Kirk and kingdom, that the remanent parts of Uniformity be expedited."<sup>29</sup> Stress was especially laid in this paper on the completion of the Form of Government; but when the paper came before the Commons (on April 14) it found that body engaged on matters of doctrine,<sup>30</sup> and its immediate fruit was accordingly an action to hasten on the preparation of the "Confession of Faith." A paper had been sent up from the Divines to both Houses on March 6 looking to the "preserving the sacraments pure," and both Houses had taken up the matter at once. The debate in the Commons from March 25 took the form of determining the particulars of ignorance and scandal which should exclude from the Lord's Supper. Several communications were passed between the House, sitting in committee, and the Divines by means of which it was determined what should be defined as "a competent measure of understanding" - "concerning God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," "concerning the state of man by the creation, and by his fall," "the redemption of Jesus Christ, etc.," "the ways and means to apply Christ, etc.," "the nature and necessity of faith, etc.," "repentance, etc.," "the nature and use of the Sacraments, etc.," "the condition of man after this life, etc."<sup>31</sup> The report of the Grand Committee embodying these findings was made to the Commons on the 17th of April, and on the same day a Committee was appointed to draft an ordinance in the terms of the findings.<sup>32</sup> Simultaneously the House voted to desire the Assembly with all convenient speed to resolve upon a Confession of Faith for the Church of England and present it to the House.<sup>33</sup> In this we may doubtless see the combined effects of the pressure brought to bear on the House by the letter from Scotland and its own sense of need arising from its labors in

defining censurable ignorance. There are entries in the Minutes of the Assembly for April 18 which may be taken as indicating the reception of this order by that body.<sup>34</sup> In this case it would seem that Messrs. Seaman, Tuckney, Burroughs, Young, Whitaker, Rayner, Vines, and Delamarch were appointed "to consider of this order," and were instructed to meet that afternoon and report at the next meeting. In any event the order was already in process of being obeyed at this next meeting, Monday, April 21. Apparently the Committee appointed on April 18 then reported that the best way to meet the immediate needs of Parliament would be to place in its hands a revised edition of the Thirty-nine Articles, to serve until a Confession of Faith could be prepared. Accordingly it was ordered that the Committee in whose charge the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles had formerly been, or perhaps the new Committee of April 18,<sup>35</sup> should "consider how far they or any of them may be useful to be recommended to both Houses of Parliament for the present, till a Confession of Faith can be drawn up by this Assembly"; and further, that "the Committee for Confession of Faith do meet on Wednesday, in the afternoon."

Nothing further appears until Friday, May 9,<sup>36</sup> when, a new order having meanwhile been received from Parliament for dispatch,<sup>37</sup> it was ordered "that the Assembly consider on Monday morning the best way to expedite the Confession of Faith, . . . and that the two Committees for the Confession of Faith be put into one." What two Committees were here united we have no means of ascertaining. We have heard hitherto of only one Committee to which the "preparing matter" for a Confession of Faith was committed (August 20, 1644), and which was subsequently (September 4) augmented; and even on April 21, as we have just seen, "the Committee for Confession of Faith" is spoken of quite simply as if there were but one, and between that entry and the present one there is no allusion in the Minutes to the matter.<sup>38</sup> But Baillie, though in the previous autumn speaking of "a Committee" to which the Confession of Faith had been referred, under date of April 25, says, "The Catechise and Confession of Faith are put in the hands of severall committees."<sup>39</sup> It is probably easiest to suppose that in the meanwhile another Committee, additional to that of August 20-September 4, 1644, had been appointed.<sup>40</sup> At all events, in accordance with the provision of May 9, the Assembly on Monday, May 12, proceeded to make further arrangements for

"expediting the Confession of Faith." The report in the Minutes of what was done is somewhat obscure. But it appears that besides reading and debating "the report of the Confession of Faith," there was an additional "debate about the Committee for drawing up the Confession"; and it was determined that "the first draught of the Confession of Faith shall be drawn up by a Committee of a few"; which Committee was then constituted - apparently of the following members: Drs. Temple and Hoyle, Messrs. Gataker, Harris, Burgess, Reynolds and Herle. This Committee is then instructed to meet that same afternoon; and the Scotch Commissioners "are desired to be assisting to this Committee." The question arises whether this Committee was additional to the former Committee or Committees (of August 20, September 4, 1644, and May 9, 1645), or was a substitute for it or them. Dr. Mitchell supposes the former, and looks upon this new Committee as erected in order to receive the material collected by the already existing Committee, or Committees, and to digest it into more formal shape before it was finally submitted to the Assembly.<sup>41</sup> There are certain serious difficulties, however, in the way of this supposition. And these are greatly increased by a subsequent act of the Assembly's. On Friday, July 11, 1645, it was ordered - "Monday morning to divide the body of the Confession of Faith to the three Committees." Accordingly on the next Monday - July 14 - we hear of a "debate about dividing of heads of confession": but the matter was not concluded on that day. On the following Wednesday - July 16, 1645 - we read of a "report made from the Committee of the heads of Confession," and it was ordered: "The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon these heads: God and the Holy Trinity; God's decrees, Predestination, Election, etc.; the works of Creation and Providence; Man's Fall"; "The Second Committee: Sin, and the punishment thereof; Free will; the Covenant of Grace; Christ our Mediator"; "The Third Committee: Effectual Vocation; Justification; Adoption; Sanctification"; "Those three Committees to meet to-morrow in the afternoon"; "If they think fit to leave out any of those heads, or add any other, they are to make report to the Assembly." Dr. Mitchell supposes with obvious justice that the three large Committees into which the Assembly was permanently divided for the preparing of its business<sup>42</sup> are referred to in these orders; and that "the material prepared by the previous small committee" was "handed over to these larger committees, and

further discussed and elaborated by them before being brought into the Assembly." This seems altogether reasonable in itself, and is fully borne out by the subsequent proceedings. But certainly, under this supposition, it becomes very unlikely that the earlier Committee or Committees (of August 20, September 4, 1644, and May 9, 1645) still continued in existence - if for no other reason than the complicated process which would in that case be involved in getting the several parts of the Confession before the Assembly. First the Committee of August 20-September 4, 1644, would collect the material; then the Committee of May 12, 1645, with the aid of the Scotch Commissioners, would digest it; then the large Committee required thereto on July 16, would further digest it; and only then would it reach the Assembly. Surely this complication of process throws something in the scale to justify us in looking on the Committee of May 12 as a substitute for that of August 20-September 4, rather than additional to it.<sup>43</sup> In that case we must suppose that the Assembly had sought at first to get along with only one Committee, which should prepare the matter of the Confession for its discussion; that that first appointed (August 20, 1644), augmented on September 4, 1644, and again perhaps on May 9, 1645, had proved too large and unwieldy for rapid work, and was superseded by a smaller one, May 12, 1645 - the members of which were, however (with one exception, viz., Mr. Harris), taken from the earlier Committees. Subsequently, for the better digesting of the material, it was ordered (July 11 and 16, 1645) that the reports of the Committee should in the first instance be submitted to one or the other of the three great Committees into which the Assembly was divided for the preparation of its business, and be by them actually brought before the whole body.

There are, to be sure, not lacking some difficulties in the way of the supposition of even this very natural and workable arrangement. Among them the chief are that in the action of May 9 we read (as we have seen) of its being ordered, "that the two Committees for the Confession of Faith be put into one"; and in the action of July 4 we read of "the sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith," as if there were still divisions in the Committee; and again on July 18 we read of a "report concerning God, by Dr. Temple" being put in - although Dr. Temple was not a member of the First great Committee to which this topic was assigned, but of the Third

great Committee, while, on the other hand, he was a member of the Committee of May 12, and as representing it had "made report of that part of the Confession of Faith touching the Scriptures" on July 7 - i.e., before the distribution of the heads to the three great Committees had been made. These difficulties do not, however, seem to be insuperable. We have already offered a suggestion in explanation of the mention of two Committees on May 9. The term "Sub-Committee" in the action of July 4 need not be pressed: it may be, and probably is, only a designation of the Committee of May 12, called Sub-Committee possibly because of its small size in comparison with the three great Committees; or it may be thought not impossible that the work on the topics of God and the Scriptures may actually have been done by a Sub-Committee of that Committee. It seems further, on closer examination, that Dr. Temple made the report of July 18 on "God," as well as that of July 7 on "The Scriptures," in consequence of the order of July 4 "that the *sub-Committee* for the Confession of Faith shall make report to the Assembly on Monday morning of what is in their hands *concerning God and concerning the Scriptures*" - so that these two topics were accounted as in that manner already before the Assembly, though in the interval between this and July 18, when the "report concerning God, by Dr. Temple," was - not made, but - "read and debated," provision had been made for another course to be subsequently pursued. It is not an insuperable objection to this solution of the difficulty that in the distribution of the heads of the Confession to the three Committees on July 16, the head on "Scripture" is not assigned to the first Committee - doubtless as already fully before the house - while the head on "God and the Holy Trinity" is so assigned, as if it were not yet - at least in full - before the house. There are so many things we do not know about the precise course of action that a plausible supposition such as we have suggested may be allowed to be probable, even though we cannot explain all the details. And it is to be observed that when the report on this topic came from the first Committee on July 23, it was not of "God and the Holy Trinity," but "of the article of the Trinity." It may be taken as likely then that the original Committee of May 12 reported as required on the two topics, "The Scriptures" and "God," and that the first report from the great Committee was on " the Trinity " only.

This construction receives further support from other circumstances. We hear nothing of "Committees," but only of a, "Committee" on the Confession between the dates May 9, when the "two Committees" were "put into one," and July 16, when the three great Committees were charged with the Confession, while afterwards this is no longer so - as e.g. on August 20 we read of "the Committees for the Confession of Faith." We hear no more of reports from Dr. Temple on the Confession after those on the "Scriptures" of July 7 and on "God" of July 18. At the very next session - July 23 - we read rather: "Report made from the Committee of the article of the Trinity," and afterwards, on August 29: "Report from the first Committee concerning God's decrees"; "Report made by the second Committee of Christ the Mediator"; "Debate on the report of the first Committee of God's decree"; on September 3, "Report from the first Committee about adding the word 'absolutely'"; "Debate about the 2d Committee's report of Christ the Mediator," and so on.<sup>44</sup> This mode of reference varied only to such forms as the following. On September 8, "Dr. Gouge offered a report of an addition, though the Committee was not a full number, but 7" - Dr. Gouge being a member of the First Committee, and possibly at this time its chairman.<sup>45</sup> On September 9, "Dr. Stanton made report additional of Christ the Mediator.<sup>46</sup> Mr. Prophet made report of Effectual Calling"<sup>47</sup> - Dr. Stanton having been from the first chairman of the Second Committee and Mr. Prophet being a member of the Third, the several Committees to which these topics had been assigned on July 16. A note in the proceedings for November 18 (sess. 537) gives the whole state of the case very clearly: "Dr. Gouge [made] report from First Committee of Creation. Mr. Whitakers from the Second Committee, of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and the Punishment thereof. The Third Committee made no report." In the presence of such clear declarations, supported by a number of incidental references accordant with them (such as have been set down in the footnotes), we need not hesitate to say that the several heads of the Confession were obviously reported directly to the Assembly by the three great Committees, even though there remain a few instances where a reference occurs not easily explicable.

The most striking of these are those instances in which we read of a topic of the Confession being reported by a member who does not seem to

have been a member of the great Committee to which this topic was assigned. On one occasion, for example, Dr. Gouge is spoken of as reporting on a topic not belonging to the First, but to the Second Committee: December 15, 1645, "Dr. Gouge made report about Free-will." Dr. Gouge may have been acting here, however, as representing not the original Committee which reported this subject to the Assembly, but a special Committee to which it or some part of it had been recommitted. Color is lent to this suggestion by three facts. First, the recommitment of special points to special Committees was not uncommon with the Assembly; instances may be noted on pp. 183, 184, 187, 208, 217, 218, 219 of the "Minutes." Secondly, the note here is made in immediate conjunction with a case of recommitment. The Minutes proceed: "Mr. Arrowsmith made report of that committed concerning the Sacraments." The Sacraments constituted a topic belonging to the Second Committee, indeed, of which Mr. Arrowsmith was a member, and so this case may be only partially parallel. More clearly similar is the instance of November 7, when we read: "Report made by Mr. Reynolds about Reprobation" - evidently in pursuance of the order of November 6: "The paragraph concerning Reprobation referred to the Committee, to make report tomorrow morning." Mr. Reynolds was not, however, a member of the First Committee to which this topic belonged, but of the Second:<sup>48</sup> and thus this would seem to be a case of reference to a special Committee. The matter is plainer still in another instance. We read in the Minutes for March 10, 1646: "Mr. Seaman made report of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience" - a topic belonging to the First Committee while Mr. Seaman was a member of the Second. The original report on Christian Liberty, however, was made on January 29, and not by Mr. Seaman but by Mr. Coleman - a member of the First Committee. The subject was debated on that day, and again on February 10, 12, 16, when it was resolved: "That this whole head of Christian Liberty shall be recommitted"; and further, "This shall be recommitted to a select Committee" - whose members are then named with Mr. Seaman at their head (p. 187). It is, of course, from this Committee that Mr. Seaman reported on March 10. It should, however, be borne in mind that we cannot implicitly trust the lists of names given in the schedule which Dr. Mitchell prints of the members of the three great Committees at the date nearest to the time when the Assembly was busied with the Confession.

For example, we read in the Minutes of January 29, 1646: "Mr. Dury made report from the Second Committee of Church Offices and Censures." But the name of Mr. Dury does not occur on the roll of the members of the Second Committee, nor indeed on any of the three rolls. A similar instance is found in this same note of January 29: "Mr. Newcomen, Mr. Dury, Mr. Delmy, Dr. Temple, Dr. Gouge, added to the Committee for report about the Law; to report to-morrow morning." The reference is not to the original Third Committee, which had reported the chapter on the Law at least as early as January 7, but to a special Committee appointed January 12 to consider the propositions under debate concerning the meaning of the terms "ceremonial" and "judicial." Of the names given in this additional list, two - Messrs. Dury and Delmy - have no place in Dr. Mitchell's lists of the three Committees. Thirdly, it may be added that it does not appear likely that Dr. Gouge's report on December 15, 1645, represents the first report to the Assembly on the topic of Free Will. A month before (on November 18) it had been represented to the Assembly that the Second Committee had finished all the heads of the Confession that had been committed to it; and this representation was made the occasion of a new distribution of heads to the three Committees. In the interval, before December 15, topics from this second distribution had been reported from the Second Committee (e.g., December 1, on the Lord's Supper; December 5, "Of the Sacraments in general"). It does not seem likely that these would be reported before report had been made of material lying ready for report before these topics were undertaken.

In the light of the facts, therefore, it seems certain that the several heads of the Confession were reported immediately from the three great Committees to the Assembly, and that therefore there was no Committee for further digesting their material intermediating between them and the Assembly. It is not safe to differ on such a matter from Dr. Mitchell, but, on the whole, it appears to us likely also that the small Committee appointed on the 12th May, 1645, was substituted for the earlier Committee or Committees (of August 20-September 4, 1644, and perhaps again in the ensuing winter), and that the mode of procedure was that the small Committee of May 12, 1645 - consisting of seven, a quorum of which was five - first drew up the heads of the Confession with the aid of



the Commissioners of the Church of Scotland: and that these were then distributed by the Assembly among the three great Committees for thorough digesting: whence they came back finally to the Assembly for discussion and ordering.

The first two of these "heads" had, to be sure, according to our supposition, already been reported to the Assembly by the small Committee, before it had been determined to distribute the heads between the three great Committees. In the Minutes of the session for Friday, July 4, 1645, we read: "Debate about the Confession of Faith. That the sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith shall make report to the Assembly on Monday morning of what is in their hands concerning God and concerning the Scriptures." Accordingly on Monday, July 7, we read: "Dr. Temple made report of that part of the Confession of Faith touching the Scriptures. It was read, debated." We hear no more of the report on the head "God," to be sure, until July 18 - before which date the distribution to the great Committees had been made. But what we read there is not that Dr. Temple made report on this topic, but: "Report concerning God, by Dr. Temple, read and debated"; while subsequently we read (July 23): "Report made from the Committee of the article of the Trinity." Whatever may be the right explanation of these phrases, the reports of the subsequent heads of the Confession were not made by Dr. Temple, but as we have seen from the First, Second, or Third Committee, or some one of their representatives. This series begins, if not on July 23, at least on August 29, with a notice of a report from the First Committee on God's decrees and from the Second Committee on Christ the Mediator. Thereafter the heads were reported one by one from the several Committees to which their digesting had been from time to time committed.<sup>49</sup>

The consideration given in the Assembly itself to the several heads was very careful and the scrutiny of every clause and word searching. Recommitments, ordinarily at least to special Committees, were frequent: final dissent on the part of individuals was sometimes entered. In a word, time, pains, and scrupulous care were not spared for perfecting the instrument. Thus the work went slowly on, until near the middle of 1646, at which time, though the work was not yet completed, the attention of

the Assembly was withdrawn by the Parliament to other matters. During the course of these long-continued and searching debates, it was inevitable that many alterations should be entered in the drafts of the several heads as they were first laid before the Assembly. It was felt by the Assembly from the first that provision should be made to have the text and alterations properly adjusted. As early as July 8, 1645, therefore, we find this order: "That Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Herle, Mr. Newcomen be desired to take care of the wording of the Confession of Faith, as it is voted in the Assembly from time to time, and to report to the Assembly when they think fit there should be any alteration in the words. They are first to consult with the Commissioners from the Church of Scotland, or one of them, before they report to the Assembly." Of this Committee we hear nothing more: it doubtless did the work committed to it and saw to it that the amendments made were fitted properly into their places and that all went smoothly. As the work advanced, another Committee of similar but apparently somewhat enlarged powers was appointed. This was done on December 8, 1645: "*Ordered* - Mr. Tuckney, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Newcomen, Mr. Whitakers, a Committee to review the Confession of Faith as it is finished in the Assembly." Apparently it was not contemplated that reports should be made from this Committee in the meantime; but rather that it should quietly prepare matter for the further consideration of the Assembly in a final review of its work. At all events, after the stress of interruption was over and the Confession was completed (at least substantially), we find this Committee reporting (June 17, 1646). The note runs: "Report was made from the Committee about 'the perfecting of the Confession of Faith'" - and at once it is "*Ordered* - That Mr. Arrowsmith be added to the Committee for [perfecting] the Confession of Faith.<sup>50</sup> Upon a debate about the 'reading of the Report again,' it was *Resolved* upon the Q., 'Not to be read again entire, but in parts.' It was debated, and the Assembly began with the Scriptures; and part of that head was ordered." From this it would seem that the report of the Committee on "the perfecting of the Confession of Faith" consisted of the presentation of a perfected copy; that this was read first entire; and then ordered to be again read in parts. On June 19, 1646, it is further ordered, "That the Committee for wording and methodizing of the Confession of Faith shall have liberty, as they see things imperfect, to complete them; and to make report unto the

Assembly."

Under the guidance of this Committee the Assembly thus went again over the whole Confession. This work was not done perfunctorily.<sup>51</sup> It was begun on June 17, 1646: immediately after determining, as has been already mentioned, to review the Confession in parts, it is noted: "The Assembly began with the Scriptures; and part of that head was ordered. *Ordered* - To proceed in the debate where we left." Accordingly in the Minutes of the next day (June 18) we read: "The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the Confession of Faith concerning 'the Scriptures'; and upon debate the whole head concerning the Scriptures was ordered ; and it is as followeth. . . . The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the Article concerning 'God and the Holy Trinity'; and upon debate that head also was ordered; and it is as followeth. . . . The Assembly proceeded in debate of the Article 'Of God's Eternal Decree'; and upon debate part of it was ordered. Upon debate about the last clause of it, concerning the handling of this doctrine, it was *Resolved* upon the Q., To refer this till to-morrow morning." The next day accordingly: "The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the Confession of Faith; and upon debate, that head 'of God's Eternal Decree' was ordered and is as followeth. . . ." Similarly chapters iv. and v. were passed on the same day; part of chapter vi. on June 22, and the remainder of chapter vi., and chapters vii. and viii. on June 25. Chapter ix., "of Free Will," gave apparently more trouble. We read in the Minutes of June 29: "Report was made by Mr. Tuckney 'of Free Will.' It was read, and also some additional to the Article 'of the Fall of Man.' The additional were debated, and ordered to be added. The Assembly debated the Report 'of Free Will'; and upon debate about the first branch of it concerning 'the natural liberty in the Will,' it was *Resolved* upon the Q., To be recommitted." In the Minutes of the next day (June 30) accordingly we read: "Report was made from the Committee of the proposition concerning Free Will recommitted. It was read and debated, and the whole Article assented to. It is as followeth. . . ." On the same day chapter x. was passed upon. After this, work on the Confession was intermitted for nearly a month, and was not resumed until a message was received from Parliament desiring the early completion of the Confession (July 22).<sup>52</sup> On July 23 chapters xi. and xii. were passed: and on the next day, July 24, the interrupted work of framing the first draft of the

Confession was also resumed, the Second Committee bringing in its reports on chapters xviii. and xxxii. The time of the Assembly was thereafter largely absorbed in framing the remainder of the first draft: and it is not until September 14 that we meet with the next note bearing on the review: on that date chapter xvii. was passed upon in its perfected form, and on September 15 chapter xviii., while on this latter date also: "Report was made from the Committee for perfecting the Confession of Faith 'of the Law.' It was read and debated, and upon debate much of it was assented to, the rest referred to the Committee." On September 16, chapters xiii. and xiv. were passed upon; on the 17th the rest of chapter xix.; on September 18, chapter xv. On September 21, chapter xvi. was passed; an addition was proposed to it on the 22d by Mr. Prophet, concerning which the Assembly - "*Resolved* upon the Q., Not to take this paper now read into debate"; nevertheless on September 23 its consideration was pressed on the attention of the Assembly again, whereupon it was "*Resolved* upon the Q., This proposition shall not be added." On the same day chapter xiii., on Sanctification, was taken up renewedly and certain alterations proposed by a Committee appointed for the purpose were entered into it. The same afternoon Mr. Whitaker sought to secure a similar review of a clause in chapter iii., but unsuccessfully.

Thus the framing of the first draft of the latter portion of the Confession and the perfecting of that portion of it already drawn up went on side by side. The House of Commons was meanwhile still pressing for its completion and in response to an order received September 18,<sup>53</sup> chapters xv.-xix. were completed and passed upon September 25, and the first nineteen chapters sent up to Parliament. Chapters xx. and xxi. were passed October 30; chapter xxii. November 6; chapter xxiii. November 9; xxvii. and xxviii. November 10; xxix. November 16; xxv. November 17; xxvi. November 20; xxx. xxxi. xxxii. and xxxiii. November 26. On November 26, 1646, the following note was spread on the Minutes: "The Confession of Faith was finished this day, and by order of the Assembly the Prolocutor gave thanks, in the name of the Assembly, to the Committee that had taken so good [or "great"] pains in the perfecting of the Confession of Faith."

Even this exhibition of the work done in bringing the Confession to its present form is not, however, a complete account of the pains expended on it. On September 18, 1646, there seems to have been made an unsuccessful effort to establish yet another Committee for the reviewing of the whole Confession, after this second passage of it through the Assembly. We read: "Upon a motion to appoint a Committee to consider of the Confession of Faith, what errors are not obviated in it, and to that end that there be a review of the Articles of England and Ireland, it was *Resolved* upon the Q., There shall be no Committee to consider of the reviewing of the Articles what errors are not obviated in them." The meaning of this is perhaps elucidated by the form in which it stands in the other draft of the Minutes, lapping here with the printed copy and called Fascicle iii. by the editors: "A new Committee to consider of all the errors unobviated in several Confessions of England, Ireland and Scotland, to give in the catalogue of these errors to the Committee for the wording. *R.* - No Committee to consider of the reviewing Articles what errors are not obviated in them." That is to say, apparently, what was proposed was a Committee to see that all that was erroneous in earlier Confessions had been fitly dealt with in the new Confession: the anxiety seems to have been that no erroneous expressions, however slight and intrenched in the earlier Confessions, should escape correction in this new one.

Though this effort failed, there was, however, a new reviewing made of the text of the Confession that bore fruit for its perfecting. This was accomplished in the process of its transcription. Over this transcription Dr. Burgess had the oversight. He made report September 21, 1646, "of the Confession of Faith transcribed, so much of it as the Assembly had perfected. It was read, and upon debate it was *Resolved* upon the Q., 'The several heads of the Confession of Faith shall be called by the name of Chapters.' *Resolved* upon the Q., That the several sections be distinguished by figures only." Thus was inaugurated what was really a second revision of the Confession - a passage of it through the Assembly for the third time. By September 25, as we have seen, nineteen chapters had passed through this third scrutiny, and were ordered sent up to the Parliament. Subsequently to that we find repeated instances in which Dr. Burgess moves certain alterations or additions to the already completed

chapters - which do or do not commend themselves to the Assembly: e.g. on November 20 he moves certain additions to chapter xxi., which had been passed on October 30; on November 23, to chapter xxii., which had been passed on November 6; and an addition was made to chapter xxi. on that same day, doubtless on his motion. This process of improvement continues even after the entry made on November 26, celebrating the completion of the Confession, i.e. during the whole process of its official transcription. Thus on November 27 we read: "Dr. Burges moved for some alterations in the Confession of Faith in some words, which were assented to." And again on December 1, "Upon a motion for an alteration in the chapter of Censures in the Confession of Faith, it was *Resolved* upon the Q., There shall be no alteration." Indeed, the onerousness of Dr. Burgess' work of overseeing the transcription was recognized at this session by the order: "That the brethren that drew up the Confession of Faith" - that is, as we should conjecture, either the Committee appointed May 12, 1645, to frame the first draft (Messrs. Gataker, Harris, Temple, Burgess, Reynolds, Hoyle, Herle) or else the perfecting Committee (Messrs. Tuckney, Reynolds, Newcomen, Whitaker, Arrowsmith and Cawdry) appointed December 8, 1645, and augmented June 17, 1646, and September 1, 1646 - "do assist Dr. Burges in reading over the Confession of Faith with one of the scribes." On December 3 a number of changes in chapters xix. xxi. xxii. xxix. xxxi. were proposed by Dr. Burgess, and either accepted or rejected, and the Committee was required further to "consider of that which is propounded concerning the chapter of the Civil Magistrate." Other changes were debated on December 4, and Dr. Burgess' final report was made, whereupon it was "*Ordered* - That thanks be returned to the Assessor, Dr. Burges, for his great pains in transcribing the Confession of Faith, which was done by the Prolocutor. *Resolved* upon the Q., This" [i.e. the transcribed and finally adjusted copy of the Confession of Faith] "shall be presented to both Houses of Parliament by the whole Assembly. The Confession of Faith as it was presented is as followeth. . . ." Here we reach the really final act in the Assembly's preparation of the text of the Confession. Nothing remained now but the printing of it, and on receiving from Parliament an order to that effect, it was (December 10) "*Ordered* - That the Scribes take care of the exact printing of the Confession of Faith."

The work of preparing proof-texts for the Confession was undertaken somewhat reluctantly by the Assembly, as a consequence of an order from the House of Commons of October 9, 1646, and reported in the Assembly on October 12. It was felt that the demand for proof-texts was only an expedient of "the retarding partie" in Parliament (as Baillie calls it) to delay the completion of the business: and it was feared that the attempt to add the texts would (as Baillie expressed it) "prove a very long business, if not dexterously managed," though, no doubt, it would be "for the advantage and strength of the work."<sup>54</sup> A Committee was, however, at once appointed to advise the Assembly "how obedience may be yielded" to this order, and their report, adopted October 13, set forth that to append full proofs to so large a Confession would require a volume, and could scarcely be necessary, inasmuch as what was set forth in the Confession was for its substance "received truths among all churches," and the only question about it concerned "the manner of expression or the fitness to have it put into the Confession." What the Assembly explicitly asked, however, was only time, not absolute reprieve for the task.<sup>55</sup> Parliament was inexorable, and the work was fairly begun on January 6, 1647 (Wednesday). We read: "*Ordered* - That Mr. Wilson, Mr. Byfield, Mr. Gower, be a Committee to prepare Scriptures for the Confession of Faith." On the very next day the Scriptures for the first chapter were reported, and those for the first paragraph were debated. The work was continued steadily thereafter. The proof-texts of the first chapter were completed on January 15: and meanwhile those for the other chapters were being reported - those for chapter ii. having been brought in on January 8, and for chapter iii. on January 13. On Friday, March 5, 1647, the texts for the final chapters were reported, and the Assembly "*Ordered* - That thanks be returned to the Committee for the Scriptures, for their great pains and diligence in that business; which was accordingly done by the Prolocutor. *Ordered* - That Mr. Burges, Dr. Smith, Mr. Calamy, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Seaman, Mr. Strickland, Mr. Spurstow, Mr. Case, Mr. Scudder, and Dr. Hoyle, or any three of them, shall be a Committee to join with the Committee for the Scriptures, to review the Scriptures. They are to meet on Thursday next in the afternoon. The care of this Committee is referred to Mr. Scudder." These resolutions mark the completion of the proof-texts, however, only in the Committee. At this time the Assembly's consideration of them had

reached no further than the twentieth chapter. It was not until April 5, 1647, that the work was completed by the Assembly. On that date the note is entered in the Minutes: " The Confession was finished."

It was not even then "finished," however, except in first draft; and it was ordered that the report of the reviewing Committee should now go through the three large Committees, and so come to the Assembly - the work to be begun on the next day. There was an effort made at the same time to have some explanatory declaration added with reference to the proper use of the proof-texts, but this was unsuccessful. The action in full was as follows: "Upon a motion by Mr. Seaman that something be annexed by way of caution to show how the proofs are to be applied, it was *Resolved* upon the Q., There shall be no further debate about cautions to be added about the proofs of Scripture. *Resolved* upon the Q., That the Review of the Confession of Faith be considered of by the three Committees of the Assembly. *Ordered* - That the Committees appointed for the Review of the Confession make report to-morrow morning what they have done about it." It would seem that it was impracticable for the three Committees to report the next day, however, and the expedient appears to have been adopted - in this approximating to the manner in which the text of the Confession itself was first taken up - of having the Committee of Review report the first portion of the texts directly to the Assembly, while the remainder should come to it only through the large Committees. This is at least what appears to be implied by the entry for April 6: "Mr. Scudder made report of the Review of the proofs of the Confession of Faith for the seven first chapters and part of the 8th; and upon debate of it, it was assented to as the proofs are entered in the margin of the Confession of Faith. *Ordered* - That the rest of the 8th chapter, and chapters 9th to the 17th be referred to the First Committee to review; and from chapter 8th to the 25th to the Second Committee, and from chapter 26th to the end of the Confession to the Third Committee." On the succeeding days, April 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, the reports of these Committees for the several sections were brought in and the proof-texts passed by the Assembly. On the 15th April it was "*Ordered* - That Mr. Wilson, Mr. Gower, and Mr. Wallis do draw up, in the margin of two books of the Confession of Faith, the Scriptures, to be presented to the Parliament." An order having been received from Parliament to send up



the texts (April 22), this was done on April 26, 1647, and they were presented to both Houses on April 29.<sup>56</sup>

Thus the Confession of Faith passed in its completed form out of the hands of the Assembly, and the history of the attempt to create a common Confession of Faith for Great Britain properly closes. All the world knows the subsequent fortunes of the product of such long-continued labors. The text of the first nineteen chapters, it will be remembered, was sent up preliminarily to the two Houses of Parliament: they were presented to the House of Commons September 25, 1646, and to the House of Lords, October 1. On December 4 the completed text went to the Commons, and on the 7th of that month to the Lords. Already by November 4, 1646, the first nineteen chapters had passed the House of Lords in the exact form in which they had been sent up by the Assembly: the remainder was passed by them February 16, 1647. In the Commons, however, the matter dragged. The first nineteen chapters were passed perfunctorily on October 6, 1646, and taken up for debate in the Grand Committee on October 9: and then things stopped. Despite prodding from the Lords, the Commons awaited the reception of the proof-texts before they would do anything. On the 29th April, 1647, "the Scriptures" were handed to them, but the commencement of the debate was still postponed until May 19, and their review of the whole was not completed until March 17, 1648. On the 22d of that month a conference was held with the Lords concerning the changes introduced by the Commons, all of which the Lords assented to except that on "Marriage," and this being made known on June 3 to the Commons, the amended Confession was ordered printed on June 20, 1648. This edition omits the whole of chapters xxx. and xxxi., and also the fourth paragraph of chapter xx. and part of the fourth and the whole of the fifth and sixth paragraphs of chapter xxiv., together with the last clause of the fourth paragraph of chapter xxiii., besides making some unimportant alterations in that paragraph. "Further than this," remarks Mr. Shaw, "the Long Parliament never got in its review of the celebrated Confession."<sup>57</sup> It was indeed taken up again by "the Rump" in 1650, and on March 2 agreed to as reported from the Assembly "in all the chapters except the 30th and 31st," and by an Act passed March 5 declared to be "the public Confession of Faith of the Church of England." But, as Mr. Shaw remarks, "needless to say that the enactment was perfectly futile

and unregarded."

Meanwhile, the Confession as presented to Parliament and printed without proofs in January, 1647, was carried at once to Scotland by Baillie, and presented to the Commission of the General Assembly; and doubtless the edition of the same with proofs, printed in the spring, reached Scotland before the meeting of the Assembly. At all events, it was in this form that, having been carefully considered in the Assembly of that year, it was passed by an approving Act, *nemine contradicente*, at its twenty-third session. This Act was ratified by the Scottish Parliament, February 7, 1649: and after the evil days of 1661, again in 1690. Thus it comes about that the Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland is in all respects the Confession as framed by the Assembly of Divines, and that the real history of the creation of the Confession closes with its labors, and may neglect all that was done in Parliament.

For the better apprehension of the progress of the various chapters of the Confession through the hands of the Assembly of Divines we append a tabular statement of the work done upon each:<sup>58</sup>

Chapter I. - "The sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith" was instructed on Friday, July 4, 1645, to "make report to the Assembly on Monday morning of what is in their hands concerning . . . the Scriptures." Accordingly on Monday, July 7, "Dr. Temple made report of that part of the Confession of Faith touching the Scriptures. It was read, debated." It was debated on July 7, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. It was debated in review June 17, 18, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported January 7,<sup>59</sup> 1647, and debated January 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15: and reviewed April 6, 1647. It was debated in the House of Commons on the 19th and 28th May, 1647 ("Journals of the House of Commons," v. pp. 177, 189) ; and the respited § 8 again debated and accepted, 17th March, 1648 (*ibid.*, v. p. 502).

Chapter II. - "The sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith" was instructed on Friday, July 4, 1645, to "make report to the Assembly on Monday morning of what is in their hands concerning God. . . ." Meanwhile on July 16, it was "*Ordered* - The first Committee to

prepare the Confession of Faith upon these heads: God and the Holy Trinity. . . ." Nevertheless on July 18, the "report concerning God" was made by Dr. Temple, the chairman of "the sub-Committee." This was debated July 18 and 23, and on the latter date it is noted that a report was "made from the Committee," i.e. obviously the First Great Committee, "of the article of the Trinity." Clearly "the propositions concerning God" were reported in accordance with the order of July 4 from the "sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith," and the "article of the Trinity," in accordance with the disposition of the heads made on July 16, by the First Committee.<sup>60</sup> The whole "Article concerning 'God and the Holy Trinity'" was reviewed June 18, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported on January 8, 1647, and debated and ordered on the 18th: and reviewed April 6. It was debated in the House of Commons, May 28, 1647 ("Journals, etc.," v. p. 189).

Chapter III. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon . . . God's decrees, Predestination, Election, etc." On August 29 - "Report from the first Committee concerning God's decrees" - and debate at once began. Debates were held on August 29, September 2, 3, [8], 9, 11, October 3, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, [30?], 31, November 3, 6, 7, 11. It was debated in review June 18, 19, 1646, and an additional debate was held on September 23, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported January 13, 1647, and debated and ordered January 19, 20, 21: they were reviewed April 6. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, May 28, 1647 ("Journals," v. p. 189).

Chapter IV. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon . . . the works of Creation and Providence." On November 17, there was made a "report from the first Committee concerning Creation." It was debated on November 18, 19, 20, on the latter date the note running: "The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the report of Creation, and finished." It was reviewed June 19, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported on January 15, 1647, and debated and ordered on January 21 and 28; they were reviewed April 6. The chapter was

debated in the House of Commons, October 2, 1647 ("Journals," v. p. 323).

Chapter V. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon . . . the works of Creation and Providence." On November 27, there was "report made from the First Committee about Providence." It was debated November 28, December 2 and 4: and reviewed and ordered June 19, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were debated on January 28, 29, and February 1; and they were reviewed April 6, 1647. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, October 2, 1647 ("Journals," v. p. 323).

Chapter VI. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon . . . Man's Fall": and again, "The second Committee: Sin, and the punishment thereof." How the two topics were got together we are not informed. On November 17, 1645, there was made a "report concerning Fall of Man, Sin, and the Punishment thereof." This was debated November 20, 21. The review was introduced June 19, 1646, and debated and ordered June 22 and 25: and additions were made June 29. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 2, 1647: and reviewed April 6.

Chapter VII. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The second Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] . . . the Covenant of Grace." It was reported before October 9, at which date "the Assembly proceeded in the debate of the report concerning the Covenant[s]." <sup>61</sup> It was debated further October 10, 17, November 6, 14, 17, December 23, 1645; and reviewed and ordered June 25, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported January 21, 1647, and debated and ordered February 3 and 5.

Chapter VIII. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The second Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] . . . Christ our Mediator." On August 29 following, there was "report made by the second Committee of Christ the Mediator." It was debated September 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, and November 14, 1645: and reviewed June

25, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 8, 1647, and reviewed April 6 and 7, 1647.

Chapter IX. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The second Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] . . . Free-will." On December 15 next, "Dr. Gouge made report about Free-will,"<sup>62</sup> and on the 17th this report was debated. It was reviewed and ordered June 29, 30, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 2, 1647, and debated and ordered on February 9: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter X. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The third Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] Effectual Vocation." On September 9 following, "Mr. Prophet made report of Effectual Calling." It was debated September 17, 25, 29 (30), November 6, 13: and reviewed and ordered June 30, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 3, 1647, and debated and ordered February 9: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter XI. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The third Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] . . . Justification." On December 2 next, there was made "report from Mr. Cheynell of Justification." It was debated December 3, (5), 8, 9, 10, (11), 16; and reviewed and ordered July 23, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 4, 1647, and debated and ordered February 10, 11: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter XII. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The third Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] . . . Adoption." On November 20 next, "Mr. Prophet brought in a report from the Third Committee about Adoption." It was reviewed and ordered July 23, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 5, 1647: debated and ordered February 11; and reviewed April 8.

Chapter XIII. - On July 16, 1645, it was "*Ordered* - The third Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] . . . Sanctification." On November 20 following, "Mr. Prophet brought in a report from the Third Committee . . . about Sanctification." It was debated

November 24: and reviewed and ordered September 16 and 23, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 5, 1647, and debated February 12: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter XIV. - On the 19th August, 1646, it was "*Resolved* upon the Q., These heads of Faith, Repentance, and Good Works shall be referred to the three Committees in their order to prepare something upon them for the Confession of Faith."<sup>63</sup> From August 21 to August 31 inclusive the Assembly sat only as a Grand Committee, lacking a quorum for a formal meeting: during this time the report on Saving Faith was reviewed.<sup>64</sup> This report was formally called up in the Assembly, September 4. It was debated September 9, and reviewed and ordered September 16. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 12, 1647: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter XV. - This chapter also was ordered to be prepared (by the Second Committee) August 19, 1646 (see under chapter xiv. ad init.). On September 9, "Dr. Stanton made Report of the Article concerning Repentance." It was debated September 10, 17, 18, at the last of which sessions it was ordered: on September 25, it was finally passed. The Scriptural proofs were debated February 12, 1647: and reviewed April 8.

Chapter XVI. - This chapter also was ordered to be prepared (by the Third Committee) August 19, 1646 (see under chapter xiv. ad init.). On September 3, 1646, "Report was made by Dr. Temple 'of Good Works.'" It was debated September 9, 18, 21, and ordered: the matter was reopened September 22, 23; and the perfected chapter passed September 25. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 15, 1647: and reviewed April 8.

Chapter XVII. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the First Committee, Perseverance. . . ." On December 19 following, there was made "Report from the First Committee of Perseverance." It was debated December 29, 1645; and reviewed September 14, 1646, and finally passed September 25. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 17, 1647, and reviewed April 8.

Chapter XVIII. - On February 23, 1646, it was "*Ordered . . . To the Second Committee, - Certainty of Salvation. . . .*" It was reported from the Second Committee July 24, 1646, and "*Ordered - This to be the title - 'Of the Certainty of Salvation.'*" It was debated July 24 and 30, and September 14, 15, and assented to under the title, "Of Assurance of Grace and Salvation"; and finally passed September 25. The Scriptural proofs were debated on February 17 and 18, and reviewed April 7, 1647.

Chapter XIX. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Third Committee, the Law. . . ." On January 1, 1646, "Dr. Wincop made report from the Third Committee about the Law of God." It was debated on January 7, 9, 12, 13, 29, February 2 and 9, 1646; also in the Grand Committee during the interval in the Assembly's meetings August 21-31, and in the Assembly September 1, 2, 3, 4, 15, 17, and finally passed September 25, 1646. A slight alteration was further made on December 3. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered on February 19 and 22, 1647.

Chapter XX. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the First Committee, . . . Christian Liberty. . . ." It was debated January 29, 1646, February 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, (23), March (4), 10,<sup>65</sup> 26,<sup>66</sup> 27,<sup>67</sup> 30, 31,<sup>68</sup> and again September 23, 24, 25, October 1, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 30. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 25, 26, 1647, March 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12. This chapter was debated in the House of Commons on the 4th February, 1648, and § 4 respited until chapter xxx. was under consideration ("Journals," v. p. 455).

Chapter XXI. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Third Committee, . . . Religion, Worship. . . ." And on February 23, 1646, it was "*Ordered - To the First Committee, in chief heads, - Christian Sabbath. . . .*" On March 5, 1646, "Mr. Prophet made report of Religion and Worship," and on March 9, there was made "Report of the Sabbath." "Religion and Worship" was debated March 9,<sup>69</sup> 10 (when the title was changed to "of Religious

Worship"),<sup>70</sup> 20,<sup>71</sup> 26,<sup>72</sup> when the subject is recorded as finished. The topic "Of the Sabbath" was debated April 6 (when the title was set as "Of the Sabbath day"). On October 12 the two heads reappeared together: "Mr. Tuckney made report 'of Religious Worship and Sabbath-day'"; but it does not appear further that they constituted a single chapter. On October 30, "the Assembly debated the Chapter 'of Religious Worship'; and upon debate it was assented to . . ."; and there were further debates on November 20 and 23, and a slight correction was ordered on December 3. Report of Scriptural proofs for the 21st chapter was made February 18, 1647. The process by which the two chapters were reduced to one is obscure. It was debated in the House of Commons on February 4, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 455).

Chapter XXII. - On January 8, 1646, there was made a "Report of a Lawful Oath by Mr. Prophet." Mr. Prophet was chairman of the Third Committee, but no such "head" had been recorded among the "heads" distributed to this Committee: perhaps it had emerged into a separate topic in the discussions of the head of "worship" assigned to the Third Committee on November 18, 1645.<sup>73</sup> It was debated January 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 1646: and in review, October 12 ("of Lawful Oaths and Vows"), November 3, 6: while on November 23 and December 3 additional adjustments were made. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 18 and reviewed April 12, 1647. It was debated in the House of Commons, 4th February, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 455).

Chapter XXIII. - On February 23, 1646, it was "*Ordered* - To the First Committee, in chief heads . . . the Civil Magistrate." It was reported to the Assembly, March 26, 1646, and debated April (23), 24, 27, [and possibly again October (12), 13, 14, 15, 20, although these debates probably belong to chapter xx.]. It was passed November 9, while further adjustments were made on December 3, 4. The Scriptural proofs were debated on March 3, and reviewed April 12, 1647. It was debated in the House of Commons, 4th February, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 456).



Chapter XXIV. - On February 23, 1646, it was "*Ordered* - To the First Committee, in chief heads, - . . . Marriage and Divorce." On June 17 next, "Report was made 'of Marriage'" and the report was taken up July 23, and debated August 3 and 4 - apparently under the simple title "Of Marriage." Accordingly on August 10, "Dr. Gouge made Report 'of Divorce,'" which under the title "Of Divorce" was taken up and debated September 10, 11. The two were, however, reported on October 12 as constituting one "head," and were so debated November 9, 10, 11, and so passed. The Scriptural proofs were reported on March 3, 1647. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, February 4, 11, and March 3, 1648 ("Journals," v. pp. 456, 461, 478).

Chapter XXV. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the First Committee . . . the Church. . . ." When we next hear of it, it is already in process of debate, February 16, 1646: the debate continues February 23, 26, 27, March 2, (3, 4), 5 [6, 9,<sup>74</sup> 13,<sup>75</sup> 16, 17, 18, 19, (20), (26), April 3, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17],<sup>76</sup> 20, 21, 22.<sup>77</sup> It was taken up in review November 13, 1646, and ordered on the 17th. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 3, 1647. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 489).

Chapter XXVI. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the First Committee . . . the Communion of Saints." On February 17, 1646, there was made a "Report of the Committee of the Communion of Sacraments" (*sic*): and debate was entered upon on it March 3, and continued March 4, 5. It was resumed for review November 13, 17, 19, 20. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 3, 1647, and reviewed April 7. It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 490).

Chapter XXVII. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee . . . Sacraments. . . ." The report was called for December 2, 1645, and given in December 5. It was debated December 11, 12, 15, 16, 24, 25, and recalled for review November 10, 1646. The Scriptural proofs are not referred to in the Minutes.

It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 490).

Chapter XXVIII. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee . . . Baptism. . . ." On December 29 following, "Mr. Calamy made report of Baptism." Debate was held on the chapter, January 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 16, (19), 21, 26, 1646; and again September 11; and on November 10 it was reviewed and ordered. No record of the adding of the Scriptural proofs. It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 490).

Chapter XXIX. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee . . . the Lord's Supper." On December 1 following, there was made a "Report from the Second Committee of the Lord's Supper": debate was "proceeded in" December 26: again it was taken up November 11, 12, 13, 1646, and on November 16 ordered. On December 3 some slight adjustments of language were made. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 5, 1647. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 491).

Chapter XXX. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee, Officers and Censures of the Church. . . ." On January 29, 1646, "Mr. Dury made report from the Second Committee of Church Officers and Censures." It was debated April 23,<sup>78</sup> and recalled for review November 13, 23, 26, and at this last date ordered. An alteration was again proposed December 1. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 5, 1647, and voted April 2, 1647 ("Minutes," p. 345, note 1).

Chapter XXXI. - On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee . . . Councils or Synods. . . ." It was reported to the Assembly, August 4, 1646, and debated August 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20: and again in review November 13 and 26, when it was ordered. On December 3 alterations were debated. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 5, 1647, debated and ordered April 2 (p. 345, note 1), and reviewed April 13.

Chapter XXXII. - On February 23, 1646, it was "*Ordered* - . . . To the Second Committee, . . . the State of the Soul after death. To the Third Committee, - The Resurrection. . . ." The former was reported July 24, 1646, and debated July 31. The latter was reported August 4, and debated September 4. On November 26, 1646, "the Assembly debated 'of the State of Man after death': and upon debate it was assented to. . . ." How or when the two were united does not appear. The Scriptural proofs for the chapter were reported March 5, 1647, and voted April 5 (p. 345, note 2.) It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 491).

Chapter XXXIII. - On February 23, 1646, it was "*Ordered* - . . . To the Third Committee, . . . the Last Judgment, Life Eternal." The topic was debated in the Grand Committee during the interval in the meetings of the Assembly, August 21-31, 1646, and was debated in the Assembly September 4, and again on review November 26, when it was ordered. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 5, 1647, and voted April 5 (p. 345, note 2). It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 491).

N. B. - In the third distribution of the "heads," made February 23, 1646, the topic "Lies and Equivocations" was assigned to the Second Committee. This topic does not emerge again by report to the Assembly, and there is no such chapter in the completed Confession. Possibly it was found that the material to be dealt with in it was sufficiently covered in chapter xxii., "Of Lawful Oaths and Vows" (see above, chapter xxii., note 73).<sup>79</sup>

To this statement we append the chief references to the work of the Assembly on the Confession made in Baillie's "Letters":

Under date of August 18, 1644 (ii. 1841, p. 220), Baillie recounts the coming of Warriston and the efforts for expedition (see the text above, note 19, p. 82), and under date of August 28 (p. 224) he recounts the progress thus far made in the work of "the Covenanted Uniformitie." Direct mention of the Confession begins

in the Publick Letter of October, 1644: "The Confession of Faith is referred to a committee to be put in severall the best hands that are here" (p. 232). Under date of November 21 he writes: "What remains of the Directorie . . . will soon be dispatched. The Catechise is drawn up, and, I think, shall not take up much tyme. I feare the Confession of Faith may stick longer" (p. 242). Under date of December 26: "If the Directorie and Government were once out of our hands, as a few days will put them, then we will fall on our great question of Excommunication, the Catechise, and Confession. There is here matter to hold us long enough, if the wrangling humour which long predomined in many here did continue; but, thanks be to God, that is much abated, and all inclines toward a conclusion. . . . I think we must either passe the Confession to another season, or, if God will help us, the heads of it being distribute among many able hands, it may in a short time be so drawn up, as the debates of it may cost little time" (p. 248). Under date of April 25, 1645: "The Catechise and Confession of Faith are put in the hands of severall committees, and some reports are made to the Assemblie concerning both. We expect not so much debate upon these, as we have had in the Directorie and Government" (p. 266). Under date of May 4, 1645: "Our next work will be the Confession and Catechisme, upon both which we have allreadie made some entrance" (p. 272). In an undated letter printed immediately after the one just quoted from: "We are at a point with the Government; and beginning to take the Confession of Faith and Catechise to our consideration" (p. 275). Under date of July 8, 1645: "Mr. Henderson . . . and Mr. Rutherford are gone this day to Epsom waters: so long as anything is to doe here, he cannot be away. I hope the rest of us may ere long be well spared, if once we had through the Catechise and a part of the Confession" (p. 296). Under

date of July 8: "Since my last, with our former post, July 1st, we have, thanks be to God, at last finished the whole body of Government. . . . Since, we have entered on the Confession of Faith; as yet I cannot pronounce of the length or shortness of our proceedings therein" (p. 300). In an undated public letter belonging doubtless to August, 1645: "In the Assemblie we have gone through a part of the Catechisme, and a part of the Confession of Faith; but . . . many [hindrances,] when least we expect them, comes in our way . . ." (p. 306). Under date of September 5: "In the Assemblie we are goeing on languidlie with the Confession of Faith and Catechisme" (p. 315). Under date of November 25: "In the Assemblie, we are goeing on with the Confession of Faith. We had long and tough debates about the Decrees of election; yet thanks to God all is gone right according to our mind" (p. 325). "We go on daily in some proposition of the Confession of Faith: till this be ended we will not take in any more of the Catechise" (p. 326). In an undated letter belonging to January 15, 1646: "We are going on in the Assemblie with the Confession, and could, if need were, shortly end it" (p. 336). In an undated letter ascribed by Dr. Laing to about January 20, 1646, he says: "We goe on in the Assemblie with prettie speed now in our Confession of Faith. We have past the heads of Scripture, God, Trinity, Decrees, Providence, Redemption, Covenant, Justification, Sanctification, Free-will, Sacraments in generall, a part of Perseverance, and of the Lord's Supper" (p. 344). Under date of January 31, 1646: "We proceed but slowlie in the Confession of Faith" (p. 348). In February, 1646: "However we wait daylie on the Assemblie, yet our progresse in the Confession of Faith is but slow . . . yet we hope, by God's grace, ere long to end the Confession" (p. 349). Cf. March 17, 1646 (p. 360). Under date of June 26, 1646: "The Parliament's

questions have retarded us much: without them we had ended the Confession of Faith" (p. 377). Under date of July 14, 1646: "I have put some of my good friends, leading men in the House of Commons, to move the Assemblie to lay aside our questions" ["some very captious questions of the Parliament, about the clear scripturall warrant for all the punctilioes of the Government," sent in, as Baillie thinks, just "to keep all things from any conclusion" (p. 378)] "for a time, and labour that which is most necessar, and all are crying for, the perfecting of the Confession of Faith and Catechise. If this motion take, I hope we shall end shortly our Confession, for there is but a few articles now to goe through: it will be a very gracious and satisfactorie Confession when yow see it" (p. 379). Under date of August 13, 1646: "In the Assemblie we were like to have stucken many moneths on the questions; and the Independents were in a way to gett all their differences debated over againe. I dealt so with Mr. Rous and Mr. Tate, that they brought us ane order from the House to lay aside the questions till the Confession and Catechise were ended. Many took it for a trick of the Independents and Erastians for our hurt; but I knew it wes nothing less. We are now near an end of our Confession: we stick in the article of Synods, upon the proposition of their coercive power, or their power to excommunicat. If this were over, we apprehend no more long debates on the Confession" (p. 388). Under the date of August 18, 1646: "In the Assemblie we are returned to the Confession of Faith, and are drawing towards the end of it" (p. 390). Under date of September 22, 1646: "We have ended the Confession of Faith for the matter, and have perfyted the most half of it, nyneteen chapters; the other seventeen, I hope, in ten or twelve days will be perfyted, and so all be sent up to the Houses. It will be, I hope, a very sweet and orthodoxe peice, much better

than any Confession yet extant, if the House of Commons mangle it not to us" (p. 397). Under date of October 2, 1646: "The Assemblie obleidged themselves by promise to sitt before and after noon for some tyme; but now, thinking they have satisfied the Houses, by sending up the half of the Confession, the first nineteen heads, they are relapsed into their former negligence. So we will be able few days in a week to make ane Assemblie; for if there be ane fewer than forty, it is no meeting; and though the rest of the heads be also past, yet, in the review, the alteration of words, and the methodizeing, takes up so much time, that we know not when we shall end. Besides that we have some additionalls, especially one proposition, about libertie of conscience, wherein the Independents offer to keep us long and tough debates; for long agoe they have laid downe in this their maske, and pleads for a libertie weell near universall" (pp. 400, 401). Under date of October 13, 1646: "Our Assemblie for one twenty dayes posted hard; bot since hes gotten into its old pace. The first halfe, and more, of the Confession we sent up to the House; the end of these who called for it, wes the shuffling out the Ordinance against Errors; yet our friends hes carried to goe on with that; but others hes carried the putting of Scriptures to the margin of the Confession, which may prove a very long business, if not dexterouslie managed. It will yet be a fortnight before the other halfe of it be ready; for sundry necessar but scabrous propositions were added in the review" (p. 403). Under date of October 27, 1646: ". . . before the Assemblie end the Confession; for that long I purpose to stay, though my permission to goe were come" (p. 406). Under date of December 1, 1646: "With much adoe we have gone through, at last, the rest of our Confession: the first part I sent, to yow three only, in Mr. David's letter, long agoe; the whole will goe up to the House one of these dayes, and so to the presse. It's

generally taken here for a very gracious and brave peece of worke" (p. 411). About Christmas, 1646: "Our Assemblie, with much adoe, at last have wrestled through the whole Confession, and all is now printed. The House of Commons requires to put Scripture to it before they take it to consideration; and what time that will take up, who knows?" (p. 415). Under date of January 26, 1647: "The third point [of Uniformity], the Confession of Faith, I brought it with me [to Scotland], now in print, as it wes offered to the Houses by the Assemblie, without considerable dissent of any. It's much cryed up by all, even many of our greatest opposites, as the best Confession yet extant; it's expected the Houses shall pass it, as they did the Directorie, without much debate. Howbeit the retarding partie hes put the Assemblie to add Scriptures to it, which they omitted only to eschew the offence of the House, whose practice hitherto hes been, to enact nothing of religion on divine right or scripturall grounds, but upon their owne authoritie alone. This innovation of our opposites may weell cost the Assemblie some time, who cannot doe the most easie things with any expedition; but it will be for the advantage and strength of the work" (iii. p. 2). Cf. June 2, 1647 (pp. 5, 6). Speech in the General Assembly at Edinburgh, August 6, 1647: "Right Honourable and Reverend, yow remember, that all your ecclesiastick desyres from your brethren of England, that all the commissions and instructions laid upon us your servants, were only for the obtaining of Uniformitie in four particulars, - in the Worship of God, in the Government of the Church, in a Confession of Faith, and Catechisme. . . . In your third desyre, the Lord made our successe no less prosperous; a large Confession of Faith is perfyted with farr greater unanimitie than any living could have hoped for, among so many learned divines, in so distempered a



place and distracted a season. I am confident, if the judgment of many my wiser do not deceive, this piece of work is so fine and excellent, that whenever you shall be pleased to look upon it, the sight of it shall draw from the most censorious eye, a good acceptance" (p. 11; cf. p. 12). Under date of September 1, 1647, giving account of the Scotch General Assembly: "We agreed . . . after much debate in the Committee, to the Confession of Faith" (p. 20).

A word in conclusion as to the title of the volume thus prepared is perhaps not out of place. The Assembly of Divines quite constantly speak of it in their Minutes, from the beginning, as "a Confession of Faith," or, after it was begun, "the Confession of Faith." The term was doubtless derived from the Solemn League and Covenant, which enumerates, among the items in which uniformity should be sought between the two nations, "Confession of Faith." Meanwhile, however, the work of its preparation was prosecuted without formally setting upon a title for the completed book. On the 3d of September, 1646, as it was approaching completion, it was "*Ordered* - The Committee for the perfecting of the Confession of Faith do prepare a title for it"; and on September 24 this duty was apparently laid specifically on Dr. Burgess. On September 25 the report upon the title came in, "and it was *Ordered* - This to be the title: 'To the Hon<sup>ble</sup> the House of Commons assembled in Parliament, The humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, now by authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster, concerning part of a Confession of Faith.'" To the completed Confession also a like title was assigned: and it was under this title that the Confession was printed in the first instance. The title thus suggested, however, did not meet with the approval of the House of Commons. It seemed to it, as Rushworth tells us,<sup>80</sup> that nothing was practically a Confession which did not take the form of "I confess" at the beginning of each section, and, moreover, that it were well to keep up the usage established by the Thirty-nine Articles; and so they altered the title to "Articles of Faith agreed upon by both Houses of Parliament," or rather to "Articles of Christian religion approved and passed by both Houses of Parliament after advice had with the Assembly of Divines" - under which latter title they published the Confession with the slight

alterations they had made in it, in the summer of 1648.<sup>81</sup> The adoption of the earlier title by the Church of Scotland in its previous action, together with the failure of the whole movement in England, has secured that the work has lived under the simple title of "The Confession of Faith": and it is as such that it is known among all the Churches which still adhere to it.

## II. THE FORMULATION OF THE THIRD CHAPTER

The third chapter of the Confession of Faith, having been prepared in first draft by the Committee appointed for that service (May 12, 1645), passed through the hands of the First Great Committee (July 16, 1645) to the Assembly. It was reported from this Committee on August 29, 1645 (Friday), and the Assembly at once entered into debate upon it. Debate is mentioned as being held upon it August 29, September 2, 3, [8], 9, 11, October 3, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, [30], 31, November 3, 6, 7, 11. In the meantime portions of the chapter were twice, at least, (September 3 and November 6) recommitted - doubtless (for such seems to have been the Assembly's custom) to special Committees: and on five occasions (September [8], 9, 11, October 3, 17, 21) the original Committee brought in additional reports. In the subsequent reviewing of the Confession as passed, the third chapter was debated again on Thursday and Friday, June 18, 19, 1646, before it was finally ordered. It appears, further, that Mr. Whitaker, a member of the Committee of Review, appointed December 8, 1645, but acting apparently on his own behalf alone on this occasion, moved an additional alteration in the chapter on September 23, 1646, and this naturally caused some further debate. The text was now, however, finally passed from. The proof-texts for the chapter were debated on January [13], 19, 20, 21, 1647, and after having been considered by the reviewing Committee appointed March 5, 1647, were finally passed on by the Assembly, April 6, 1647. Thus the text of the third chapter occupied the attention of the Assembly some part of at least twenty separate days, besides all the time given to it in the various Committees through whose hands it or parts of it passed. The proof-texts similarly occupied the Assembly on some parts of at least four days in addition to the care given to them in Committee. It would not be excessive to say, in a word, that a good portion of a month's public labor was given to this chapter by the Assembly; and certainly much more than

this was expended on it by its Committees.

The debates upon the chapter which are signalized in the Minutes seem to have been especially careful and persistent:<sup>82</sup> and they are perhaps unusually fully reported. We are not able to trace them in full, to be sure, or even to ascertain all the points on which they turned. But it is presumable that those mentioned explicitly were of more importance than those passed over without so much as an indication of the points on which they turned; and doubtless those recorded in some detail were the most important of all. If we may assume so much, we are not without some hint as to the matters about which most interest was felt, and the phraseology of which was framed most carefully and in the fullest light. As is usual in such cases, the real work of creating the chapter was of course done in Committee; and the chapter as finally passed by the Assembly is obviously substantially what in the first instance was reported by the Committee. The notes of debate are sufficient to certify us of that natural and almost inevitable fact. But they also certify us that it was not passed by the Assembly without the most careful scrutiny or without many adjustments and alterations, so that as passed it represents clearly the deliberate and reasoned judgment of the Assembly as a whole.

This will at once be made evident by merely noting the special points on which debate is signalized. They concern the title of the chapter (August 29); the phrasing of the first section in no less than six separate particulars (August 29); the whole form of statement of the latter half of the second section (September 3 and 11); the statement of reprobation in section three (November 3, 1645, and September 23, 1646); the whole fabric and especially the retention of a particular phrase of the fifth section (October 3 and 17, 1645); the entire structure of the sixth section (October 20, 21), and, above all, the assertion of its last clause (October 22, 23, 24, 30, 31); the mode of statement of section seven (November 6, 7, 11); and at least the phraseology of section eight (June 18, 1646). It must be borne in mind that this is but a partial list of the topics debated; the precise topic debated is not always mentioned when the fact of a debate on chapter iii. is, nevertheless, recorded; and there is no reason to believe that when it is mentioned it is always done with completeness. The record is enough, however, to assure us that the debate was both

extremely searching and very comprehensive. This chapter did not leave the Assembly's hands, we may feel sure, without having been conformed in every particular to the Assembly's belief and even taste.

This will become even more apparent if we will attend to the details debated, so far as the record enables us to follow them. It is quite clear that the report brought in by the Committee, while framed with independence and special theological knowledge and skill, was yet based upon the Irish Articles, and in places followed them very closely - though elsewhere breaking away from them and striking out a new path. The knowledge of this fact will enable us now and again to reconstruct the form of the language in the original report, and so to follow the lines of the debate somewhat more closely than would otherwise be possible from the meager hints of the record.

1. For example, when we are told in the Minutes of August 29, 1645, that debate on this chapter was first joined "upon the title," we shall be wise to remind ourselves that the title of the corresponding Article in the Irish Articles ran: "Of God's Eternal Decree and Predestination"; and that it is therefore extremely likely that it was reported to the Assembly in some such form. We note accordingly with interest that in the distribution of the heads of the Confession to the three great Committees which was made on July 16, this head reads "God's decrees, Predestination, Election, etc." It is altogether likely, therefore, that when this chapter came to the Assembly it bore a title somewhat like that of the Irish Articles, "Of God's Eternal Decree and Predestination," and that the Assembly curtailed this to the simpler "Of God's Eternal Decree"; although, of course, it is possible, on the other hand, that it was the simpler title that it bore, and what happened in the Assembly was that it was queried whether the longer title of the earlier Articles were not better restored. This Irish title was not exactly tautological; for in the prevailing speech of the time the term "Predestination" was commonly limited to the soteriological decree, so that in the Irish title the collocation really is equivalent to "of God's general and special decree," or "of God's cosmical and soteriological decree." Even the threefold enumeration made in the designation of the topic in the act distributing the heads of the Confession to the Committees, would not be incapable of defense on the ground of

progressive advance from the more general to the more specific. It was not uncustomary at the time, however, to look upon the word "Predestination" as so much a synonym of "Election," that it embodied all its precious connotations - a fact which underlies the discrimination between the terms "predestinate" and "foreordain" as used in the third and fourth sections, which otherwise would be puzzling. However accordant with current usage it was, it might well have seemed, therefore, desirable to avoid the formal and unexplained treatment of Predestination as a more inclusive word than Election. Even the Irish heading might seem, indeed, to some, although not essentially tautological, yet to bear so nearly the formal appearance of tautology as to be offensive to the severer taste represented in the Assembly. The choice of the brief and simple "Of God's Eternal Decree" surely seems, in any event, to do the Assembly credit: it is as terse and simple as all the rest of its work and may be looked upon as a fair indication of its temper and taste alike.

We might be tempted to suppose that in the debate on the title of the chapter another point would be raised - whether the singular or plural form should be used - "Of God's Eternal Decree," or "Of God's Eternal Decrees."<sup>83</sup> On October 20, when the sixth section of the chapter was under discussion, a question involved in this difference was under debate, and some difference of opinion on the matter was developed. There is no hint, however, that the question was raised when the title of the chapter was under discussion; and the very occurrence and especially the nature of the subsequent debate render it difficult to suppose that the same subject had already been threshed out so short a while before. It seems altogether likely that the debate on the title was confined, therefore, to its compass, and that the form "Of God's Eternal Decree" was simply adopted, without question raised, from the Irish Articles. How little importance was attached to the difference between the singular and plural forms is evident not only from the subsequent debate, in which indifference to it is manifested by the strongest Calvinists in the body and it is generally treated as a question of language rather than of things; but also from the circumstance that though the singular form is consistently maintained in the Confession, the plural is equally consistently maintained in the Catechisms, both Larger and Shorter."<sup>84</sup>

2. Our knowledge that the Irish Articles underlay the draft sent in to the Assembly is of yet more aid to us in understanding the debates that are noted as having taken place on the first section of the chapter (August 29, 1645). These are hinted at in the Minutes as follows: "Debate about the word 'counsel,' about those words 'most holy wise,' and about those words 'his own.' Debate about that word 'time,' about the word 'should.' Debate about the transposing." Not all these words occur in the section as passed: but they are explicable from the Irish Articles. We need only to assume that the first half of the section as at first reported was more similar to the Irish Articles than it became in the course of the debate. It probably ran as follows: "God from all eternity did, by the most holy and wise counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever in time should come to pass." In the process of the debate the word "counsel" was scrutinized and retained; the adjectives "holy" and "wise" were transposed; "His own" was scrutinized and retained; and the last clause after careful scrutiny of its phraseology was exchanged to the simpler "whatsoever comes to pass." Thus the form that was adopted was arrived at: "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass." That the changes thus made were improvements we can scarcely doubt: the order "wise and holy" is the order of nature as well as climax, in its progress from the intellectual to the moral perfections; while the new concluding clause is not only simpler and free from apparent but fictitious limitation, but avoids raising puzzling questions as to what are to be classed as pre- or extra-temporal and what as temporal acts.<sup>85</sup>

What is intended by " the transposing," debate on which is noted, we have no means of confidently determining. It may concern simply the transposition of the adjectives " wise " and " holy," which we have already referred to. It may, on the other hand, concern some other transposition of words as originally reported of which we have no knowledge - or indeed some transposition of the words as given us which was not carried out. We note that the concluding words " but rather established " stand in the Irish Articles " but established rather ": possibly the reference is to this. It seems most probable, however, that it refers to a transposition to a new section of the clause excluding dependence of the decree on the Divine foresight, to the likelihood of which we shall recur when speaking

of the following section - which, as we shall see, was originally a part of this section.

3. The second section of the Confession has nothing parallel to it in the Irish Articles, which reserve the guarding of the independence of God's decree until they are dealing with specific or soteriological predestination (§ 14). Without this aid we find ourselves naturally in difficulties as we essay to reconstruct its original form. The chief notes in the Minutes concerning it are found in the entries for September 3 and September 11. The former reads: "Report from the first Committee about adding the word 'absolutely' - debated. Absolutely without any [not being moved thereunto by any]<sup>86</sup> foresight of anything without himself as a condition moving him thereunto. *Ordered* - This recommitted." The latter reads: "Report from the morning Committee that they think the former vote of the Assembly sufficient to print? the conditional decree."

It is at least evident from these notes that the framing of this section cost the Assembly some trouble. The new report from the digesting Committee as to adding the word "absolutely" is proof that there had already been puzzled discussion of the section. The recommitment of the matter, doubtless (as was the wont of the Assembly) to a special Committee, exhibits its dissatisfaction with its work so far. Probably between September 3 and September 11 the matter had again been before the Assembly, and the adjustment made which gives us our present section: for the report of September 11 appears to have come from a Committee meeting that morning, and seems to close the matter by recommending the treatment of a so-called "conditional decree," as it then stood, for passage for printing. Certainly the adjustment that was made was a good deal of a triumph: we do not indeed know the wording of the whole section as originally reported, or at any former stage of the debate - but the phrasing as ultimately agreed on is obviously a much finer piece of work than anything could have been of which the phraseology of the note of September 3 was a part. Is it too much to conjecture that this clause, for which no appropriate place can be found in section 2 as passed, was originally only a part of the first section - coming, perhaps, in between the first and second clauses of that section? In that case the sentence would have read: "God from all eternity did, by

the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass, without any foresight of anything without Himself as a condition moving Him thereunto: yet so as thereby, etc." The stages of procedure would, in that case, be as follows: First, it was sought to strengthen the statement by inserting "absolutely" before "without." Then it was queried whether the "any" might not be better omitted. Then a new phraseology was tried: instead of "absolutely without foresight of anything," it was proposed to read "not being moved thereunto by any foresight of anything." It was finally seen that the trouble lay deeper than any adjustment of mere phraseology could cure; that the proposed addition to the Irish statement at this point hopelessly overweighted the sentence. The knot was then happily cut by relieving the sentence of the addition altogether and erecting a new section, which then it was comparatively easy to phrase happily. And, as we have already hinted, perhaps it is this transposition that was debated, but not determined, on August 29.

It is so far in favor of this general supposition that it is altogether likely that an attempt would first be made to include the whole doctrine of the general or cosmical decree in one section, as had been done in the Irish Articles; and the relieving of the heavy sentence which thence resulted would be apt to be an afterthought. And it seems to be brought, in this general sense at least, out of the region of conjecture into that of ascertained fact by a note in the Minutes of September 8: "Dr. Gouge offered a report of an addition, though the Committee was not a full number, but 7. He read it; but the Assembly thought not fit to meddle with it, because they were not a Committee. The addition was, without respect to anything foreseen, to be added after freely and unchangeably." These words occur in the first section, which, accordingly, it was proposed to read thus: "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, without respect to anything foreseen, ordain whatsoever comes to pass." The proposal brought by Mr. Gouge is evidently a substitute for the heavy clause that was debated and recommitted on September 3, and accordingly that clause too was a part of the first section.

The main result, in any event, of our scrutiny of the section is to



advertise to us the importance which was attached by the Assembly to the proper guarding of the doctrine of the decree. This they sought to accomplish by adding in some fit way to the statement of the Irish Articles a clause explicitly affirming the independence of the decree - or, as has actually resulted in the event, fully setting forth the relation of the decree to the divine knowledge.

4. So far as the Minutes record, there was very little debate on sections 3 and 4, which, again, together represent a single section in the Irish Articles (§ 12). We read indeed in the notes for October 3: "Report additional to the article of Predestination. Debate about it." It is possible that this may refer to section 3, in which the term "predestinated" occurs for the first time, and in which the thing, as currently defined (of specific or soteriological predestination), for the first time emerges. On the other hand, however, the term may be used in a still narrower sense and the reference be to section 5, where the doctrine of election is discussed in its details. And it is almost equally possible that it is used in its broadest sense and refers to the chapter as a whole. The sequence of notices runs as follows: August 29, 1645, "Debate on the report of . . . God's decree"; September 2, "proceed in the debate of the report of decrees"; September 9, "report concerning God's decree"; September 11, "proceed in the debate about the decree"; October 3, "report additional to the article of Predestination"; October 17, "debate upon the report . . . concerning Predestination" [when § 5 was debated]; November 6, "the paragraph concerning Reprobation referred to the Committee, to make report tomorrow morning"; November 7, "Report made . . . about Reprobation"; November 11, "Debate the report of Reprobation" [when § 7 was debated]. The appearance is rather strong that under the term "Predestination" the portion of the chapter that treats of soteriological predestination, or more particularly §§ 3-6, was intended.

There can be little doubt that the entry in the Minutes of November 3, "Debate about leaving out those words, 'foreordained to everlasting death,'" refers to section 3: though it is, of course, not absolutely impossible (though most unlikely) that coming in at this late point in the debate, it may refer to a phrase originally in section 7, and omitted as the result of this debate. The likelihood of its reference to section 3 is

moreover distinctly increased by an entry at a much later date - after the Confession, in fact, had been completed, and was ready to be sent up to Parliament. In the Minutes for September 23, 1646, we read: "Mr. Whitakers moved an alteration in these words in the chapt[er] of Predestination, viz., 'and some ordained to everlasting death.'<sup>87</sup> It was debated, and upon debate it was *Resolved* upon the Q., The words shall stand without alteration. Mr. Whitakers enters his dissent." It can scarcely be doubted that the words in which Mr. Whitaker desired some alteration are the closing words of section 3; and the suggestion will perhaps present itself that he was only persisting at this final opportunity in pressing the desire of those who wished these words omitted in the earlier debate (November 3, 1645). It certainly is not said that Mr. Whitaker wished the words omitted, but only that "he moved an alteration in these words" - and what alteration he desired we have no means of ascertaining. And it would appear that he met with little or no support for his proposition. The Assembly not only rejected his motion, but he alone entered dissent. But it is at least not impossible that he was here only carrying to its latest stage the debate of November 3 for the omission of these words.

In that case, we should learn that there were some in the Assembly - or perhaps only one, as Mr. Whitaker is alone in his dissent on September 23, 1646, and may have been equally alone in the contention of November 3, 1645 - who desired that the doctrine of reprobation should not be so sharply stated in section 3. What their - or his - reasons for so desiring were, we do not know.<sup>88</sup> But we should equally learn that the Assembly was not only decided, but we may say unusually decided in its determination to have the doctrine of reprobation clearly asserted in this its appropriate place in the Confession. We must not fail to observe that the matter was pressed to a vote, to the sharpest of decisions, and to a recorded dissent: and we must not fail to note the significance of this. Says Dr. Mitchell:<sup>89</sup> "So far as appears from the minutes, the various articles of the Confession were passed by the Assembly all but unanimously. On some occasions, when dissent was indicated even by one or two of the members, the wording of the article they objected to was so modified as to satisfy them. The main occasions on which this policy was not followed were on 4th September 1645, with regard to Dr.

Burgess's dissent from the resolution of the Assembly to leave out the word 'Blessed,' retained both in the English and Irish Articles, before the name of the Virgin mother of our Lord; on 23d September 1646, with regard to Mr. Whitaker's dissent from the words 'foreordained to everlasting death'; and on 21st October 1646, with regard to the dissent of several of the Independents from the insertion in a Confession of Faith of certain parts of § 3, chap. xxiii." We must esteem the clear and firm statement of the doctrine of foreordination to death, therefore, a matter which the Assembly deemed of the highest importance. When it was proposed to omit the words (November 3, 1645) the proposition was defeated: and when, at the eleventh hour, Mr. Whitaker returned to the charge and proposed at least some alteration in the words, it was resolved shortly, "The words shall stand without alteration," and Mr. Whitaker was left to enter his dissent. It is very clear that the Assembly by a very large majority - doubtless, in this case too, practically unanimously - deemed that important concerns were guarded by these words.

It is noteworthy that no debates and no dissents are noted on section 4.

5. Only the slightest hint of debate on section 5 is preserved. We have already observed the possibility, but hardly probability, of the notice of debate on "the article of Predestination" mentioned on October 3, 1645, referring to the fifth section. If that be set aside we have only the entry of October 17: "Report from the first Committee concerning Predestination. . . . Debate upon the report of the first Committee concerning Predestination. Debate about those words, 'unto everlasting glory,' whether they be not superfluous." The words were retained - to the enrichment of the statement. But the raising of the question of their superfluity is another indication of the severe terseness of the style given by the Assembly to this chapter - in contrast with the greater elaborateness, if not exactly elaboration, of the language of the underlying Irish Articles.

6. It was about the sixth section, however - the section in which is concentrated the *ordo salutis* of the Westminster Divines - that debate most gathered. From before October 20 to October 31 the Assembly was occupied with this great statement, and every element of it was subjected

to the closest scrutiny. Especially did the discussion expand around the three points of the unity of the decree and the relation respectively of the decrees concerning the fall and redemption to the decree of election. We do not know precisely when debate on this section was first begun. The first notice of it (October 20) runs already: "Proceed in the debate about permission of man's fall; about 'the same decree.'" Nor can we reconstruct in its entirety the original form of the section. It seems to have begun somewhat thus: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, to bring this to pass, ordained by the same decree to permit man to fall, etc."; and the debate first turned on the phrase "the same decree," and then on the phrase "to bring this to pass." To meet the objection to the former phrase, for which he would not contend - for, said he, "when that word is left out, is it not a truth, and so every one may enjoy his own sense" - Mr. Gillespie proposed that the statement should be modified so as to read: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He for the same end ordained to permit man to fall." This involved, however, the retention, in other language, of the idea involved in the phrase "to bring this to pass," which the Assembly was not disposed to insist on. A formula offered by Mr. Reynolds on October 21 accordingly found more favor. It runs as follows: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He by the same eternal and most free purpose of His will fore-ordained all the means thereunto, which He in His counsel is pleased to appoint for the executing of that decree; wherefore they who are endowed with so excellent a benefit, being fallen in Adam, are called in according to God's purpose." This formula preserves the mention of the fall of Adam, as had just been ordered, but also the phrase "the same decree," which had been debated but the omission of which was not yet determined fully on, and meets by a happy turn the determination that the words "to bring this to pass" should not stand. Whether, however, this formula was simply (as we have presumed) the original formula, modified to meet these orderings, or an entirely new one wrought out by Mr. Reynolds himself, we have no sure means of determining. Immediately after the entry, "*Mr. Reynolds* offered something," with the text as given above, it is added, "*Mr. Chambers* offered something" - but no hint is given of what it was, possibly because the differing reception given to the propositions of the two advertised the scribe that it was Mr. Reynolds' and not Mr. Chambers' offering that would form the basis of

subsequent debate. In any event, Mr. Reynolds' paper appears to register the results of the debate so far, and to lay the basis for further advance.

So far, we may say then, two things had been settled about this section: it should mention the fall of Adam and it should not insist on emphasizing the unity of the divine decree. In both matters the decision had been arrived at in the interest of what we may call, perhaps, comprehension - though this must be understood, of course, as a generic Calvinistic and not universalistic Christian comprehension. The Assembly had been led in this policy by the strictest Calvinists in the body. The sharp assertion of the sameness of the decree ordaining both the end and the means (for it was on this point of the unity of the decree alone that the debate turned) was advocated by Mr. Seaman, who seems to be most concerned about the possible misapprehension of the omission; by Mr. Whitaker, who takes the high ground that it is true, and therefore would best be expressed - an indication, by the way, of the sound Calvinism of the man who later was so strenuous to have some alteration (we know not what, but surely from this we can infer no anti-Calvinistic one) made in the last words of the third section; and by Mr. Palmer, who fears to be brought into a worse snare by leaving it out than could arise from inserting it. Mr. Seaman urged that "if those words 'in the same decree' be left out, will involve us in a great debate"; that "all the odious doctrine of Arminians is from their distinguishing of the decrees, but our divines say they are one and the same decree"; that the censure the Remonstrants lay under for making two decrees concerning election would lie equally against making two decrees of the end and means. Mr. Whitaker simply urged that with reference to time all decrees are "*simul* and *semel: in eterno* there is not *prius* and *posterius*"; that though the conceptions of the Divines were very various about the decrees, there was no reason why the truth should not be frankly asserted. The other side was taken by men like Rutherford, Gillespie, Gouge, Reynolds, and Calamy. They did not deny the truth meant to be expressed in the phrase "the same decree," but rather unanimously affirmed it. But the keynote of their discussion was expressed by Gillespie when he said, "When that word is left out, is it not a truth, and so every one may enjoy his own sense," and by Reynolds when he remarked, "Let not us put in disputes and scholastical things into a Confession of Faith." Obviously it was generic Calvinism they were

intent on asserting and not any particular variety of it. And this is given point to by another incident of the debate. Besides the mere phrase "the same decree," its sameness was asserted in the original draft by the concatenation of the clauses. We do not know precisely how its language ran at first; but apparently it was, as we have seen, something like this: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, to bring this to pass, ordained by the same decree to permit man to fall" - and so on enumerating the several steps in the *ordo decretorum*. "I question," remarked Mr. Calamy, "that 'to bring this to pass'; we assert *massa pura* in this. . . . I desire that nothing may be put in one way or other; it makes the fall of man to be *medium executionis decreti*." It was in the same sense that Rutherford wished to amend by saying simply "God also hath decreed." "It is very probable but one decree," he added, "but whether fit to express it in a Confession of Faith. . . ." A remark of Gillespie's would seem to show that he was not quite willing to yield in this matter; let there be no dispute indeed about a word, he seems to say - but the matter involved is another thing: "Say, 'For the same end God hath ordained to permit man to fall.' . . . This shows that in ordine nature God ordaining man to glory goes before His ordaining to permit man to fall." The appearance is that Gillespie desired the Confession to be committed not indeed to the supralapsarian position - for that occupies narrower ground than his words need to imply - but to the inclusion of the fall of Adam explicitly in the means to glorification.

Counsels of moderation thus prevailing as the result of this debate of Monday (October 20), the Assembly listened on Tuesday morning (October 21) to the "report made from the first Committee sitting before the Assembly"; and resolved "that mention be made of man's fall," and "that those words 'to bring this to pass' shall not stand." This is to say, it resolved to include man's fall within the decree of God, but not to assert it to be means to the end of glorification. It was then that Mr. Reynolds' statement as already quoted was brought before them and the debate commenced afresh from this new beginning. By what process this statement was ultimately reduced to the exquisite formula that was finally passed we are not informed. Considerable adjustment was needed. The first sentence required the omission not only of the word "same," but also of its whole concluding clause: "which He in His counsel is pleased to

appoint for the executing of that decree" - a redundancy which must have been intolerable to this tersely speaking Assembly. Similarly, while the structure of the second section is adopted, and, of course, the happy phrase - cutting all knots - "being fallen in Adam," the language is wholly recast in the interests of clear and succinct statement: thus the long clause (derived from the Thirty-nine Articles) "who are endowed with so excellent a benefit" gives way to the simple "who are elected"; and the Scriptural "called according to God's purpose" to the more technical "effectually called," with an additional definition of that unto which they are called and by what divine agency. Thence the statement proceeds through the items of the *ordo salutis*. So far as we can trace it, this is the history of the formulation of this beautiful section - wise in its insertions and omissions alike.

There remains, however, a very important clause of the section about which apparently the keenest and certainly the most fully reported of all the debates on this chapter was held - the final sentence of the section, which affirms: "Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only." The discussion of this statement was formally ordered at the close of the session on Tuesday, October 21, 1645: "*Ordered* - To debate the busin[ess] about Redemption of the elect only by Christ to-morrow morning." The debate, begun Wednesday morning, October 22, and continued at least to October 31, constitutes one of the most notable debates reported in the Minutes, and certifies us that the closing sentence of the sixth section is one of the most deliberate findings of the Assembly.

The protagonist in the debate was Mr. Calamy, who opened it with the enunciation of what is known as the "Hypothetical Universalistic" *schema* - a well-guarded expression of this theory, certainly, and even, perhaps, a somewhat modified expression of it, but also a clearly-cut and fully developed enunciation of universal redemption with limited application. "I am far from universal redemption in the Arminian sense," he said; "but that that I hold is in the sense of our divines in the Synod of Dort, that Christ did pay a price for all, - absolute intention for the elect, conditional intention for the reprobate in case they do believe, - that all

men should be *salvabiles, non obstante lapsu Adami* . . . that Jesus Christ did not only die sufficiently for all, but God did intend, in giving of Christ, and Christ in giving Himself, did intend to put all men in a state of salvation in case they do believe." Again, "The Arminians hold that Christ did pay a price for this intention only, that all men should be in an equal state of salvation. They say Christ did not purchase any impetration. . . . This universality of R[edemption]" - that is, of course, that which he, in opposition to this Arminian construction, advocates - "doth neither intrude upon either doctrine of special election or special grace." Still again: "In the point of election, I am for special election; and for reprobation, I am for *massa corrupta*. . . . Those to whom He . . . by virtue of Christ's death, there is *ea administratio* of grace to the reprobate, that they do wilfully damn themselves." If we were to take these statements just as they stand, we should probably be obliged to say that Calamy's position was characterized by the following points: 1. It denied the Arminian doctrine of a universal redemption for all men alike, without exception, on condition of faith, which faith is to be man's own act by virtue of powers renewed through a universal gift of sufficient grace. 2. It denied equally the Amyraldian doctrine of a universal redemption for all men alike, without exception, on condition of faith, which faith, however, is the product of special grace given to the elect alone, so that only the elect can fulfil the condition. 3. It affirmed a double intention on Christ's part in His work of redemption - declaring that He died absolutely for the elect and conditionally for the reprobate. Theologically his position, which has its closest affinities with the declarations of the English Divines at Dort, was an improvement upon the Amyraldian; but logically it was open, perhaps, to all the objections which were fatal to it as well as to others arising from its own lack of consistency.

Both sets of objections were made to tell upon it in the debate. For example, the fundamental objection to all schemes of conditional redemption, that it is inapplicable to more than a moiety of the human race, was early pressed upon him with telling effect. Mr. Palmer asked subtly, "I desire to know whether he will understand it *de omni homine*," i.e. whether Christ died for every man - of all sorts and in all conditions - only conditionally on the exercise of faith. Mr. Calamy must have felt



hard pressed indeed when he answered simply, "*De adultis.*" Where, then, shall those that die in infancy appear? On the other hand, Mr. Reynolds struck a deadly blow at the peculiar form which Mr. Calamy had given his doctrine when he remarked that to assert that Christ, besides dying absolutely for the elect, died also conditionally for the reprobate - in case they do believe - is to say He died for them" upon a condition that they cannot perform, and God never intends to give them." It cannot seem strange to us, therefore, that Mr. Calamy was not able to preserve in the debate his somewhat artificial middle position, and is found arguing roundly for universal redemption of all and several, without distinction, at least in the Amyraldian sense.

To Calamy's aid in the debate there came Messrs. Seaman, Marshall, and Vines: while he was opposed by Palmer, Reynolds, Gillespie, Rutherford, Wilkinson, Burgess, Lightfoot, Price, Goodwin, and Harris. In the early part of the first day the debate turned on the *ordo decretorum*. Gillespie held it firmly to this broader question, and from that point of view - that "there is a concatenation of the death of Christ with the decrees" - asked significantly "*a parte post* what follows upon that conditional redemption." On the authority of the Dordrechtan Divines, to whom Calamy had appealed, Reynolds explained that "the Synod intended no more than to declare the sufficiency of the death of Christ; it is *pretium in se*, of sufficient value to all, - nay, ten thousand worlds," and that "to be salvable is a benefit, and therefore belongs only to them that have interest in Christ." Later in the day the debate turned rather on the Scriptural argument, and Calamy rested his case on the two texts, John iii. 16 and Mark xvi. 15. From the former he argued that it was on account of the love of God for the world at large, not for the elect only, that Christ came - as the "whosoever believeth" sufficiently indicates. From the latter he argued that a universal redemption is requisite to give verity to the universal offer. Those who essayed to answer him exhibit minor differences, especially in the detailed exegesis of John iii. 16. Gillespie and Rutherford understand that when it is said God so loved the world, it is the elect scattered everywhere in the world that are intended; Lightfoot and Harris understand that "the world" in contra-distinction from the Jews is meant; and Price very wisely remarks that even if mankind at large be meant it does not at all follow that Christ died

equally and alike for every individual - there is no inconsequence in saying that it was because of His love for the world that He gave His very life for the multitudes He chose out of this world to save. However the term "the world" be taken, therefore, the result of the debate showed that no conclusion could be drawn from this text to the universality of redemption. As to Mark xvi. 15, Rutherford pointed out at once that the argument that the universality of the offer of the Gospel necessarily inferred precedent universality of redemption as its ground was obviously unsound inasmuch as it proved too much - the same argument is equally applicable to, say, justification. The promise of justification is as much included in the Gospel as the promise of redemption: shall we say, then, that we cannot preach the Gospel to all except on the supposition of a precedent universal justification? To this Mr. Seaman could reply only by repeating the shibboleth that what Christ did was to make all men only salvable, as Adam had made all men damnable - which one cannot believe was much of an aid to the cause he was advocating, as it involved a seriously low view of the effect of Adam's fall as well as of Christ's redemption: surely there were few in the Assembly who would assent to the proposition that the whole effect of Adam's sin was to render men liable to be condemned, instead of bringing them under actual condemnation, and the whole effect of Christ's work was to render men capable of salvation, instead of actually saving them. Gillespie, however, as was usual with that brilliant young man, put his finger here, too, on the technical flaw in Calamy's reasoning by insisting on the distinction between the *voluntas decreti* and *voluntas mandati*: "The command doth not hold out God's intentions; otherwise God's command to Abraham concerning sacrificing of his son. . . ." Mr. Marshall, who with Mr. Vines gave a support to Mr. Calamy which was evidently as effective and wise as that of Mr. Seaman seems the opposite, acutely replies to this that "there is not only a *mandatum* but a promise" - but obviously this was a good rejoinder rather than a solid distinction. The weight of the debate was clearly on the side of the proposition proposed, and on that score alone we cannot feel surprise that it was retained in the Confession.

The interest of the debate to us lies in the revelation which it gives us of the presence in the Assembly of an influential and able, but apparently small, body of men whose convictions lay in the direction of the modified

Calvinism which had been lately promulgated by Cameron and Amyraut for the express purpose of finding a place for a universal redemption in the Calvinistic system. For the origin of this party Dr. Mitchell<sup>90</sup> would point us to English sources: but Baillie especially mentions Amyraut in this connection;<sup>91</sup> and it would seem that it was Amyraut and Cameron - both of whom Gillespie mentions in this debate - whom men had especially in mind during the discussion; and it would seem further to be clear that while the adherents of this universalistic view of the atonement in the Assembly held it with British moderation, and were not prepared to go all lengths with the French Divines who had lately promulgated it with such force, they yet looked upon them as of their school and sought support from them. The result of the debate was a refusal to modify the Calvinistic statement in this direction - or perhaps we should rather say the definitive rejection of the Amyraldian views and the adoption of language which was precisely framed to exclude them. Dr. Mitchell, reviving an old contention, suggests indeed that unless the clause of the Confession in question be read disjunctively rather than, as it is actually phrased, conjunctively, it will not operate for the exclusion of Amyraldians.<sup>92</sup> It is not clearly obvious, however, that the word "and" here binds the several items of the enumeration so closely together as to make it appear that all that is affirmed is only that the whole of this process takes place in the case of the elect only: the natural sense of the clause is clearly that no one of the transactions here brought together is to be affirmed of the non-elect. And this impression is increased by the broader context, not to speak of the parallel passages in viii. 3 and 5.<sup>93</sup> It might seem somewhat more to the point, possibly, to recall that in this section the language is so ordered as to seem to deal with the actual *ordo salutis* rather than directly with the *ordo decretorum*. It is asserted that the *ordo salutis* is the result of the decreeing of the means by which the elect are brought to glory. But what is subsequently asserted is that none but the elect are (actually) redeemed by Christ, effectually called, etc. - the mind being abstracted for the moment from the intention to the performance. The Westminster Amyraldians - if we may venture so to call them - had, of course, freely admitted the distinction between the elect and nonelect in the application: it was only in the impetration that they disputed it: and it might perhaps seem to them possible to confess that though Christ had died for all, the merits of His death had actually been

applied only to some, and to contend that only this is actually expressed by saying that none but the elect "are redeemed by Christ." Even this, however, appears more subtle than satisfactory; and in any event it would seem quite obvious that the Assembly intended to state in this clause with adequate clearness their reasoned and deliberate conviction that the decree of election lies behind the decree of the gift of Christ for redemption, and that the latter is to be classed as one of the means for the execution of the decree of election. This is the definite exclusion of the Amyraldian view, and anything that can be made really consistent with this conception of the *ordo decretorum* will be found to differ fundamentally from Amyraldism.<sup>94</sup>

7. We first hear of the seventh section in the Assembly on November 6, 1645; but then after such a fashion as to suggest that it had already been before the Assembly and perhaps may have been already somewhat debated. We read simply: "The paragraph concerning Reprobation referred to the Committee, to make report to-morrow morning." This was doubtless a special Committee, according to the wont of the Assembly in such instances. On November 7 accordingly we read: "Report made by Mr. Reynolds about Reprobation." Then again on November 11 we read: "Debate the report of Reprobation. . . . Debate about that 'sovereign power.'" This is all that the Minutes tell us about the passage of this important section through the Assembly: and this tells us practically nothing, except that it was carefully scrutinized and debated. We may conjecture that the debate on the words "sovereign power" turned on the query whether something more or other than "power" might not wisely be indicated at this point: but this is mere conjecture, and we learn only that the retention of the phrase just as it now stands was not inadvertent but deliberate. The section is one of those which, though it has a point of suggestion in the Irish Articles, yet as it stands is the independent product of the Assembly: and it certainly does credit to the Assembly by the combined boldness and prudence, faithfulness, and tenderness of its sonorous language.<sup>95</sup>

8. There is no debate signaled on section 8 in its first passage through the Assembly. But when the chapter came back again from the perfecting Committee - June 18, 1646 - we read: "The Assembly

proceeded in debate of the Article 'of God's Eternal Decree'; and upon debate part of it was ordered. Upon debate about the last clause of it, concerning the handling of this doctrine, it was *Resolved* upon the Q., To refer this till to-morrow morning." We find nothing, however, on the subject in the Minutes for June 19 beyond this: "The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the Confession of Faith; and upon debate, that head' of God's Eternal Decree' was ordered, and is as followeth. . . ." We are therefore only certified concerning this admirable section that it was the object of the care of the Assembly itself up to the last moment, without being informed what precisely in the course of its stately march engaged its latest attention.

From this survey, by means, as it were, of specimen bits of the debates during which the third chapter of the Confession as we have it was beaten out, we may obtain some sort of idea of the labor and care expended on it by the Assembly. The survey is certainly calculated to enhance our idea of the deliberateness of its formulation. We have here no hasty draft, rushed through the body at breakneck speed and adopted at the end on the credit of the Committee that had drafted it. The third chapter of the Confession is distinctly the work of the Assembly itself, and comes to us as the well-pondered and thoroughly adjusted expression of the living belief of that whole body. The differences that existed between the members were not smoothed over in ambiguous language. They were fully ventilated. Room was made for them when they were considered unimportant and mere *apices logici*: but when they concerned matters of moment, after full discussion, the doctrine of the Assembly - well-reasoned and fully thought out - as distinguished from that of individuals, was embodied clearly and firmly in the document. The document as it stands is thus emphatically the Confession of Faith of the Westminster Assembly. We cannot say that this or that clause represents this or that party in the Assembly. There were parties in the Assembly, and they were all fully heard and what they said was carefully weighed. But no merely party opinion was allowed a place in the document. When it came to voting the statements there to be set down, the Assembly as such spoke; and in speaking it showed itself capable of speaking its own mind. It is doing only mere justice to it, therefore, to read the document as the solemn and carefully framed expression of its reasoned faith.

In the appended text (to follow on the succeeding pages) we have given, in the middle column, as nearly as we can make it out, the form in which the third chapter came before the Assembly from its Committee, marking in footnotes the chief amendments which were made in it in the process of reducing the earlier draft to the form in which it left the Assembly and has come down to us. In order that the relations of this first reported text to the Irish Articles, on the one hand, and the completed Westminster Confession, on the other, may be easily apprehended, we have printed these two texts alongside of it, and we have sought so to present them that the eye may easily unravel the historical connections involved.

**IRISH ARTICLES  
(1615)<sup>96</sup>**

**III. OF GOD'S  
ETERNAL DECREE  
AND  
PREDESTINATION**

(11) God, from all eternity, did, by his unchangeable counsel, ordain whatsoever in time should come to pass: yet so as thereby no violence is offered to the wills of the reasonable creatures, and neither the liberty nor the contingency of the second causes is taken away, but established rather.

**COMMITTEE'S  
PROPOSAL**

**OF GOD'S ETERNAL  
DECREE [AND  
PREDESTINATION]<sup>97</sup>**

[1] God from all eternity, did by the most holy [and] wise<sup>99</sup> counsel<sup>100</sup> of his [own]<sup>100</sup> will freely and unchangeably<sup>101</sup> ordain whatsoever in time<sup>102</sup> should come<sup>103</sup> to pass,  
[2] without any foresight of anything without himself as a condition moving him thereunto:<sup>104</sup> yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or

**WESTMINSTER  
CONFESSION<sup>98</sup>**

**OF GOD'S ETERNAL  
DECREE**

**1. GOD FROM** ALL **ETERNITY DID**, by the most wise and holy COUNSEL of his own will, freely and unchangeably **ORDAIN WHATSOEVER COMES TO PASS; YET SO AS THEREBY** neither is God the author of sin; **NOR IS VIOLENCE OFFERED TO THE WILL OF THE CREATURES, NOR IS THE LIBERTY OR CONTIGNECY OF SECOND CAUSES TAKEN AWAY, BUT RATHER ESTABLISHED.**

contingency of second causes taken away but established rather.

(12) By the same eternal counsel, God hath predestinated some unto life, and reprobated some unto death: of both which there is a certain number, known only to God, which can neither be increased nor diminished.

(13) *Predestination to life is the everlasting*

[3] By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.<sup>105</sup> [4] These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

[5] Those of mankind that are predestinated

2. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions; yet hath he not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass, upon such conditions.

3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, **SOME** men and angels are **PREDESTINED** UNTO everlasting **LIFE**, and others fore-ordained **TO** everlasting **DEATH**. 4. These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their **NUMBER IS** so **CERTAIN** and definite that it **CANNOT BE EITHER INCREASED OR DIMINISHED**.

5. Those of mankind that are *predestinated*

*purpose of God, whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath constantly decreed in his secret counsel to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ unto everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour.*

(14) The cause moving God to predestinate unto life, is not the foreseeing of faith, or perseverance, or good works, or of anything which is in the person predestinated, but only the good pleasure of God himself. For all things being ordained for the manifestation of his glory, and his glory being to appear both in the works of his mercy and of his justice, it seemed good to his heavenly wisdom to choose out a certain number, towards whom he would extend his

unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory,<sup>106</sup> out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.

*unto life, God, BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD WAS LAID, according to his ETERNAL and immutable PURPOSE, AND THE SECRET COUNSEL and GOOD PLEASURE of his will, HATH CHOSEN IN CHRIST, UNTO EVERLASTING glory, out of his free grace and love alone, WITHOUT ANY FORESIGHT OF FAITH OR GOOD WORKS, OR PERSEVERANCE in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.*



undeserved mercy,  
leaving the rest to be  
spectacles of his justice.

(15) Such as are predestinated unto life, *be called according unto God's purpose (his Spirit working in due season), and through grace they obey the calling, they be justified freely, they be made sons of God by adoption, they be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, they walk religiously in good works, and at length by God's mercy they attain to everlasting felicity.*

But such as are not predestinated to salvation shall finally be condemned for their sins.

[6] As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he to bring this to pass,<sup>107</sup> by the same decree,<sup>108</sup> ordained to permit man to fall; [and such as are predestinated unto life effectually to call to faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, to justify, adopt, sanctify, and to keep by his power through faith unto salvation<sup>109</sup>].<sup>110</sup> Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.<sup>111</sup>

[7] The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as

6. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto. *Wherefore they who are elected being fallen in Adam are redeemed by Christ, ARE effectually CALLED unto faith in Christ BY HIS SPIRIT WORKING IN DUE SEASON; ARE JUSTIFIED, ADOPTED, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are nay other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.*

7. The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as

as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power<sup>112</sup> over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.

he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath **FOR THEIR SIN**, to the praise of his glorious justice.

(16) *The godly consideration of predestination and our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things; as well because it doth greatly confirm and establish their faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God.* And, on the contrary side, *for curious and carnal persons lacking the Spirit of Christ, to*

[8] The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men attending to the will of God revealed in his word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.<sup>113</sup>

8. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men **ATTENDING THE WILL OF GOD REVEALED IN HIS WORD**, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.

*have continually before  
their eyes the sentence  
of God's predestination  
is very dangerous.*

*(17) We must receive  
God's promises in such  
wise as they be  
generally set forth unto  
us in holy Scripture:  
and in our doings, that  
will of God is to be  
followed which we  
have expressly  
declared unto us in the  
word of God.*

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Endnotes:

1. From *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, xii. 1901, pp. 226-283.
2. The fundamental authority for the study of the work of the Assembly for the period covered by it is, of course, the volume of its "Minutes" edited by Drs. A. F. Mitchell and John Struthers, and published by William Blackwood and Sons in 1874. Along with this Dr. Mitchell's Baird Lectures for 1882 on "The Westminster Assembly: Its History and Standards" (ed. 2, Philadelphia, 1897), should be consulted. Next to the "Minutes" the fullest source of information is Robert Baillie's "Letters and Journals," edited by Mr. David Laing, Edinburgh, 1841-1842. A very painstaking study of the whole constructive work of the Assembly has recently been published by Dr. Wm. A. Shaw in his "History of the English Church during the Civil Wars and under the Commonwealth, 1640-1660," 2 vols., London, New York, and Bombay: Longmans, Green & Co., 1900—a book simply packed with facts. The present article was unfortunately

written before Dr. Shaw's book came into our hands. But we have carefully compared it with the account he has given (in pages 357-367 of his first volume) and examined the data afresh in the light of his narrative-not without profit to ourselves, or, occasionally, correction of details in Dr. Shaw's narrative. Where our account differs from Dr. Shaw's, therefore, it is to be understood that the difference is not unintentional.

3. See the full and very interesting account of this work given by Dr. Mitchell, "The Westminster Assembly," ed. 2, pp. 150 *sqq.* Cf. Dr. Briggs's article in the *Presbyterian Review* for January, 1880.
4. He notes the emergence of the matter only on July 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, 27, 28, August 1, 18, and October 12.
5. "The Westminster Assembly," pp. 150 *sq.* Cf. Shaw, i. pp. 147 *sq.*
6. Thus: Art. i. Old and Revised Artt. and Conf. of Faith: "of one substance" (Irish: "of one and the same substance"). Art. ii. Old and Revised Artt. and Conf. of Faith: "very and eternal God" (Irish: "true and eternal God"). Especially the following: Art. ii. Revised Artt. and Conf. of Faith: "and *the* manhood" (Old Artt. and Irish omit "the"); Art. x. Revised Artt. and Conf. of Faith: "or [to] prepare" (Old Artt. and Irish: "and prepare").
7. The text of the Westminster revision of the first fifteen Articles of the Church of England may be found in Hall's "Harmony of Protestant Confessions," 1844, Appendix i. pp. 505-512; Neal's "History of the Puritans," ii. 1849, Appendix vii. pp. 454-457; Stoughton's "Ecclesiastical History of England," ii. ("The Church of the Commonwealth"), 1867, Appendix iii. pp. 528-535; but correctly as to the 8th Article only in E. Tyrrell Green's "The Thirty-nine Articles and the Age of the Reformation," London, 1896, Appendix iv. pp. 343-348. Mr. Green marks all the changes made in the text. For the Preface and revised Article viii., see especially Mitchell and Struthers, "Minutes," pp. 541-542. Cf. Schaff, "Creeds of Christendom," i. 1877, pp. 653 *sq.*
8. A good account is given by Shaw, "History of the English Church," i. 1900, pp. 259-261. Cf. "Journals of Commons," iv. pp. 89 *sq.*, etc., and Minutes of Assembly for March 1, 5, 21, 24, 28, April 2 (4?), 21 (August 14), 1645.
9. For some indication of the nature of these topics see below, p. 85.

10. Chapter xxiii. § 3.
11. See especially Mitchell, "The Westminster Assembly," pp. 420 *sqq.*, but compare Shaw, i. p. 369, note. References may be found in the Minutes on December 2, 1644, February 7, 1645, May 12, 13, August 1, 4, 5, 19, 20, and September 11. Then especially September 14 (1646), 15, 17, 22, 23, 24, November 27, 30, December 1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 28, 31, and January 4 and 14, 1647, on which last day the order was given to intermit the preparation of the Catechism on which the Assembly had hitherto been working and to cast the material into two Catechisms. The text of this "first Catechism," so far as it is recorded in the Minutes, has been put together by Mr. Wm. Carruthers, in his admirable "The Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines," in facsimile, London, 1897, pp. 21-26.
12. When the first propositions from the Catechism were reported the Assembly had just passed chapter xvii. of the Confession (though one or two immediately preceding chapters were not yet passed).
13. "Letters," ii. p. 379: July 14, 1646.
14. It is with reference to this engagement that the following Minute, entered immediately after the completion of the (Larger) Catechism, October 15, 1647, must be read: "Upon a motion made by Mr. Rutherford, it was Ordered - That it be recorded in the Scribes' books, 'The Assembly hath enjoyed the assistance of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Reverend and learned Commissioners from the Church of Scotland in the work of the Assembly'; during all the time of the debating and perfecting of the 4 things mentioned in the Covenant, viz., the Directory for Worship, the Confession of Faith, Form of Church Government, and Catechism, some of the Reverend and learned Divines Commissioners from the Church of Scotland have been present in and assisting to this Assembly." There is no question here of a farewell to the Assembly: but of a record of covenanted work completed. Rutherford's leavetaking was made on November 9 subsequent. The relation of the Scottish Commissioners to the Assembly and its work is not always fully understood: it is lucidly explained by Dr. Mitchell in his "The Westminster Assembly," ed. 2, pp. 180-181, note. They were not members of the Assembly and cast no vote in it: they took part in its debates only as private persons on

its invitation. They were representatives of the Church of Scotland coordinate as a body with the Assembly as a whole, which represented the Church of England, and conferring with it as a whole on the common formularies.

15. See Shaw, i. p. 127, note, and cf. the "Ordinance" itself as printed in most Scotch editions of the Confession of Faith and in Dr. Mitchell's "The Westminster Assembly," pp. xiii. *sqq.*
16. So it says in its Preface prefixed to the portion of the Thirty-nine Articles it had revised, when this was sent up to the Commons. See the Preface in "Minutes," pp. 541-542.
17. Preface to Thirty-nine Articles, as above. Cf. Mitchell, "The Westminster Assembly," p. 185.
18. Mitchell, "The Westminster Assembly," p. 161.
19. Lightfoot, "Works," ed. Pitman, xiii. 1824, p. 303. Baillie's ("Letters," ii. pp. 220-221) account is as follows: "So soon as my Lord Warriston came up, we resolved on the occasion of his instructings, and the letters of our Generall Assemblie, both to ourselves and to this Assemblie, which he brought, to quicken them a little, who had great need of spurrs. My Lord Warriston very particularlie declared in the Assemblie the passionate desires both of our Parliament, Assemblie, armies, and whole people, of the performance of the Covenanted Uniformitie; and withall we called for a meeting of the grand Committee of Lords, Commons, Assemblie, and us; to whom we gave a paper penned, notablie well, by Mr. Henderson, bearing the great evils of so long a delay of settling religion, and our earnest desyres that some wayes might be found out for expedition. This paper my Lord Say took to deliver to the House of Lords, Mr. Solicitor also for the House of Commons, and a third copy was given to Mr. Marshall, to be presented to the Assemblie. . . Also we have the grand committee to meet on Monday, to find out wayes of expeditione; and we have gotten it to be the work of the Assemblie itselfe, to doe no other thing till they have found out wayes of accellerating; so by God's help we expect a farr quicker progress than hitherto."
20. Lightfoot, as above, p. 305.
21. Lightfoot, "Works," xiii. p. 305. The Assembly's own Minute runs: "A Committee to join with the Commissioners of the Church of Scotland to prepare matter for a joint Confession of Faith."



R. neg. 12.	R. affirmat. 9 [to be a Committee].	
Dr. Gouge.	Mr. Burges.	or any 5 of them."
Mr. Gataker.	Mr. Vines.	
Mr. Arrowsmith.	Mr. Goodwin.	
Dr. Temple.	Dr. Hoyle.	
Mr. Burroughs.		

See " Minutes," pp. lxxxvi. sq.

22. Lightfoot, p. 308. The Assembly's own Minute for September 4 runs: Report from the Committee for the Confession of Faith. They desire an addition of those persons to the said Committee-*Ordered*-Mr. Palmer, Mr. Newcomen, Mr. Herle, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Tuckney, Dr. Smith, Mr. Young, Mr. Ley, Mr. Sedgwicke, be added to the Committee for the ConI- «ion of Faith" (p. lxxxvii.).
23. "Letters," ii. pp. 232, 248.
24. On December 26, 1644, Baillie tells us why the work on the Confession was delayed: "If the Directorie and Government were once out of our hands, as a few days will put them, then we will fall on our great question of Excommunication, the Catechise, and Confession. There is here matter to hold us long enough, if the wrangling humour which long predomined in many here did continue.... I think we must either passe the Confession to another season, or, if God will help us, the heads of it being distribute among many able hands, it may in a short time be so drawn up, as the debates of it may cost little time. All this chalking is on the supposition of God's singular assistance, continuing such a disposition in the Assemblie and Parliament as hes appeared this moneth or two bypast" (ii. p. 248).
25. It was not until July that any part of the text got before the Assembly. Baillie (ii. p. 275), writing apparently early in June (Shaw, i. p. 190), can still speak of the Assembly as only "beginning to take the Confession of Faith and Catechise to our consideration," and on the 5th September (ii. p. 315) says, "We are goeing on languidlie with the

Confession of Faith and Catechisme."

26. "Letters," ii. p. 266.
27. References to the Minutes are of course all to the volume published in 1874 by Drs. Mitchell and Struthers. References are equally easily verifiable whether made by pages, dates, or numbers of sessions - and therefore we shall not burden the footnotes with details.
28. "Minutes," p. 77. Cf. pp. 28 *sq.*
29. This paper was brought into the Assembly on April 14: it is given by Dr. Mitchell from the "Journals of the House of Lords," vii. pp. 317, 318, on pp. 80-81, note, of the "Minutes."
30. See a full account of the work of the Houses in this matter in Shaw's "History of the English Church during the Civil Wars and under the Commonwealth," i. 1900, pp. 257 *sqq.*
31. Shaw, as above, i. pp. 259-261. "Minutes," p. 71 (March 21 and 24), p. 74 (March 28), p. 75 (April 2), p. 76? (April 4).
32. Shaw, i. pp. 260-261, citing "Commons' Journal," iv. p. 114, April 17. The names of the Committee are given by Shaw, p. 261, note.
33. Shaw, i. p. 358, citing "Commons' Journal," iv. p. 113. 34
34. Shaw, i. p. 358.
35. The language is: "That the Thirty-nine Articles be reviewed by the former Committee, and the Committee to consider &sc. . . . R. - To be referred to one Committee." Hence apparently *two* Committees are in view: but finally the whole matter was committed to *one*. *Which* one is not clear.
36. On Tuesday, May 6, when the propositions as to the Civil Magistrate in the Government were under debate, question was raised whether a proposed form of statement should be placed in the Government or in "a Confession of Faith."
37. Shaw, i. p. 358, quoting "Commons' Journal," iv. p. 133: "Minutes" for May 8 (p. 90).
38. The Confession of Faith is mentioned in the interval only on May 6 (as above, p. 78, and p. 86, note 36), and then only incidentally and indeterminately.
39. As cited, ii. p. 266.
40. Shaw, i. p. 358, supposes the Committee "to have subdivided" and to be now reunited. It is possible, of course, that the two parts (that appointed August 20 and that appointed September 4) had been



sitting as separate Committees and were only now combined.

41. "The Westminster Assembly," ed. 2, Philadelphia, 1897, pp. 367 *sq.*
42. Concerning them see Mitchell, "The Westminster Assembly," p. 147.
43. Shaw, i. p. 358, also seems to look upon the Committee of May 12, 1645, as a substitute for the former Committee.
44. Reports from First Committee, "Minutes," pp. 129, 130, 150, 151, 164, 166, 167, 171, 192. Reports from Second Committee, "Minutes," pp. 130, 131, 150, 181, 162, 166, 167. Reports from Third Committee, "Minutes," pp. 165, 173.
45. The detailed history of the large Committees is obscure: see Mitchell, "The Westminster Assembly," ed. 2, pp. 148 *sq.* Dr. Burgess was the first chairman of the First Committee, but he had in the meanwhile been in disgrace (p. 181) and during his suspension a new chairman must needs have been chosen. Cf. January 29, 1646, "Mr. Coleman made report of Christian Liberty" (cf. p. 104), Mr. Coleman being also a member of the First Committee: March 5, "Report from Dr. Gouge about the Church."
46. Cf. November 12: "Dr. Stanton [made] report from second Committee"; December 5: "Report from Dr. Stanton of the Sacraments in general" (cf. pp. 164, 167); but December 29: "Mr. Calamy made report of Baptism."
47. Cf. November 20: "Mr. Prophet brought in a report from the Third Committee," etc.; March 5, 1646: "Mr. Prophet made report of Religion and Worship," etc.; but December 2, 1645: "Report from Mr. Cheynell of Justification" - Mr. Cheynell being also a member of the Third Committee; January 1, 1646: "Dr. Wincop made report from the Third Committee about the Law of God"
48. Mr. Reynolds was, however, a member of the Committee of September 4, 1644, and also of that of May 12, 1645: and it is, of course, conceivable that it was to this fundamental Committee that the topic was recommitted. The case would not be so simple in the instances of Mr. Gouge and Mr. Arrowsmith; they were both members of the Committee of August 20, 1644, but not of that of May 12 - which in our view had been substituted for it. In Mr. Seaman's case, just to be mentioned, it is clear that it was to a special Committee that the recommitment was made, and he was moreover not a member of any of the Committees of August 20, September 4,

- 1644, May 12, 1645.
49. There were four distributions - July 16, 1645, November 18, 1645, February 23, 1646 - to which should be added the supplementary distribution of August 19, 1646.
  50. Mr. Cawdry was added also, September 1, 1646.
  51. Compare Baillie's account of the care expended on this review, ii. pp. 400-403: the passages are extracted below, pp. 119-120.
  52. This order was "due to the letter from the Assembly of the Kirk in Scotland of the 18th of June, read in the Lords on the 9th of July (L. J., viii., 425; C. J., iv., 621) "-Shaw, i. p. 360. A letter from the Church of Scotland was delivered also to the Assembly, July 8.
  53. The order was made on September 16 ("Commons' Journal," iv. p. 670; Shaw, i. p. 361), and received on September 18 ("Minutes," pp. 285-286).
  54. Baillie, "Letters," ii. p. 403, iii. p. 2. See the text below, pp. 119, 120.
  55. The answer of the Assembly to the requisition is printed by Dr. Mitchell in "The Westminster Assembly," ed. 2, 1897, pp. 377 sq.: the rejoinder of the House in the "Minutes," 1874, p. 295.
  56. For a history of the proof-texts of the Confession, see Dr. Samuel T. Lowrie's article in *The Presbyterian Review*, July, 1888 (ix. pp. 443 sqq.), and his reports in the "Minutes" of the General Assembly for 1891 (pp. 129 sqq.), and 1894 (pp. 157 sqq.), or in the "Digest " of 1898 (pp. 21 sqq.).
  57. As cited, i. p. 365.
  58. We have taken the idea of this tabular statement from Shaw (i. pp. 367 sqq.), who prints such an one; and we at first intended simply to quote Shaw's table. But on examination the accuracy of his presentation appeared scarcely adequate, and we have made out the whole afresh - deriving, of course, such aid from Shaw as we could. Where our table differs from Shaw's, therefore, it differs wittingly.
  59. See also " Minutes," p. 473.
  60. From Baillie also (ii. p. 344) we learn that the Articles "God" and "Trinity" when first passed were two separate Articles. See below, p. 118.
  61. Why the bracketed "s" appears in the printed "Minutes" is not obvious. The "s" is arbitrarily present or absent in the allusions in the "Minutes."

62. Why it is not likely that this is the first report of chapter ix. made to the Assembly is explained above, pp. 94-95.
63. It will be noted that these three chapters were apparently afterthoughts; they were, to all appearance, not contemplated in the first planning of the Confession.
64. "Minutes," p. 271.
65. Cf. also p. 205.
66. Cf. p. 436.
67. Cf. p. 437.
68. Cf. p. 439.
69. Cf. also p. 205.
70. P. 205.
71. Cf. p. 43.
72. Cf. p. 435.
73. See what is said of the topic, "Lies and Equivocations," at the end of this tabular statement (p. 116, N. B.). Is it possible that this chapter was developed out of that topic? It is against this supposition that different Committees seem concerned.
74. Cf. also p. 204.
75. Cf. also p. 206.
76. The material developed in the debates recorded on the dates contained within these square brackets entered very little into the formation of chapter xxv. Part of it was incorporated into chapter xxx.
77. The debates on the *jus divinum* which took place on May (1), 4, 5, 7, 8, 15, 18, 19, (25), 28, June 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, July 6, 7, 10, 17, did not, of course, directly concern chapter xxv., but rather were in preparation of the answer of the Assembly to certain Parliamentary "Questions." See Baillie's account as given on p. 118, below; and compare Shaw, i. pp. 308 *sqq.* But the material thus gathered indirectly bore fruit for this chapter also.
78. See above under chapter xxv. (note 76).
79. Shaw (i. p. 372) mentions the topic *Dedication to God*, which is reported as debated January 2, 1646, as "if not represented by Article XII" (Adoption), probably a subsequently omitted Article. Possibly, however, it signalizes only a debate on one phase of Baptism, in immediate contiguity with which it is mentioned.

80. See Mitchell in "Minutes," p. 416.
81. Mitchell in "Minutes," p. 416, and in "The Westminster Assembly," pp. 378-379, and 526; Shaw, i. p. 365.
82. Baillie says (November 25, 1645; ii. p. 325): "We had long and tough debates about the Decrees of election; yet thanks to God all is gone right according to our mind."
83. In the interesting discussion published in pp. 185 *sq.* of his "Theology of the Westminster Symbols," 1900, Dr. Edward D. Morris appears to suggest something like this. "An interesting discussion," he says, "seems to have arisen in the Assembly respecting the use of the singular or the plural term, decree or decrees, in the exposition of this general doctrine." There is, however, no indication of any such discussion having occurred on the title: the debate adverted to by Dr. Morris was upon the sixth section and concerned directly another matter - as will be seen below. The Westminster Divines obviously attached very little importance to this mere matter of phraseology.
84. The loosely kept notes which we have of the Minutes are too carelessly written to offer any testimony in such a matter. If we have counted correctly, the third chapter is mentioned more or less formally by name ten times in the "Minutes." In five the plural is used (pp. 114, 126, 127, 322, 323); in five the singular (pp. 126, 129, 130, 245, 246).
85. In the Larger Catechism, Q. 12, the words "in time" are retained: "God's decrees are the wise, free and holy acts of the counsel of His will, whereby, from all eternity, He hath, for His own glory, unchangeably fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men."
86. The words here placed in brackets stand in the Minutes *above* the line.
87. Dr. Mitchell notes that in the additional copy of the Minutes lapping at this part, which he calls Fascicle iii., the words stand: "and some *foreordained* to everlasting death."
88. Whitaker was a high Calvinist (see below, p. 136), but beyond that we know too little of his personal opinions to permit ourselves any conjectures as to his position on the special point here raised. He left little in print behind him: Brook ("Lives of the Puritans," 1813, iii. pp. 190 *sqq.*) supposes that only a few occasional sermons were

published by him, and names only three. He was a Cambridge Master of Arts, and a good scholar and unremitting in his labors as a preacher. See also Mr. Lupton's notice in the "Dictionary of National Biography," *sub nom.* It is illustrative of how little even the best scholars keep in mind the most important matters of Puritan (Presbyterian) history in England that Mr. Lupton can print such a sentence as this: "When the Westminster assembly of divines was convened in June 1643, he was one of the first members elected, and in 1647 was appointed moderator." Yet he had Brook's notice before his eyes (p. 191).

89. "The Westminster Assembly," ed. 2, 1897, p. 373.
90. "Minutes," pp. lv. *sqq.*
91. And his "Letters" have a number of references to the Amyraldian controversy and the pressing need of a telling refutation of Amyraut, which cannot mean anything else than that it was from him that the Assembly felt that the dissenting opinions emanated.
92. "Minutes," p. lvii. This contention, together with the other expedients which have been made use of by advocates of universal atonement to explain away the Confessional statement, is judiciously examined by Dr. Cunningham in his "Historical Theology," ii. 1864, pp. 327 *sq.*
93. Dr. Cunningham remarks that the followers of Cameron made their contention that they were not condemned by the Synod of Dort turn precisely on the fact that nothing exactly like these clauses occurs in its "Canons" (*op. cit.*, p. 329, note).
94. These debates are discussed with the care and prudence habitual to him by Dr. Mitchell, pp. lii. *sqq.* of his Introduction to the "Minutes"; and he says the best and most that can be said in favor of the view that Amyraldism is not peremptorily excluded by the statements finally agreed on. They are also discussed in somewhat the same spirit by Dr. E. D. Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 187 *sqq.*, with which should be compared the remarks on pp. 382 *sqq.* Dr. Morris, though claiming for the Amyraldians a right of existence under the "symbol," seems to be unable to free himself of the suspicion that the letter of the symbol scarcely justifies it. We should heartily accord with such a conclusion - in both its elements. We have already referred to Dr. Cunningham's discussion of the meaning of the Symbolic declarations ("Historical

Theology," ii. 1854, pp. 327 *sq.*).

95. At p. 813 of Dr. E. D. Morris' "Theology of the Westminster Symbols," 1900, we read the following sentences: "Some of the members [of the Westminster Assembly] held with Calamy (Minutes, 153) that by virtue of the death of Christ there is an administration of grace even to the reprobate, so that they in rejecting such grace do willfully damn themselves as a *massa corrupta*. It is a fact of considerable significance that, in deference to this opinion, it was proposed and somewhat debated in the Assembly to omit any statement respecting reprobation. This would have been in harmony with the course pursued in the framing of most of the continental symbols, which are quite silent respecting the relation of the divine decree to those who reject the divine grace. The statement in the Confession finally agreed upon, (Ch. III. vii.) simply declares that God, in the exercise of his sovereign power or dominion over his creatures passes by the wicked and unbelieving, and ordains them to dishonor and wrath *for their sins*, to the praise of his glorious justice." This seems to say that the omission of the seventh section of chapter iii. was proposed and debated in the Assembly: and indeed the omission of all statements respecting reprobation. There is nothing in the Minutes or, so far as known to us, in any witnessing document to justify such an affirmation. It would seem that Dr. Morris has fallen into an error here - possibly through a misinterpretation of the entries in the Minutes of propositions and debates concerning the language of iii. 3 - of which we have spoken above (pp. 130 *sqq.*). This misinterpretation would be rendered easier by the circumstances that the former of these entries occurs in the Minutes for November 3, and is noted by Dr. Mitchell on the margin as a "debate on reprobation," while in the immediately next Minute we have a reference to "the paragraph concerning Reprobation," doubtless referring to §7, which was certainly under debate November 11. Nevertheless it is very plain that it is §3 that was debated on November 3: and even if that were not so, there is no ground for Dr. Morris' statement that "it was proposed and somewhat debated in the Assembly to omit any statement respecting reprobation." To desire an "alteration in the words 'and some [fore-] ordained to everlasting death,'" or even the omission "of those words,

'foreordained to everlasting death'" - the extent of the notices of the proposals and debates in question - is, certainly, something extremely different from proposing and debating the omission of "any statement respecting reprobation." It is probably safe to say that the attribution to any Westminster man of a suggestion to omit all reference to reprobation from the Confession would have struck him as a calumny injurious to the soundness of his faith if not of his intelligence. With reference to the attitude of the other Reformed symbols to reprobation see *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, xiii. 1901, pp. 49-128, especially pp. 121-126: the doctrine of reprobation is certainly not left without "any statement" in the "most" of them.

96. This exhibit is taken without change from the Rev. E. Tyrrell Green's treatise on "The Thirty-nine Articles and the Age of the Reformation" (London [1896]), pp. 354-355. Phrases in italics are derived from the Thirty-nine Articles: those in thick-faced type from the Lambeth Articles. About 58 per cent. of the Irish Articles is taken from Art. xvii. of the Thirty-nine Articles, and about 15 per cent. from the Lambeth Articles: leaving about 27 per cent. of new matter.
97. Possibly the title read originally as in the Irish Articles, and in the debate the last two words, here bracketed, were omitted.
98. Phrases in italics are derived from the Thirty-nine Articles: those in thick type from the Lambeth Articles: those in small capitals from the Irish Articles. Phrases derived proximately from the Irish Articles and ultimately from the Thirty-nine Articles will therefore be found set in italic capitals: those derived proximately from the Irish Articles and ultimately from the Lambeth Articles in thick capitals. About 28 per cent. of the chapter is derived matter, about 72 per cent. being original. All but a trace of the derived matter is taken from the Irish Articles: end the material thus taken from the Irish Articles is about evenly divided between material original with them, and material ultimately derived from the Thirty-nine or Lambeth Articles - about 10 per cent. of the whole having each of these three sources for its origin.
99. Amended to "most wise and holy."
00. Debates signaled on these words, but details not given.
01. Moved to insert here "without respect to anything foreseen," and

omit corresponding clause below: "without . . . thereunto."

02. "in time" omitted.
03. "should come" amended to "comes."
04. After several attempts to adjust this clause, "without . . . thereunto," vis.: (1) by prefixing "absolutely"; (2) by omitting "any"; (3) by modifying so as to read "not being moved thereunto by any foresight of anything without himself"; (4) by transferring in a shortened form to just after "unchangeably" (see note 3) - it was removed from this place and expanded into a new section (§ 2) of the completed Confession.
05. Omission of the words "foreordained to everlasting death" proposed but refused: Mr. Whitaker proposed some alteration in them, which being refused, he entered his dissent.
06. The words "unto everlasting glory" were challenged, as perhaps superfluous, but retained.
07. Ordered not to express "to bring this to pass." Mr. Gilleapie proposed to substitute for the clause "so hath he . . . to permit man to fall": "For the same end God hath ordained to permit man to fall"; but it did not prevail.
08. Ordered not to assert "the same decree."
09. The bracketed portion is conjectural, to fill out the section according to the original opening: it is derived from the Irish Article.
10. Mr. Reynolds proposed the following form, which supplied the basis on which the final form was made (the italicized words were altered in making out the final form): "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he by the same<sup>a</sup> eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto, *which he in his counsel is pleased to appoint for the executing of that decree;*<sup>b</sup> wherefore they who are *endowed with so excellent a benefit,*<sup>c</sup> being fallen in Adam, are<sup>d</sup> called *in*<sup>e</sup> *according to God's purpose,*<sup>f</sup> etc. (a) "same" was omitted. (b) This clause was omitted. (c) This clause, derived from Art. xvii. of the Thirty-nine Articles, changed into "elected." (d) "redeemed by Christ, are" was inserted here. (e) It is uncertain whether "in" here is a mere slip due to a mixture of the two expressions "according to" and "in accordance with," or whether the word "Christ " has fallen out inadvertently after it. (f) "called



according to God's purpose" was altered to "effectually called unto faith in Christ."

111. Much debate was held over this final clause, but it was retained decisively.
112. "sovereign power" perhaps challenged but retained.
113. Debate signaled on this section but no details given.

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*-+ scanned and marked up by Lance George Marshall, 2007 +-*