

Symposium.

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH.

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A CONSIDERABLE degree of doctrinal restlessness has of late years been manifested among the churches which hold the Westminster Standards. For present purposes we need not inquire particularly into the causes which have given rise to this state of things. In the opinion of some it may be due to improved methods and general advancement in theological science, while others may see in it convincing evidence of deplorable unfaithfulness and retrogression. Be this as it may, the fact of wide-spread uneasiness is undeniable.

The United Presbyterian Church in Scotland was the first to deal with the matter. In 1879 its Synod adopted a Declaratory Act intended to guide ministers in quieting the minds of their people. It sets forth in substance that their teaching should be clear and emphatic regarding the love of God for all men; the sufficiency of the salvation provided through Christ for all men; its adaptation and free offer to all; man's responsibility in relation to the gospel; the salvation of infants; the salvability of the heathen; creation in six days; the relation between Church and State, etc.

In 1882 the Presbyterian Church of Victoria took similar action.

In 1883 the Presbyterian Church of England began to discuss its Standards, making declaration at the same time of unabated adherence to its historic doctrinal positions. A theological compendium was desired. Its design was not "of necessity to supersede the Westminster Confession as the standard of orthodox teaching from the pulpit." It should serve, however, "sundry other practical uses," such as "the clear presentation to the public of the Church's exact doctrinal teaching, the indoctrination