

churches of England and Scotland, we ought certainly to be anxious to acquaint ourselves better with the history and doctrinal standards of those with whom we would have closer relations. Certainly the ignorance which prevails and the gross misrepresentations of the doctrinal standards of other churches which find a place in some of our "church papers," are not conducive to friendship, much less to unity.

Then there are special points in the origin and history of the Westminster Confession which ought to commend it to the study of English Churchmen. The great Assembly to which it owes its existence was summoned in 1643 by the authority of the English Parliament. It was intended to include all parties in the English church, except the extreme High Church or Laudian, whose sacerdotalism and despotism had been the chief cause of the troubles in Church and State. All its members, with few exceptions, were in English orders; the great majority of them were not averse to a moderate episcopacy upon the lines laid down by Archbishop Usher. Among the Episcopalian members recommended by Parliament were Archbishop Usher, Bishops Brownrigg, Westfield, and Prideaux, and five doctors of divinity, two of whom afterwards became bishops.

Unfortunately most of these were excluded from attendance by the king's command. Dr. Heatley was the only one who was present throughout. Archbishop Usher is said to have been present upon one occasion, but upon doubtful authority, and his influence appears throughout the Confession. As Schaff observes: "In England Episcopacy and the Prayer Book were identified with the Reformation and Protestant martyrdom, and hence were rooted in the affections of the people." Had the

Episcopalians been permitted to remain, and had not their abstinence been followed by the influx of the strong Scottish influence, embittered against Episcopacy by Laud and the star-chamber, the probability is that the Assembly would have declared in favour of Episcopacy.

But while the members of the Assembly differed in their views of Church government, they were doctrinally united. They were Augustinians or Calvinists, but not of an extreme Supralapsarian type. The first intention was to revise and enlarge the Thirty-Nine Articles, but after ten weeks, in which fifteen of the Articles were revised and adopted, the revision was suspended in order to take up the subject of Church government. Through Scotch influence it was not resumed, and a new Confession was resolved upon. But this new Confession was largely based upon the Articles of the Irish Church. These Irish Articles, one hundred and two in number, were drawn up by Archbishop Usher. He incorporated in them the substance of the Thirty-Nine Articles; and they received the formal sanction of the first convocation of the Irish Church. These Articles formed the basis of the Westminster Confession which follows the same order and embodies very largely their phraseology. Dr. Hoyle, Archbishop Usher's friend, and Professor of Divinity at Dublin, was a leading member of the committee of the Westminster Assembly which drew up the Confession.

Thus we see that the Westminster Confession is closely related to our Thirty-Nine Articles. It embodies the substance of the chief doctrinal Articles. The fuller and more definite and pronounced statements of the Confession are taken from the Irish Articles of Archbishop Usher, who, like Bishop Jewel, the final editor of the Thirty-Nine Articles, was a doc-