Symposium.

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH.

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THE inherent right of the church of God, in any of its constituent parts, by virtue of *Potestas Dogmatica* to make, revise, amend, change, supersede its subordinate standards is conceded. From the chu ch of Rome, with her boasted *semper-ubique-eadem* claim, down to the most democratic, independent, organization called a church—even a Plymouth *assembly* of Brethern—the right has been exercised by one and all. Terms of fellowship are laid down and members are received or excommunicated according to the standard which the particular church holds. Creeds and confessions in some form are a necessity if the church is to be a witness for the truth over against anti Christian error, immorality and worldliness. The particular form of the confession however will be determined by times and circumstances; for a confession is made for the more precise definition of "present truth," and forms the "deposit of truth" which is deemed essential. Creeds and confessions are not manufactured, they grow. They are the expression of inward life, and thought : the result of the experience of God's church under the guidance of the spirit of grace.

The church in Canada inherited her creed from the Scotch and Irish churches, she did not frame it. In 1875 the United Church solemnly adopted the Westminster Confession as her subordinate standard, and the catechisms for use in the instruction of the people. A single note of expla nation was added regarding the power of the civil magistrate. Although only sixteen years have elapsed since the confession was thus placed in our basis of union, nevertheless the inherent right remains, in a constitutional way, to modify, amend, or supersede it, as our subordinate standard. To do this is "lawful," is it expedient? This is the question I propose shortly to answer. Is it expedient at the present time to revise the confession of Faith? For nearly two hundred and fifty years it has been the standard of English-speaking Presbyterians; are our circumstances now such as call for or would justify