Stephen Marshall (1594-1655) was the most influential preacher to Parliament during the English Revolution. The influence of his oratory can be seen in the religious and political policies of the so-called Long Parliament, called by King Charles I in November 1640. Tensions between the Long Parliament and Charles resulted in the outbreak of civil war in August 1642. Marshall remained a loyal supporter of the parliamentarians, acting as a chaplain to the parliamentarian army, a diplomatic representative in Parliament's negotiations with Scotland, an arbitrator in treaty talks with the king, and a leader of religious reform efforts as manifested in the Westminster Assembly.

Born in Godmanchester, Huntingdonshire, Marshall attended grammar school and obtained a scholarship to matriculate at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. At Cambridge Marshall was heavily influenced by Puritan ideas, particularly those of Laurence Chaderton, the renowned master of Cambridge University. Chaderton supported moderate Puritan views, encouraging the reformation of the Church of England from within rather than through religious separation. Puritans believed that the Church of England, though theologically sound, remained full of errors, that its polity and rituals needed "purifying." Marshall left Cambridge to become a chaplain in a private home, and then the lecturer for
the town of Wethersfield, Essex, where he honed his famous oratorical skills. He left Wethersfield in 1625 when he received an appointment as vicar to the wealthy benefice of Finchingfield, Essex, which he held until 1651.

In Finchingfield Marshall led a so-called "reformation of manners," an effort to instill godly living in the community through personal piety and community service. While there, Marshall preached on the nature of grace and the need for salvation and ensured that widows would receive charity and the immoral ecclesiastical justice. Marshall usually preached on pastoral themes such as caring for the poor and the sick. The anonymous author of The Godly Man's Legacy, a 1680 biography of Marshall, attributed his popularity to his ability to speak in the people's language, in "plain and familiar Expressions." He motivated his listeners by telling them his message was important because he had the Holy Spirit working "upon his own Soul." (1)

By the time of the English Revolution, Marshall was prepared to take his program of religious and political reform to the national level, joining with other men of like mind. He preached at the convocation of the Long Parliament, stating: "The Lord is with you while ye be with him; And if ye seek Him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you." (2) For Marshall and other Puritan leaders, England had ceased being faithful to God. He pleaded with Parliament to lead England's return to righteousness. Obedience to the divine will would be accomplished by renewing the covenant with God and initiating a plan for substantive religious reform. Marshall's sermons promoted religious militancy and revolution. (3) Edward Hyde rightly maintained that Marshall's rhetoric influenced the Puritan parliamentarians more than Archbishop William Laud did the court, and royalist pamphlets castigated the efforts of "that Geneva Bull," Stephen Marshall. (4)

Marshall emphasized the need for a special body of religious men, called for the purpose of examining the Church if England and devising a means for its reform. The body of men became known
as the Westminster Assembly, so-called because it met in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey beginning in 1643. Parliament clearly delineated the purpose of the assembly, namely "to confer and treat amongst themselves, of such matters and things, touching and concerning the Liturgy, Discipline and Government of the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the Doctrine of the same from all false Aspersions and Misconstructions." (5) Members of Parliament from each county, both knights and burgesses, could nominate delegates to the Westminster Assembly, although the House of Commons made the final selection. Marshall and Obadiah Sedgwick were chosen to represent Essex, although, like members of Parliament, the delegates for a county did not have to be residents of the shires they represented. (6)

Marshall's role in the Westminster Assembly is difficult to interpret without an understanding of its work. Robert Baillie, one of the Scottish commissioners (representatives) who was the pastor of a presbyterian church in Glasgow, recorded the details of the meeting places and the order of business. After being granted permission to attend the Assembly the Scottish commissioners were taken there directly from Parliament since "no mortal may enter to see or hear, let be to sitt, without ane order in wryte from both Houses of Parliament." (7) Baillie first attended the Westminster Assembly in November 1643, after it had passed from a study of the Thirty-Nine Articles to church government. However, there is no reason to suppose the methods changed with the topic, and Baillie's contribution to an understanding of the Assembly's methods is important.

After being greeted at length by William Twisse, the moderator, the Scottish commissioners sat in the first row of seats. Originally the group had met in Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey, but cold weather had forced the delegates to move to the smaller Jerusalem chamber, which could comfortably seat 100 to 120 men. At one end of the chamber was a dais with a chair; this was Twisse's seat. In front of him sat two chairs for the assessors (Cornelius Burges and John White) at the end of a
long table that ran the length of the chamber. Further down the table sat two scribes, Adoniran Byfield and Henry Roborough. A fire near the door warmed the room, and oftentimes the members sat in the chairs nearest the hearth, or even stood in the foyer of the chamber near the fire to catch its warmth.

(8)

The Assembly met every day except Saturday and as a body until one or two o'clock in the afternoon; about sixty members were present at any one time. (9) They were divided into three committees but were technically members of them all, since they could attend each one and debate any issue. Each committee had a task and prepared propositions for debate in the General Assembly, with scriptural evidence as support. In the morning the General Assembly began with prayer, and afterwards Byfield read the propositions and the biblical references, at which point the Assembly members started to debate "in a most grave and orderlie way." Members who desired to speak stood and were recognized, and if more than one rose, other members called out the name of the one they wanted to hear first. According to Baillie, they "harangue[d] long and very learnedlie" and were "exceeding prompt, and well spoken." (10) After each person had responded as he wished, Byfield went to the moderator's chair and read the proposition again before the vote. Everyone would say "Aye" or "No" at the same time, and whichever answer seemed to be the loudest would prevail. If the vote was close, those men who supported the proposition stood and were counted, and those who had voted no then did likewise. Once a proposition had been ordered and recorded, it was not taken up again.

Baillie went into great detail about the debating method in the Assembly. Although its procedure was orderly and deliberate, the debates did not move quickly. Baillie seemed to sigh when he remarked that "their longsomeness is wofull at this time, when their Church and Kingdome [rest] under a most lamentable anarchy and confusion." Members were aware of time constraints but refused to be rushed. They saw "the hurt of their length, but cannot get it helped" because they wanted to be
thorough in their assessment of the church and make sure their revisions achieved the necessary spiritual ends. (11)

Parliament first commanded the Assembly to review the Thirty-nine Articles, the set of doctrines formally accepted by the Church of England. (12) Delegates started with the first ten articles, "to free and vindicate the Doctrine of them from all Aspersions and false Interpretations." (13) Marshall did not participate notably in the examination of these articles. He was sent to Scotland to help formulate the Solemn League and Covenant, the military alliance between Scotland and the English Parliament against Charles I, and did not return until late October 1643. (14) By that time Parliament had ordered the Assembly to leave consideration of the Thirty-nine Articles in order to address the issue of church government. (15)

The theological discussions in the Westminster Assembly were not particularly divisive. Although Ethyn Williams Kirby convincingly argues that the divines were staunch individualists rather than a united force, she is incorrect in saying that they agreed on "a national church, embracing all men, with a simple liturgy, a non-prelatical polity, and, inevitably, a Calvinist creed." (16) The divines in fact were not united in their Calvinism; these concerns would not be raised in 1643 during the discussions of the Thirty-nine Articles, but in 1645 when delegates confronted the sects. However, the divines made church government their top priority and realized the necessity of following Parliament's mandate. Tai Liu declares that the calling of the Assembly marked the "knell of death" of episcopacy, but the divines were not completely confident that this would happen, and ending episcopacy was their primary objective. (17) Despite Tom Webster's persuasive argument that many divines did not dislike episcopacy itself, but the prelates' misuse of power, Parliament's charge clearly specified a new national church. (18)

The preliminary debates on how to form this new national church began in July 1643. These
deliberations delineated major groups in the Assembly and prepared the way for later discussions. Marshall played a crucial role in these debates, his primary objective being to mediate between the groups and minimize divisive issues. For Marshall, the goal of the Assembly was to develop a viable church model that both conformed to the biblical pattern and satisfied the parliamentary leaders, and he saw no conflict in this bifurcated purpose. He maintained that the English magistrate had power over religious issues and his Assembly career reveals commitment to his political ideology. Consistently, Marshall labored to fulfill the goals of the Assembly as stipulated by Parliament.

Historians have interpreted Marshall as a pragmatist and an accommodator. He certainly desired concessions, but only because he recognized this course as the best way to resolve conflict, and saw compromise as a means to procure ecclesiastical unity and create a national church. If Marshall had been as practical as historians claim, he would not have become involved in the revolution to the extent he did. Other vicars, such as Ralph Josselin, continued their ministerial duties in the 1640s with limited participation in national activities and did not participate in the Assembly. However, Marshall, a proponent of Presbyterian polity, did not regard the episcopal polity of the Church of England as biblical. (19) He believed he had been called to champion the cause of God, which mandated his work in both political and religious activities.

It is necessary to describe the groups in the Assembly to understand the major concerns and Marshall's role. Assembly members were all Puritans. Their Puritan convictions provided a common ground on which discussions of polity and policy could take place. (20) There were a few moderate episcopalian, such as William Twisse, who had been named moderator. Most of the divines, however, wanted to abolish episcopacy since they saw no evidence of it in the New Testament. The problem, then, was what kind of church polity was biblical.
The first group sought to restructure the Church of England along national and presbyterian lines. The presbyterian system was similar to the episcopal one in that it was hierarchical, but with assemblies of presbyters (ministers and elders) replacing bishops. Unfortunately, there were two contingents. The English Presbyterians consisted mainly of Church of England clergy and clutched tradition pretty tightly in their fists. Marshall is usually placed in this category, and he did want a presbyterian church model. However, he often sided with the Scottish Presbyterians, representatives from the Church of Scotland who were in general, like Robert Baillie, pastors of Scottish churches in Scotland. They could participate in committees and in debates but could not vote. Nevertheless, they had substantial influence because they remained in constant contact with the political leaders involved in the war effort. In fact, Baillie admitted that the task of the commissioners was to make sure the promises of the Solemn League and Covenant were fulfilled. The major differences between the two factions rested in the degree of English conformity to the Scottish Kirk and in their view of the clergy. The English Presbyterians wanted to preserve the traditional status of the clergy, while the Scots sought greater participation by lay people.

Independents, who desired a congregational polity, believed power rested in the local church under the leadership of church officers. If provincial or national assemblies did exist, they only provided advice. (21) Independent leaders included Philip Nye and Jeremiah Burroughes. Nye was one of Marshall’s closest friends and married to his daughter Judith. (22) Refusing to conform to Laudian policy, Burroughes had moved to Rotterdam in 1637. He returned in 1641 and became pastor of a gathered church in Stepney. (23)

The fourth group consisted of Erastians, whom Baillie termed the "brethren in evil." (24) These men adhered to various policies of the theologian Erastus. The latter had argued that the secular power had the obligation to control religious belief, and one of the ways the state could do this was
through the church’s discipline. (25) Erastians employed the theologian’s arguments in different ways. The pamphleteer William Prynne, for instance, thought a pure Erastian system would result in a theocracy so unpopular it would be overthrown. (26) William Lamont persuasively argues that Erastian opposition in the Westminster Assembly developed because the divines failed to bring about promised moral reform. (27) J. R. DeWitt maintains, somewhat narrowly, that Parliament tired of Scottish demands when they stopped contributing to the war effort. (28) In fact, men referring to themselves as Erastians had existed from the beginning of the Assembly. (29) This circle included Lightfoot and Thomas Coleman. The latter had been a rector in Blyton, Lincolnshire before moving to London in 1640 to become the lecturer at St. Peter’s, Cornhill. (30) He was renowned for his Hebrew scholarship, and would publish a translation of Erastus’s work in 1645. (31)

Marshall became embroiled in the preliminary debates, many of which revolved around the question of church offices, in particular the office of pastor. The crucial point of disagreement involved who had ecclesiastical authority, the clergy or the laity. One group believed authority had been given to the apostles and was thus monopolized by the clergy. Jesus bestowed ecclesiastical authority on Peter because of his apostleship; the apostles’ descendants were therefore clergy, not laity. The other protagonists argued that the church, consisting of all believers, had ecclesiastical authority, not just the clergy. Nye and Thomas Goodwin maintained that Peter had received ecclesiastical authority from Jesus not because he was an apostle, but because he recognized Jesus as Christ -- because he was a believer. (32) The distinction made at this point between the clergy and the laity would be important for later debates. (33)

Those divines who favored clerical privilege prevailed in this debate. Marshall sided with them but objected to several provisions. (34) When some divines expressed concern about the public reading of Scripture, Marshall suggested that it should not be limited to the clergy because there might be times
when clergymen were not available, such as in times of war. (35) Against him the Assembly voted to limit the public reading of Scripture to the pastor of the church. Delegates were worried that women and children would publicly read Scripture, a possibility that did not bother Marshall. In his waffling on whether the reading of Scripture belonged solely to the pastor one can see a germinal tendency to agree with the more liberal members of the Assembly. (36) Some divines wanted to specify that it was the pastor's duty to visit the sick, but Marshall thought this unnecessary. He saw no need to place such restrictions on the office of pastor and in turn did not want to confine visits to pastors only. (37)

In addition, some members wanted pastors and teachers to be separate offices. The Assembly resolved that the offices of teacher and doctor involved different spiritual gifts. But since the same minister might possess several gifts, he should perform as many functions as he could. If there were more than one minister, each should devote himself to the gift at which he excelled. (38) Marshall believed that there were separate offices for the pastor and teacher, but that one person could handle both roles. (39) He wanted to define the office in this way: "That pastor and teacher are different administrations, though they do one and the same thing." (40) The Independents and the Scottish Presbyterians believed there were different church officers rather than having all offices embodied in one man, such as the traditional parish priest, who they perceived as having too much power. On the other hand, the English Presbyterians were not prepared to see the pastor and doctor as separate offices because they were trying to maintain the traditional church order. (41)

The issue of the ruling elder subsequently occupied the Assembly's attention. (42) This controversy demonstrated a major contrast between Scottish and English Presbyterians. The ruling elder, an important church official in the Scottish church, initially received little English support. Most English Presbyterians did not see the ruling elder as biblical, since there were no examples of them in the New Testament. (43) Some English Presbyterians were willing to compromise and admit that ruling
elders were useful, but this challenged the position of the Scottish Presbyterians and Independents that ruling elders had divine institution. Eventually, the Assembly resolved that scriptural authority advocated that other men besides pastors should participate in church government. (44)

Marshall supported the Scots and Independents' desire for a ruling elder, speaking at length on the requirements for the office, although his comments were not recorded. Nevertheless, he had reservations, noting that ruling elders had not existed before John Calvin. Here Marshall exhibited his concern with the biblical texts and divine institution. It was not enough for him that the ruling elders were helpful; he was more concerned with whether they could be supported by Scripture. (45)

The first major disagreement in the Assembly erupted on 17 January 1644 over the power of ordination. In the New Testament churches the apostles and evangelists had the power of ordination, but who inherited it? (46) The majority concluded that ordination rested in the hands of pastors only. The Independents disagreed with this because it gave the pastor too much power, and they wanted the congregation as a whole to have more authority. Moreover, the Independents were less concerned than the Presbyterians with the ceremony of ordination itself. They believed that a minister's power came from his call and election to church office. The ceremony in itself was only that, a ceremony. (47)

The Independents began to anticipate some forthcoming conflict. A group of "Dissenting Brethren" -- Nye, Burroughes, Thomas Goodwin, William Bridge, and Sidrach Simpson -- published An Apologetical Narration outlining their objections to presbyterian government. (48) But An Apologetical Narration had an unforeseen effect. Parliament began to view the Independents as obstructors in the debates, and as important parliamentary leaders such as the earls of Warwick and Essex, Oliver St. John, and Henry Vane Jr. began to attend Assembly debates, pressure for resolution increased. Thus, late in January, attention shifted from ordination to polity because the debates for
ordination had foundered; polity would have to be determined before ordination issues could be resolved.

It is important to note the disadvantages posed by the Independents. They attempted to walk a fine line between presbyterianism and separatism. They wanted neither the congregation nor the church elders to have power alone, but for the church elders to have authority within the jurisdiction of the congregation. For example, Independents wanted the church elders to decide and implement church censures, but only in the presence of the congregation. (49) Congregational force was manifested through church elders; their power was not absolute, and they had none beyond the congregation's jurisdiction.

Marshall and Richard Vines sided with the Independents and the Scottish Presbyterians, who wanted ordination to be for a particular church or office, not general enough so that an ordained person could fulfill different church offices at various churches. Differences between the Scottish and English Presbyterians now began to emerge. The Scottish Presbyterians wanted to construct the new English church on the model of their own Kirk which, they maintained, followed the example of Reformed churches on the continent. The English Presbyterians, while seeing the presbyterian system as a valid option, aspired to develop a biblically modeled English church that did not necessarily conform to Reformed custom. Their church was a national one incorporating all people within a parochial framework. It was Calvinist with a plain liturgy and did not have an episcopal church government. (50)

At times some committed English Presbyterians voted with the Independents and Scottish Presbyterians. Vines consistently supported the Scottish cause, and Baillie termed him one of the few Assembly members truly committed to the Scottish Presbyterian system. (51) Marshall had been one of the formulators of the Solemn League and Covenant. Nevertheless, he usually chose accommodation over dissent, and his decision here to side with the Independents and Scottish Presbyterians should be
taken as a sign of diplomacy. Robert Baillie declared that Marshall had a "middle way of his own" in the debates. (52) Both he and Burges claimed they found their ordination distasteful. (53) This declaration was not popular with most of the English Presbyterians, and reveals the beginning of a move away from dependence on them for counsel. This debate, in which Scottish Presbyterians openly supported an Independent argument, was the first hint of the new alliance in the Assembly. In addition, the fact that English Presbyterians such as Marshall voted at times with the Independents and Scottish Presbyterians made debating and voting patterns in the Assembly unpredictable.

Later decisive debates over ordination occurred in April 1644. They were crucial because by this time an unexpected alliance had formed in the Assembly. The association consisted of Scottish Presbyterians and Independents on one hand against the more conservative English Presbyterians on the other. This coalition can be seen in at least two separate cases. The first instance occurred over propositions, numbered two and three, which had been presented for debate on 18 March 1644. The second proposition ordered the prospective ordinand to receive examination and approval from those people ordaining him, while the third required recommendation for ordination from the congregation the ordinand would serve. However, the congregation could only refuse the candidate if it had just cause as decided by the ordaining authority. (54)

The Independents and the Scottish Presbyterians rebelled. They interpreted the propositions as subversions of the freedom and power of the congregations and they wanted the congregations to have the right to elect their own ministers. One member declared that designation of a pastor to a congregation by an ordaining authority contravened Scripture. But the majority of the Assembly feared that the Scottish Presbyterians and Independents desired separatism despite Gillespie's assertion that the method of designation chosen by the Scottish Presbyterians and Independents created a middle way. (55) The Independent-Scottish Presbyterian alliance failed in this instance because the majority
feared popular control of the church. They would not consent to two addenda to the propositions: not to appoint a minister to a congregation without its consent, and the congregation's right to choose its own minister. Although at this point the ordaining authority had yet to be decided, the majority supported the presbytery's authority. Moreover, the power of the presbytery envisioned by the majority clearly mirrored the power of Church of England bishops. (56)

The second instance involving the alliance occurred in the arguments over the divine institution of local congregations. The second committee brought forth a proposition during the ordination debates concerning what constituted the church. (57) However, the debate began to focus on the visible church. Most of the Assembly agreed that a church was a company of visible saints but disagreed on how it was manifested. (58) The English Presbyterians refused to accept that a local congregation had divine institution by itself; most of them believed that such a group only existed as a practical measure, or because of the historical development of the church, not as a result of scriptural mandate. (59) Both the Independents and the Scottish Presbyterians insisted that the local congregation was divinely instituted according to New Testament models. The alliance prevailed this time, thanks largely to the eloquence of Thomas Goodwin and the support of Marshall. (60) The Assembly finally voted that local churches existed in the New Testament. (61)

There are three major points to make regarding the preliminary debates in the Assembly. First, the English Presbyterians, including Marshall, wanted to construct a national church based on scriptural warrant, not existing church models in Scotland, the continent, or elsewhere. They were looking for viable ecclesiological options in the debates and did not assume, as did the Scottish Presbyterians, that the Scottish Kirk represented the final word in church government. Secondly, the English Presbyterians refused to accept any substantive alteration in church government because they wanted to validate their past positions in the Church of England and preserve a place for themselves in the new church's
power structure. Their stubbornness -- which could also be interpreted as adherence to principle -- caused fragmentation in the Assembly, and made them as culpable as the Independents for the lack of meaningful progress. Robert Paul accurately concludes that "the bitterness . . . [of the debate] reflects the fear of the Puritan majority of anything that threw doubt on the validity of ordination as it had been traditionally administered in England." (62) Thirdly, there was an obvious tension between the two primary goals of the English Presbyterians. They wanted to review options for a new national church while preserving the power structure of the old one. This strain would limit the Assembly's progress and influence.

Marshall understood the pressure and was the premier English Presbyterian willing to resolve conflict and adapt to the changing needs of the revolution as manifested in the Assembly's goals. His willingness to press for both the needs of the revolution and the goals of the Assembly is clearly seen in his role in the so-called Grand Debate for church government, which will be examined later. Tension had accelerated during the preliminary debates and Marshall attempted to alleviate it. Initially, despite the obvious presence of factions, a cooperative atmosphere prevailed. Marshall often played mediator, especially in disputes between Independents and English Presbyterians. His settlement of a controversy between Cornelius Burges and Thomas Goodwin prompted Baillie to comment that Marshall was not anti-Independent enough, since the Presbyterians should make the "utmost endeavour to prevent that dangerous evil." (63)

Meanwhile, the growth of separatist churches in London undermined the accord. In November 1643, several English Presbyterians presented a petition against the gathering of churches. (64) As noted earlier, Independent divines responded with An Apologetical Narration. Although Tolmie notes reticence on the part of the authors, their intransigent position against presbyterianism is certainly
clear. They argued in favor of a "middle way" between a strict presbyterian government and a loose separatist type of church polity. (65)

An Apologetical Narration troubled Marshall for several reasons. It went directly against parliamentary order. Parliament had mandated that no individuals or groups could make presentations on religious matters to Parliament. Spiritual matters had been entrusted to the Assembly, and it was the Assembly as a whole that should make such presentations. Marshall interpreted the Independents' action as a rejection of the Assembly and Parliament. Maybe the Independents were not concerned about national religious reform since they had countermanded the work of the civil magistrate. Viewing the publication of An Apologetical Narration as a provocation, he declared that it would trouble him to cause dissension when others wanted reconciliation, implying that the pamphlet was an act of defiance. Moreover, Marshall believed there was a logical progression in the Assembly's work and he reminded the Assembly that it needed to progress step by step. (66) An Apologetical Narration moved the group's work out of its natural development.

Marshall disagreed with separatism on principle. He believed strongly in the cooperation between ministry and magistracy, and separatism disturbed it. Marshall contended that, despite any religious corruption in the Church of England, magistrates must authorize and ordained ministers must lead any reform efforts. The voluntary nature of the Independent churches, and the fact that they were not under the power of any earthly authority, distressed him. Ellen S. More has persuasively argued that the Independent churches were actually quasi-separatist because they believed a godly remnant existed within the established church. (67) For Marshall, the fact that these churches rejected any part of the established church made them potentially destabilizing. Separatist churches, as voluntary organizations, reputedly split parishes and families, the intrinsic social units. (68) Moreover, Independent church polity was designed to encourage loyalty to the congregation itself. Marshall
thought this connection to the congregation undermined allegiance to the English government. In addition, if congregations elected their own ministers they might exert influence over those clerics, frustrating goals for both reform and conformity. (69)

The authors of An Apologetical Narration had tried to mitigate distrust such as Marshall’s. Notwithstanding their belief in the importance of individual congregations, the Independents claimed they did not allow the people in those groups to act in an uncontrolled manner. Their pamphlet did not reject the parochial framework or even argue that their churches existed outside of it, and the authors insisted that only a church established by the civil magistrate was valid. They maintained that a godly church required an ordained ministry. (70) Although insistence on the latter did not alleviate his fears, Marshall’s commitment to the role of ordained ministerial leadership explains his hesitant support for the Independent churches. He became willing to lead Parliament’s Accommodation Program, the effort to reconcile Independents and Presbyterians.

Parliamentary order and outside events motivated his support of the Accommodation Program. In 1645, efforts to reconcile king and Parliament failed. Military conflict recommenced, this time with some differences. Passing the New Model Ordinance to reorganize the parliamentary army, the Parliament created the Self-Denying Ordinance to separate war from politics. This latter ordinance appealed to many pious parliamentary supporters as it prohibited members of Parliament from serving as military officers. In June 1645, the battle of Naseby resulted in spectacular success for the New Model Army, which comprised large numbers of Independents and sectaries.

The new war effort had new leaders, including Oliver Cromwell. Believing King Charles I intended to establish an absolute monarchy of the continental type, Cromwell had a different agenda than Marshall. Cromwell maintained that Charles was responsible for the nation’s ills and committed himself to the king's military defeat. The "win-the-war" policy of Cromwell and his cohort Sir Thomas
Fairfax caused divisions within both the Long Parliament and the Westminster Assembly. Cromwell proved willing to use the social and religious radicals shunned by Assembly divines and considered dangerous by most parliamentarians. He believed the state should ignore opinions when it needed men to serve. (71)

Cromwell and Fairfax represented a new revolutionary spirit. Like Marshall, they shared a commitment to both religious and political reform. In addition, they had a passion to achieve their goals. Christopher Hill has rightly attributed this view to a "strong strand of Christian pragmatism." While Marshall might not completely agree with their principles, he gradually accepted the necessity of working with the popular leaders. Cromwell had encouraged cooperation between Presbyterians and Independents, asking them to fight together in faith and prayer. (72) The Accommodation Program seemed a good vehicle for such interaction.

Initially, the Assembly did not address the principle of separatism as a whole. It originally focused on Independency. A profusion of gathered churches, particularly Baptist ones, changed the members' position. Marshall prepared the Assembly's pamphlet against separatist churches, entitled Certaine Considerations to Dis-Wade Men from Further Gathering of Churches. (73) It was signed by twenty-one Assembly delegates including all the authors of An Apologetical Narration and several English Presbyterians such as Edmund Calamy and Obadiah Sedgwick. (74)

Certain Considerations is interesting because it does not reject Independency outright, thus providing an opening for accommodation attempts. Marshall claimed that the current gathering of churches was "unseasonable" because separatism proved too divisive. Parliamentarians needed to be united to confront royalist troops. He promised "to beare with [those] whose Consciences cannot in all things conforme," but asked that they, in return, be patient and wait for the reform program being prepared by the Westminster Assembly. (75) The success of Marshall's document reveals how much
power he had in the Assembly. The Assembly accepted this document as policy on gathered churches. As Murray Tolmie points out, the endorsement of this document marked a defeat for those staunch English Presbyterians who wanted action against all gathered churches. (76) However, prominent Independents such as Nye and Goodwin were ceding their position that good Christians might need to leave a corrupt church to find spiritual fulfillment and realize God’s will. Tai Liu deems the document flawed because it did not fully articulate the beliefs of either side, but it nevertheless appealed to many people because it represented an attempt at religious unity. (77)

Of all of the separatists, Marshall focused on the Baptists, whom he considered unacceptable for a variety of reasons. Independent churches were not established by political authority but they had an ordained ministry. Like Thomas Edwards, whose polemical tract Gangraena attacked sects such as the Baptists, Marshall believed the flurry of Baptist preachers undermined the authority of the national church and ordained clergy. (78) The Baptists gathered in congregations that were in turn organized into associations, which became rivals of the existing parishes. Sometimes the association meetings discussed doctrine and church structure, concerns that should be addressed by the national church, not smaller constituents. (79) The Baptists flouted the national church, in fact, because they believed they were voluntary groups of believers united in opposition to its doctrine, government and discipline. (80) They challenged the natural order inherent in the Church of England because they questioned the right of such an authority to exist. Several years later, Calamy became disturbed when, invited to give a sermon to a Baptist congregation, the listeners received instructions to question him and point out his errors. (81) English Baptists claimed they were not part of the continental Anabaptist tradition, which supported the separation of church and state. Nevertheless, this troubled Marshall as well. An August 1644 House of Commons petition, drafted by Marshall, asked Parliament “to prevent the spreading
Opinions of Anabaptism and Antinomianism" because they undermined the reformers' religious and political efforts. (82)

In addition, Marshall disagreed with the concept of adult baptism. After the Baptists published their Confession of Faith in 1645, he countered with A Sermon of the Baptizing of Infants. For Marshall, not only was baptism the seal of the individual's covenant of faith but it also marked admission into the commonwealth. Entry into the "Household of God" demanded baptism. Addressing the issue of original sin, Marshall contended that until the sacrament of baptism had been performed, a child remained tainted and needed an infusion of divine grace and mercy. He argued that God required everyone to enter into the covenant, regardless of age. The symbol of baptism had significance as well, for it illustrated the removal of uncleanness from the flesh and spirit in order to recognize the redemption offered by Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit entered the believer as a result of baptism. Infants of believers needed to be admitted into the community of believers, and obedience to God's will required obedience to the baptismal ordinance. (83)

Marshall's distrust of the Baptists was not particularly unique, but it had an underlying purpose. Baillie maintained that Baptists represented a dangerous sect because they were cunning, often purposefully misrepresenting themselves. Their Confession of Faith, for example, had allegedly been written in vague terms to win converts without provoking the wrath of the ordained clergy. (84) Motivating Marshall's rejection of the Baptists was his fear that they would upset the accommodation attempts between the Independents and Presbyterians. (85)

Concerns about the war effort as well as the tension over the separatists strained the Grand Debate in church government. More consideration has been given to the Grand Debate than to any other issue in the Westminster Assembly. Often, historians have used military language to explain the argumentation over church government. Daniel Neal maintains that the Independents contested the
Presbyterians' positions by slowly advancing and planning for a counterattack. (86) J. R. DeWitt calls the Dissenting Brethren a "little company of troops" and declares that "no general ever approached a campaign in the field with more preparation and more diligent attention to strategy." (87) More recently, Paul has used the military metaphor. He terms the preliminary debates "First Salvoes" and "Reconnaissance Probes." The Grand Debate was "the Battle for Presbyterian Government" and the Presbyterians prepared an "Assault from Prepared Positions." (88)

However, the military metaphor does not apply to Marshall's role in the Grand Debate. Although Edmund Vaughan calls his work in the Assembly the "height of [his] distinction," in reality he mainly acted as peacemaker. (89) He labored instead to mediate among the major groups while attempting to assure that the Assembly fulfilled its orders from Parliament. In addition, his awareness of outside events prompted him to remind the Assembly of its commitment to the Scots. To understand Marshall's role in the Grand Debate, one must briefly summarize the major points, highlighting the places at which Marshall participated. The moderator introduced the topic of church government on 5 February 1645 to a crowd that included not only Assembly members but many parliamentarians. Establishing presbyterian government necessitated a consideration of three issues, namely, the role of individual congregations, governmental assemblies, and church discipline. The Independents believed individually governed congregations had existed in the early church in Jerusalem, while the Presbyterians maintained that the same churches operated under one church government, called a presbytery. Marshall articulated the Presbyterians' position by stating that the general body of the church was manifested in "instituted churches" for pragmatic reasons. After all, the thousands of Christians in Jerusalem would not have been able to meet under one roof. The Assembly eventually resolved that several congregations could exist as one church under one presbyterial government. (90)
Interest also centered on graduated governing assemblies. Marshall argued that Scripture mandated church government by parochial, classical, and synodical assemblies. (91) Moreover, he supported the subordination of these assemblies in the government of the church. This means what each parish would have delegates (the church officers, or presbyters) sent to a regional meeting (a classis) and then representatives from the classis would meet to make decisions at provincial meetings. Delegates from the provincial meetings would gather in a synod, a large national assembly, to make the ultimate determinations about church discipline and doctrine, etc. Moreover, these groups would be hierarchical, so that the local parish was subordinate to the regional classis, and so on. Marshall gave an example of an instance when the subordination of assemblies might be necessary. If the assemblies of the three kingdoms (England, Ireland and Scotland) came into conflict, there should be an over-arching synod to make the final decision. (92) Like the Independents, Marshall maintained that all officers, including lay people such as ruling elders, should participate in these governing bodies. (93)

The final and most contentious issue involved church discipline. This subject caused a breakdown within the English Presbyterian block and encouraged the Erastians to become more vocal. The proper location of ecclesiastical authority had been addressed in the preliminary debates, but had not been settled satisfactorily. Argument centered around church censures, particularly the most serious one, excommunication. Presbyterians, except those with Erastian leanings, agreed that the church controlled excommunication, but at what level? Did the individual churches decree excommunication, or was it dictated by a governmental assembly? Some of the English Presbyterians, including Marshall, claimed that suspension from communion should be determined by individual congregations with appeal possible to the governmental assemblies. (94) Meanwhile, Independents believed the congregation should have the power of excommunication and the Erastians wanted Parliament to have it. (95) Parliament intervened with its Erastian demand for parliamentary
commissioners to consider church censures. Obdurate positions on this point stopped attempts to mediate ecclesiological differences and the Assembly created a presbyterian national church, with a Confession of Faith, a Directory of Worship and a Catechism.

Marshall had a limited yet important capacity throughout the Grand Debate. Rather than participating in daily debates over assorted issues, he focused on what he considered to be important -- the fulfillment of parliamentary orders. Parliament had directed the Assembly to determine the structure of a reformed national church based on biblical principles and adhering as much as possible to the demands of the Scots as articulated in the Solemn League and Covenant. Marshall struggled to keep the Assembly to its task, often reminding them of their commitment. (96) He also participated in the Grand Committee of Religion and as a mediator for the debates on church government. He became more active towards the end of the Grand Debate, however, as events forced him to reconcile circumstances with his personal beliefs.

Parliament had created the Grand Committee of Religion on 26 October 1643 to ensure that the ecclesiastical terms of the Solemn League and Covenant were fulfilled, if and when possible. (97) The Scots believed the Grand Committee would protect their interests, noting Marshall's prominent position in it. (98) Marshall became the Grand Committee's spokesman in the Assembly, and thus the representative of Scottish interests. He often reminded the divines of their obligation to the Scots. On 14 November, he presented a paper, prepared by the Scottish commissioners, regarding particulars on church government. The paper reminded the Assembly that the Kirk of Scotland had four church officers -- pastors, teachers, ruling elders and deacons. It also explained that there were four levels of church government -- church sessions, classical presbyteries, provincial synods and national assemblies. (99) The ruling elder was an integral part of the Scottish system, and Marshall spoke in favor of it.
He also created a subcommittee to consider the biblical standing of the ruling elder. Reporting from the committee, he argued that Scripture "warranted . . . that some others beside the ministers of the word . . . should join with the ministers in the government of the church." He also persuaded the Scots to develop a major document detailing their vision for the reformed English church; however, the Assembly would not allow it to be submitted because the divines wanted a reconstructed English church, not one based on a Scottish model.

Marshall also acted as a mediator in Assembly debates. In the early discussions on church government he emphasized that presbyterian government "could have" existed in the New Testament rather than stating emphatically that it did. In another case, he requested a flexible interpretation of the word "church" because he thought disagreement over its meaning obstructed progress. The definition of terms should be left to individual interpretation so that progress could be made in the Assembly debates. Marshall’s intervention led to his leadership of Parliament’s Accommodation Program. The House of Commons asked him to direct the program in September 1644, assured the Assembly members could resolve their differences regarding church government. The Commons created a committee charged to consider how far the reformed Church of England could accept liberty of conscience and appointed Marshall as chairman. Most parliamentarians were convinced that the Independent congregations could be accommodated within the church’s parochial framework. Parliament was willing to accept Independent churches but abhorred other separatist congregations, viewing the accommodation policy as a way to isolate the sects so they could be suppressed.

The accommodation attempt was unsuccessful, in part because many Presbyterians became suspicious of Marshall. Baillie spoke for many Scottish and English Presbyterians when he called Marshall a great "contriver." In addition, Parliament’s premise for beginning the program was faulty, desiring to detach the Independents from the sectarians so as to suppress the latter.
Independents, meanwhile, were convinced of their need to gather across parochial boundaries, which Parliament did not want. Thus, the accommodation committee was dissolved. (109)

Fresh concerns prompted Parliament to create a new accommodation committee in November 1645. Members were motivated by a fear of sectaries in the New Model Army. By this time, however, the Independents themselves had abandoned a compromising attitude. Victories in spring and summer battles, such as Naseby, had imbued them with self-confidence. The Independents also began to gain support in Parliament. They would therefore demand complete religious toleration without parochial limitations. (110) Although this committee was officially dissolved, some members continued to meet. Marshall still believed a settlement with the Independents could be achieved. Baillie expressed concern over Marshall's conciliatory attitude, declaring that Marshall dealt with the separatists more than anyone else. (111)

However, Marshall had to abandon attempts at accommodation because of a new dispute. Parliament had made its convictions regarding church censures clear, and he could not accept them. On 20 October 1645, both Houses passed an ordinance entitled "On Suspension from the Lord's Supper." It stated that any person dismissed from communion at the congregational level could appeal to the classical assembly, then to the synodical and national levels, and ultimately to Parliament. (112) This weighed heavily on the consciences of the English Presbyterians, who petitioned Parliament. Parliament not only denied the petition, but reiterated the same ideas in another ordinance proclaiming the superiority of parliamentary commissioners over church assemblies. (113)

Many divines, including Marshall, objected to the second ordinance. It stipulated that in each province, as determined by the presbyterian church government, the synod's activities would be joined by Parliament's appointed commissioners. The commissioners' task was to judge scandalous offenses at the provincial level. However, church officers at the congregational level had to certify the suspension
of individuals through the parliamentary commissioners. If church members wanted to speak in defense of their actions, they could do so in a hearing composed not only of their direct church officers, but also of that area's parliamentary commissioners. (114)

Parliament's demands stunned Marshall. Although he believed Parliament had a role in the reformation of government, he objected to this level of parliamentary control. (115) Therefore, he decided to prepare a remonstrance against it. He became chairman of an Assembly committee to draw up a petition, and was chosen to present it. The petition requested an annulment of the ordinance since the duties of the parliamentary commissioners "appears to our Consciences to be so contrary to that Way of Government which Christ hath appointed in His Church" because the ordinance gave church authority to political men. (116) Likewise, Parliament was incensed at what it termed an act of "open disobedience" by Presbyterian clergy. (117) The House of Commons sent the petition to the Grand Committee on Religion for consideration, and on 11 April 1646, the House voted that the Assembly had committed a breach of privilege for which the members could be punished individually or as a group. The MPs were particularly disturbed by Marshall's leadership of the movement since he had been Parliament's spokesman. (118)

Marshall did not believe the remonstrance to be a breach of privilege and could not accept Parliament's demands. Unlike An Apologetical Narration, the petition had been prepared by a committee acting on the request of the whole Assembly, not a select few. In A Plea for Defensive Armes, Marshall had claimed that remonstrances representing the collective political and religious interest were valid. (119) There had been petitions for religious reform from the counties during the Root and Branch movement in 1640. The Westminster Assembly had been appointed to consider spiritual matters; if Parliament intended to take matters into its own hands, what was the point of creating the synod of divines? In addition, while Marshall accepted Parliament's role in mandating
forms, such as church government, he did not believe a magistrate had the right to interfere in purely spiritual matters. (120) In fact, Marshall himself was very confused over the magistrate's role in religious matters. Where did Parliament's powers regarding religion begin and end? Realizing the unproductiveness of his pugnacious demands, Marshall retreated to consider the situation.

At this point, Marshall withdrew from plenary Assembly debate to resolve his personal doubts concerning Parliament's spiritual jurisdiction. Not only was he confused about his own position regarding Parliament's role in religious reform but he was unsure of Parliament's motives. He would spend several months in prayer and meditation contemplating this problem. His September 1647 publication entitled An Expedient to Preserve Peace and Amity resolved it. This work accepted Parliament's sovereignty in religious matters. The principle of religious toleration, while worthy, could not always provide the "order and decency" required by civil governments. Whatever the political authorities determined should be the state church; however, those whose consciences could not accept that church must exercise their own spiritual will, even if that entailed civil consequences. Marshall supported religious toleration within the framework of a national church, but did not believe this was ideal. (121)

Parliament reacted quickly to Marshall's withdrawal. Viewing his intransigence as representative of the Assembly's attitude, Parliament immediately limited its functions and responsibilities. Debates on church government ceased, the Accommodation Committee was abolished and there were no further attempts to reconcile ecclesiological differences. In response, the Assembly decided to establish presbyterian government jus divinum against the wishes of Parliament and the Dissenting Brethren. The members opened an unsanctioned debate on this topic on 4 May 1646. There were two parts to the debate, argument over the definition and a close examination of the resulting resolution. The divines concluded that jus divinum meant that Jesus Christ had stipulated through his
will and through Scripture that presbyterian government was the proper form of church government. The Dissenting Brethren asked to be excused in order to document their protest. (122)

On 7 July 1646, the Assembly voted in favor of jus divinum presbyterianism after a lengthy debate. The divines argued that Jesus Christ had instructed the apostles on the necessary elements of church polity. Although Scripture did not include Christ's will and appointment, proof of presbyterianism jus divinum existed in the examples set by the New Testament churches. (123) Marshall did not participate in the jus divinum debates, although he voted in favor of the policy. Paul rightfully maintains that Marshall had a strong practical motive for his approval. Marshall believed presbyterianism was the correct form of government because ecclesiology had evolved in the direction God favored. Noticing a problem with so-called errant congregations in England, he remained convinced God had provided a solution, in this case presbyterianism. (124) In addition, his support of the second part of the resolution enabled him to overcome his minor misgivings on the first part. The resolution's second article maintained that church government existed independently from outside force. His support of presbyterianism jus divinum, therefore, has been misunderstood. For Marshall, support of the resolution became a vehicle for opposition to Parliament, a way to assert the Assembly's unique religious role. He went with Newcomen and Spurstowe to deliver the document to the House of Commons. (125)

Proclaiming its right to control religion, Parliament published The Erastian Statement declaring the jurisdiction of the political body over the spiritual one, and made certain Marshall understood the ramifications of his actions. Baillie sighed that the Church of England was "a lame Erastian presbytery." (126) Marshall asked for a new committee to reject the Statement. As late as 18 May 1648, such a committee had not been created, and a rebuttal had not been prepared despite Marshall's continuing demands. His zeal in opposing Parliament caused him to appear before the Assembly's Committee for
Scandalous Ministers on 3 November 1647, when he was accused of absenteeism from Finchingfield, an absence Parliament had approved so he could participate in the Assembly. The committee investigated him (the debates are sketchy at this point) and did not close the case until 22 December 1647, when Marshall received approval for his nonresidency based on his former work for the Assembly. (127) In fact, through this response to Marshall, both Parliament and the Westminster Assembly were proclaiming the end of Marshall's usefulness! They accepted him not because of his current behavior, but because of his past contributions to their cause. This treatment encouraged Marshall's gradual removal from national politics and his return to Finchingfield, which occurred in 1649, before the Westminster Assembly finished its work.

Marshall's final role in the Assembly involved his contributions to the Directory of Worship. (128) The work on the Directory occurred concurrently with the Grand Debate, and minutes for the discussions on the Directory, Catechisms and Confession are much less detailed. (129) In truth Marshall contributed only one section of this Directory, namely, the one on preaching. In this he had considerable latitude. The Directory, Confession of Faith and Catechism followed the order from Parliament's Grand Committee on Religion to emulate Scottish models. However, the Scottish section on preaching was brief.

The Assembly began working on the Directory of Worship in May 1644, when Parliament ordered the appointment of a subcommittee. Marshall chaired the subcommittee but focused on the portion regarding preaching, leaving the remaining sections to the other committee members, Charles Herle, Herbert Palmer, Thomas Young and Thomas Goodwin. The Scots Commissioners sat on the subcommittee, and Nye began to attend meetings. (130) Substantial agreement existed over drafting the Directory. Baillie did not think the committee work would take very long, stating "we apprehend no great difficultie in [the Directory] passing" the committees, the Assembly and Parliament. (131) When
disputes arose, Marshall mediated. On 24 May 1644, Marshall presented the standards by which the Directory would be drafted. The committee intended to find a median between a fixed liturgy and unstructured worship through as comprehensive a liturgy as possible. (132) Controversy erupted, however, over preaching, the Lord's Supper, and baptism. The divines quickly settled the controversy over baptism, but the other two were more problematic. (133)

The Directory of Worship recommended the plain style of preaching, which had been "found by experience to be very much blessed of God." (134) In the plain style of preaching, the preacher selected a scriptural passage and broke the passage down into parts so that they could be analyzed in depth, and then applied to present circumstances. Through the Directory Marshall argued that the preacher should possess a variety of gifts. He should be illuminated by God's Spirit, have training in the original biblical languages, know the necessary arts and sciences, especially rhetoric and logic, and understand theology and Scripture. (135) The sermon should be from a suitable text that could be properly and briefly summarized and analyzed. The doctrines should be removed from the text and exhorted in "plaine terms" with supporting Scriptural texts. The preacher should argue persuasively, applying the text to circumstances so as to "convey the truth into the Hearers heart with spirituall delight." (136) Marshall's contribution was substantial, making the section on preaching almost as long as the outlines for Sunday worship. (137)

Discussion of the Directory's preaching section continued through June 1644. Many objected to Marshall's draft, with some divines calling the method narrow and rigid. Anthony Tuckney, vicar of Boston, Lincolnshire, deemed the format too stiff for all people and every circumstance. (138) Some of the concerns specifically criticized traditional conventions. Several divines believed classical languages and non-biblical authors should not be used in the pulpit. Nye argued that some plain-style practices made sermons so academic that listeners could not benefit from them. (139) Compromise was achieved
when the committee worded the section vaguely so that it could be interpreted in a variety of ways. The only specific comment was that flexibility had to be granted to accommodate the gifts of various preachers. (140) Marshall barely participated in the debates. He did not defend either the plain style of preaching or his drafting of the Directory's preaching section. Marshall wanted the preparation of a sermon to be a serious undertaking, but conceded that there should be latitude for individual preachers. (141)

Controversy surrounding the Lord's Supper carried from the committee meetings to the Assembly as a whole. The Scots wanted the congregation to take communion while sitting around a table. When the congregation became too large, the believers should sit around successive tables. Most English Presbyterians, including Marshall, supported the Scottish view. Agreeing that the people should sit down, group after group, Marshall nevertheless refused to concede the Scots' demand that English parishes be redrawn so that single congregations could sit together at the communion table. (142) Other divines, most notably Nye and Goodwin, believed this made communion too structured. Nye considered how a believer participated in communion to be less important than the sincerity of the practice, while Goodwin called the method of taking the sacrament unimportant for salvation. (143) Calamy stated that the point of unity was in the consecration of the bread and wine. Passing the bread and wine from hand to hand did not undermine unity, even if people were not sitting at tables. (144)

Marshall arbitrated between the two groups. Paul rightly notes that some divines felt compelled to cooperate with the Scots because of the Solemn League and Covenant, and Marshall fits into this category. (145) He wanted the committee to recommend, not order, that communion transpire around the table or successive tables, suggesting the wording state that "It is likewise desired, or recommended, that the communicants receive at the table." (146) However, when the Scots spoke as a group, declaring that communion around the table was necessary, Marshall defended their
intransigence. He did not want the debate to harm the Scots' reputation or practice, yet encouraged communion at the table on the basis of "order and decency." (147) Realizing the debate had become heated, Marshall asked the Assembly to appoint a committee of arbitration. (148) The arbitration committee's draft omitted the orders about the congregation coming to the table, and its comments on people sitting around the table could be interpreted in a variety of ways. (149)

Marshall missed most of discussion on the Catechism in the summer of 1645, and made few substantive contributions when he was present. He was often out of town on errands for Parliament, periodically traveling with commissioners seeking a settlement with the king. When he attended he exhibited aggravation with the proceedings. As early as March 1645, he became irritated with the attitudes of his fellow divines, complaining at one point about people arriving late for debates and arguing that such behavior wasted precious time. A month later he asked people not to bring extraneous reading material, such as books and news sheets, to read privately while others addressed important issues. Everyone should pay attention at all times! Exasperated, he spoke against prevalent lackadaisical manners displayed by the frequent late arrivals and the people who left early in the afternoon. (150)

During debates on the Confession of Faith Marshall limited his participation to support for Calamy's stance on limited redemption. Calamy opposed the Confession's first proposition, that Christ intended redemption only for the elect. (151) His moderate position claimed that Christ had paid a redemptive price for everyone, the elect absolutely and the reprobate conditionally. (152) Arguing from John 3:16, Calamy maintained that God meant his gift of Christ for the whole world, so that "whosoever believeth" was saved. Lazarus Seaman and Marshall agreed. Seaman concluded that as every person was damnable, every person was salvable, and Calamy added that this included Judas Iscariot. (153)
Marshall aimed his comments at the Scots, Calamy's most adamant opponents. Samuel Rutherford maintained that people believed because they were saved and justified. George Gillespie declared that God did not mean the whole world in John 3:16, but only those people who loved him. Because no universal love for God existed, there could be no universal salvation. Marshall countered by calling John 3:16 a promise, a contract between God and humankind. Because God had said all who believed would be saved, he would save those who believed. Seaman had said that God could choose, justify and sanctify as he chose, and God had guaranteed salvation for those who accepted Christ. The committee submitted the Confession of Faith to the House of Commons in December 1646, and it passed both Houses by March 1647. The committee had labored over the Confession throughout the summer and fall of 1646, and the Commons passed it as it had been drafted except for the omission of church censures. (154) Doctrinal proposals were published as the Articles of the Christian Religion on 27 June 1648. The Catechisms, likewise, went through the Houses with minimal changes.

Eventually, Marshall withdrew from Assembly debates because nothing was being accomplished. The minutes do not refer to him after 11 January 1649. The impatience he experienced during the Catechism debates continued. At one point he called for the Assembly members to recall what they had already resolved as they repeated old arguments and revisited past issues. Several times in the spring of 1648 Marshall futilely attempted to oppose Parliament. The Assembly largely ignored his efforts to gain recognition for the Scots. On 2 June 1648, he unsuccessfully urged the Assembly to prepare a letter for the Scottish Kirk, to note its faithfulness in the cause. (155)

In fact, Marshall's star had fallen. He no longer acted as the primary messenger between the Assembly and the House of Commons. His limited involvement in late Assembly proceedings resulted in part from his political activities, but also because his political theology had evolved. Unlike most of the other Assembly members, Marshall's ideology did not remain static from 1643 to 1647. He carefully
observed the religious, political and military context and pragmatically addressed issues that needed to be resolved without desperately attempting to achieve an unrealistic reform program. While on the surface his work in the Assembly can be underestimated, he tirelessly worked to reconcile the different factions in the Assembly so that a new model of the Church of England could be devised. While the traditional, episcopalian Church of England was re-established with the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the presbyterian model as created by Marshall and his colleagues at Westminster continued to influence presbyterian churches on the Continent and in the American colonies.
ENDNOTES


5. JR, 5:338.

6. CJ, 2:524, 538-39, 543. By 1 July 1643, of the 119 divines in the Assembly, three others were from Essex, namely, Matthew Newcomen, Edmund Calamy the elder, and Richard Cleyton. Cleyton, vicar of Easton Magna, sent regrets and never attended Assembly meetings.


8. Ibid., 107-108.

9. Of the 139 divines appointed to the Westminster Assembly, 30 never attended.


11. Ibid.

12. LF, 5.

13. CJ, 3:156.

14. LF, 10, 29.

15. Ibid., 17.


23. DNB, s.v. Jeremiah Burroughes.


29. Two very influential Erastians were not members of the Assembly -- the M.P. John Selden and the pamphleteer William Prynne.

30. DNB, s.v. Thomas Coleman.

32. MM, 1, fols. 130r-131v, 139r-v.


34. Ibid., 150.

35. LF, 37.

36. MM, 2, fols. 132v-133r.

37. LF, 84, 93.

38. Ibid., 58.


40. LF, 53.


42. MM, 1, fol. 213v.

43. Paul, The Assembly of the Lord, 163.


45. Ibid., 71-72.

46. Ibid., 115.


48. Ibid., 124-25.

49. Church censures were actions taken against church members, such as excommunication.


51. LB, 2:62.

52. Ibid., 2:226.

53. LF, 123.

54. Ibid., 218-20.
55. Ibid., 232.
57. LF, 235.
58. MM, 1, fol. 409v.
59. Ibid., fol. 414v.
60. Ibid., fol. 417v.
63. LB, 2:122.
64. LF, 56.
66. MM, 1, fols. 425r-426v.
72. Ibid., 77.


75. Marshall, Certaine Considerations, 3, 5.

76. Tolmie, The Triumph of the Saints, 125.

77. Liu, Discord in Zion, 40-42.


80. Ibid., 39.


82. CJ, 3:584.


84. Robert Baillie, Anabaptism, the True Fountaine of Independency (London, 1646), 96-97.

85. Tolmie, The Triumph of the Saints, 64.


87. DeWitt, Jus Divinum, 105.


90. LF, 133.

91. Ibid., 144.


93. LF, 313.


95. CJ, 4:513.

96. MM, 1, fols. 303r-304r.

97. LF, 27.


99. LF, 51.

100. LB, 2:110-11.

101. LF, 75-76.

102. Ibid., 120.


104. MM, 1, fol. 306r-v.

105. CJ, 4:513.

106. LF, 12-13, 186.


109. LB, 2:236.

110. Tolmie, The Triumph of the Saints, 128.
111. LB, 2:243.

112. JR, 6:210-12.


116. LJ, 8:232.


118. CJ, 4:492, 506.


121. [Stephen Marshall], An Expedient to Preserve Peace and Amity (London, 1647), 17. An Expedient to Preserve Peace and Amity will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Marshall published this piece in the autumn of 1647 to justify his intervention between City, army and Parliament in early August.

122. LB, 2:266, 3:77; Paul, The Assembly of the Lord, 472-75, 533-34.

123. Ibid., 2:378.


126. Ibid., 3:110.


130. LB, 2:131.
131. Ibid., 2:140.

132. MM, 2, fol. 86v.

133. While the Scots and Independents usually conducted baptismal services in churches, the English clergy normally did so in the families' homes. Although Marshall protested that baptism should not be performed in churches as an absolute rule, all of the divines ultimately agreed that baptism should ordinarily be celebrated in church. Ibid., 2, fol. 128v.


138. LF, 278.

139. MM, 2, fol. 93v.

140. Ibid., 2, fols. 95v-96v.

141. Spinks, "Brief and Perspicuous Text," 93.

142. LF, 286-87.

143. MM, 2, fol. 107v.

144. Ibid., 2, fol. 118v.


146. LF, 291.
147. MM, 2, fol. 115r.
148. LF, 294.
149. Ibid., 296.
150. MM, 2, fols. 120r, 122v, 142r, 159v.
151. MM, 2, fol. 278r-v.
153. MM, 2, fol. 278r-v.
155. MM, 3, fols. 52r-54v.

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Abbreviations


CH Church History

CJ Journals of the House of Commons 1547-1714, 17 vols.


JBS Journal of British Studies


MM Manuscript Minutes of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. Dr. Williams's Library, London.


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