Act for the establishing and putting in Execution of the DIRECTORY for the Publick Worship of God.

General Assembly of Church of Scotland, February 3, 1645, Sess. 10.

WHEREAS an happy unity, and uniformity in religion amongst the kirks of Christ, in these three kingdoms, united under on Sovereign, having been long and earnestly wished for by the godly a well-affected amongst us, was propounded as a main article of the large treaty, without which band and bulwark, no safe, well-grounded, and lasting peace could be expected; and afterward, with greater strength and maturity, revived in the Solemn League and Covenant of the three kingdoms; whereby they stand straitly obliged to endeavour the nearest uniformity in one form of Church government, Directory of Worship, Confession of Faith, and Form of Catechising; which hath also before, and since our entering into that Covenant, been the matter of many supplications and remonstrances, and sending Commissioners to the King's Majesty; of declarations to the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, and of letters to the Reverend Assembly of Divines, and others of the ministry of the kirk of England; being also the end of our sending Commissioners, as was desired, from this kirk, with commission to treat of uniformity in the four particulars afore-mentioned, with such committees as should be appointed by both Houses of Parliament of England, and by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster; and beside all this, it being, in point of conscience, the chief motive and end of our adventuring upon manifold and great hazards, for quenching the devouring flame of the present unnatural and bloody war in England, thought o the weakening of this kingdom within itself, and the advantage of the enemy which have invaded it; accounting nothing too dear to us, so that this our joy be fulfilled. And now this great work being so far advanced, that a Directory for the Publick Worship of God in all the three kingdoms being agreed upon by the Honourable Houses of the parliament of England, after consultation with the Divines of both kingdoms there assembled, and sent to us for our approbation, that, being also agreed upon by this kirk and kingdom of Scotland, it may be in the name of both kingdoms presented to the King, for his royal consent and ratification; the General Assembly, having most seriously considered, revised, and examined the Directory afore-mentioned, after several publick readings of it, after much deliberation, both publickly and in private committees, after full liberty given to all to object against it, and earnest invitations of all who have any scruples about it, to make known the same, that they might be satisfied; doth unanimously, and without a contrary voice, agree to an approve the following Directory, in all the heads thereof, together with the Preface set before it; and doth require, decern, and ordain, That, according to the plain tenor and meaning thereof, and the intent of the Preface, it be carefully and uniformly observed and practised by all the ministers and others within this kingdom whom it doth concern; which practice shall be begun, upon intimation given to the several presbyteries from the printing of this Directory, that a printed copy

of it be provided and kept of or the use of every kirk in this kingdom; also that each presbytery have a printed copy thereof for their use, and take special notice of the observation or neglect thereof in every General Assembly, as there shall b cause. Provided always, That the clause in the Directory, of the administration of the Lord's Supper, which mentioneth the communicants sitting about the table, or at it, be not interpreted as if, in the judgment of this kirk, it were indifferent, and free for any of the communicants not to come to, and receive at the table; or as if we did approve the distributing of the elements by the minister to each communicant, and not by the communicants among themselves. It is also provided, That this shall be no prejudice to the order and practise of this kirk, in such particulars as are appointed by the books of discipline, and acts of General Assemblies, and are not otherwise ordered and appointed in the Directory.

Finally, The Assembly doth, with much joy and thankfulness, acknowledge the rich blessing and invaluable mercy of God, in bringing the so much wished for uniformity in religion to such a happy period, that these kingdoms, once at so great uniformity than any other reformed kirks; which is unto us the return of our prayers sorrows and sufferings; a taking away, in great measure, the reproach of the people of God, to the stopping of the mouths of malignant and disaffected persons; and an not of evil, to give us an expected end; in the expectation an confidence whereof we do rejoice; beseeching the Lord to preserve these kingdoms from heresies, schisms, offences, profaneness, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine, and the power of godliness; and to continue with us, and the generations following, these his pure and purged ordinances, together with an increase of the power and life thereof, to the glory of his great name, the enlargement of the kingdom of his Son, the corroboration of peace and love between the kingdoms, the unity and comfort of all his people, and our edifying one another in love.