ACT APPROVING FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT 1645

ACT of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the KIRK of SCOTLAND, approving the Propositions concerning Kirk-government, and Ordination of Ministers

General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 10 February 1645

THE General Assembly being most desirous and solicitous, not only of the establishment and preservation of the Form of Kirk-government in this kingdom, according to the word of God, books of Discipline, acts of General Assemblies, and National Covenant, but also of an uniformity in Kirk-government betwixt these kingdoms, now more straitly and strongly unite by the late Solemn League and Covenant; and considering, that as in former time there did, so hereafter there may arise, through the nearness of contagion, manifold, mischief to this kirk from a corrupt form of government in the kirk of England: likeas the precious opportunity of bringing the kirks of Christ in all the three kingdoms to an uniformity in Kirk-government being the happiness of the present times above the former; which may also, by the blessing of God, prove an effectual mean, and a good foundation to prepare for a safe and well-grounded pacification, by removing the cause from which the present pressures and bloody wars did originally proceed: and now the Assembly having thrice read, and diligently examined, the propositions (hereunto annexed) concerning the officers, assemblies, and government of the kirk, and concerning the ordination of ministers, brought unto us, as the results of the long and learned debates of the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, and of the treaty of uniformity with the Commissioners of this kirk there residing; after mature deliberation,, and after timeous calling upon and warning of all, who have any exceptions against same, to make them known, that they might receive satisfaction; doth agree to and approve the propositions afore-mentioned, touching, touching Kirk-government and Ordination; and doth hereby authorized the Commissioners of this Assembly, who are to meet at Edinburgh, to agree and to conclude in the name of this Assembly, an uniformity betwixt the kirks in both kingdoms, in the afore-mentioned particulars, so soon as the same shall be ratified, without any substantial alteration, by an ordinance of the honourable Houses of the Parliament of England; which ratification shall be timely intimate and made known by the Commissioners of this kirk residing at London. Provided always, That this act be no ways prejudicial to the further discussion and examination of that article which hold forth, That the doctor or teacher hath power of the administration of the sacraments, as well as the pastor; as also of the distinct rights and interests of presbyteries and people in the calling of ministers; but that it shall be free to debate and discuss these points, as God shall be pleased to give further light.