

pense of the Books of Discipline, because it firmly establishes patronage, and appears to limit popular rights. The truth is, that if the Books of discipline have no authority, the Church of Scotland has no church government, worship or discipline, for the old confession does not treat of these subjects. The Act of 1592 is a declaratory Act, which, though it does not mention these books—mentions what is in them, and establishes what was set up by them; and such is the establishment which exists down to the present day. Such is the true Scottish Church. Such is the Church established by law. Such is the church of the reformation.

Having ascertained that the only legalised worship is that set up in the two Books of Discipline at the Reformation, and that the only legal form which our church can assume is that which it had at the Reformation, if it is to place itself in the position where its charter places it—it remains to be seen what is the legal force of Knox's liturgy. In the first Book of Discipline, it is frequently referred to. Thus: "To the churches where no minister can be had presently, must be appointed the most apt men that distinctly can read the common 'Prayers' and the Scriptures." For the work of reading the common prayers and Scriptures a distinct office was created—the office of "the readers." Their stipend is thus arranged: "For a reader forty marks is sufficient: provided that he teach the children of the parish, besides the reading of the common prayers and books of the Old and New Testament." Again: "readers ought to be endued with gravity and discretion, lest by their lightness, the prayers or Scriptures read be of less price or estimation." For upland parishes it is ordained: "every reader or minister there appointed, must take care of the children and youth of the parish, to instruct them in the first rudiments, especially in the catechism (Calvin's catechism) as we have it now translated in the Book of Common Order, called the order of Geneva." In explaining "the policy of the Kirk," the first distinguishes between things necessary and things only profitable. Among things "necessary," are enumerated "common prayers publicly made;" and among things only

"profitable:" "that psalms should be sung." Again: "In great towns we think it expedient that, every day, there be either sermon or common prayers with some exercises of reading the Scriptures." There is a curious clause too long to quote, which recommends that public sermon and common prayers be not conjoined. As to catechising: "the order and how much is appointed for every Sunday, is already distinguished in our *Book of Common Order*; which Catechism is the most perfect that ever yet was used in the Kirk." Again: "In private houses we think it expedient that the most grave and discreet person use the common prayers at morn and night." Such is a specimen of the sanction which the liturgy contained in the Book of Common Order received in this wonderful book—the *first Book of Discipline*—every line of which breathes piety, patriotism and prudence. It may be mentioned that, for a year or two before, and for a year or two after 1560, the English Book of Common Prayer was used in the Scotch Church, owing to the scarcity of Knox's, until means were taken to have the latter printed in sufficient abundance. Therefore, the phrase "common prayers" may sometimes refer to the English, except when the other is expressly mentioned. In a review of the period between 1560 and 1592, Dr. Cunningham says, in his admirable history: "The Book of Common Prayer [Prayer Book of Edward VI.] was still used in the service, and sometimes as a help to private devotion. John Knox had portions of it read to him while he lay upon his death-bed. In Dec. 1564, the Assembly ordered all ministers and readers to provide themselves with a copy of the Psalm Book, with the order of Geneva attached (which had just then issued from the press), to assist them in the celebration of the sacraments; and in October, 1599, the *parliament* ordained that every gentleman worth three hundred marks yearly, and every substantial seaman and burgher worth fifty pounds in goods or land, should possess himself with a Bible and Psalm Book." Copies of this edition are still extant. This book of prayers continued in use till at least 1637; for in that year, on the famous 23rd July, when Laud's semi-Popish