

Confession of Faith *without exception*.—The Establishment, since the Disruption, has practically repudiated some of its doctrines—holding the benefits of the establishment on terms which are inconsistent with them—but it professes, by its subscription, to hold by the Confession in all its integrity. The Free Church of Scotland professes to hold by the entire doctrine of the Confession; and the *first* Seceders maintained the doctrine to the same extent. Mr. Trotter's blunders, and the mistakes into which the Presbyterian Synod have fallen, seem to be the result of their not having made themselves acquainted with the real import of the Act of Assembly 1647.

The early part of that Act narrates the way in which the Confession had been drawn up, and the care which had been taken that the Assembly, in judging of it, should have due means of being acquainted with its contents. There is then an approval and adoption of the Confession, as being most orthodox, and grounded upon the word of God; but as the document which was thus approved of does not enter upon the details of Church Government, the Act guards the Assembly from being misunderstood on that account, by intimating that these points were to be set forth in a separate document—the Directory of Government.—Still further, whereas it is stated in the second article of the thirty first chapter of the Confession, "As magistrates may lawfully call a Synod of Ministers, and other fit persons, to consult and advise with about matters of religion; so if magistrates be open enemies to the church, the ministers of Christ, of themselves, by virtue of their office, or they, with other fit persons upon delegation from their churches, may meet together in such assemblies;" the Act interposes a remark, not objecting to the doctrine that magistrates may call a Synod of Ministers and other fit persons to consult and advise with about matters of religion, but explaining the circumstances in which this may warrantably be done, viz. where churches are not properly settled or organized; as was the case at that very time in England, in which the Assembly of divines was sitting at Westminster, in compliance with the call of the English Parliament. These remarks do not constitute any *exception* to the doctrine of the Confession of Faith; and, notwithstanding the unexpected length of this article, in order that the reader may see for himself that there is not a single doc-

trine of the Confession objected to, the entire Act is subjoined.

"*Assembly at Edinburgh, August 27, 1647, Sess. 23. Act approving the Confession of Faith.*

"A Confession of Faith for the Kirks of God in the three kingdoms, being the chiefest part of that uniformity in religion, which, by the Solemn League and Covenant, we are bound to endeavour: And there being accordingly a Confession of Faith agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, with the assistance of Commissioners from the Kirk of Scotland; which Confession was sent from our Commissioners at London to the Commissioners of the Kirk met at Edinburgh in January last, and hath been in this Assembly twice publicly read over, examined, and considered; copies thereof being also printed, that it might be particularly perused by all the members of this Assembly, unto whom frequent intimation was publicly made, to put in their doubts and objections, if they had any: And the said Confession being, upon due examination thereof, found by the Assembly to be most agreeable to the word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Kirk. And, lastly, It being so necessary, and so much longed for, that the said Confession be, with all possible diligence and expedition, approved and established in both kingdoms, as a principal part of the intended uniformity in religion, and as a special means for the more effectual suppressing of the many dangerous errors and heresies of these times; the General Assembly doth therefore, after mature deliberation, agree unto, and approve the said Confession, as to the truth of the matter; (judging it to be most orthodox, and grounded upon the word of God;) and also, as to the point of uniformity, agreeing for our part, that it be a common Confession of Faith for the three kingdoms. The Assembly doth also bless the Lord, and thankfully acknowledge his great mercy, in that so excellent a Confession of Faith is prepared, and thus far agreed upon in both kingdoms; which we look upon as a great strengthening of the true reformed religion against the common enemies thereof. But, lest our intention and meaning be in some particulars misunderstood, it is hereby expressly declared and provided, That the not mentioning in this Confession the several sorts of ecclesiastical officers and Assem-