

Calendar (New Style) Act 1751

Imperial Act 23

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An Act for regulating the commencement of the year; and for correcting the calendar now in use.

Preamble

WHEREAS the legal supputation of the year of our Lord in that part of *Great Britain* called *England*, according to which the year beginneth on the twenty-fifth day of March, hath been found by experience to be attended with divers inconveniencies, not only as it differs from the usage of neighbouring nations, but also from the legal method of computation in that part of *Great Britain* called *Scotland*, and from the common usage throughout the whole Kingdom, and thereby frequent mistakes are occasioned in the dates of deeds, and other writings, and disputes arise therefrom: And whereas the calendar now in use throughout all his Majesty's *British* dominions, commonly called *The Julian Calendar*, hath been discovered to be erroneous, by means whereof the Vernal or Spring Equinox, which at the time of the General Council of *Nice*

Note

Source: New Zealand Parliamentary Library, International Documents Collection

in the year of our Lord three hundred and twenty-five, happened on or about the twenty-first day of *March*, now happens on the ninth or tenth day of the same month; and the said error is still increasing, and if not remedied, would, in process of time, occasion the several Equinoxes and Solstices to fall at very different times in the civil year from what they formerly did, which might tend to mislead persons ignorant of the said alteration: And whereas a method of correcting the calendar in such manner, as that the Equinoxes and Solstices may for the future fall nearly on the same nominal days, on which the same happened at the time of said General Council, hath been received and established, and is now generally practised by almost all other Nations of *Europe*: And whereas it will be of general convenience to merchants, and other persons corresponding with other nations and countries, and tend to prevent mistakes and disputes in or concerning the dates of letters, and accounts, if the like correction be received and established in his Majesty's dominions: May it therefore please your Majesty, that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same

1 The old supputation of the year not to be made use of after December 1751 year to commence, for the future, on 1 Jan. the days to be numbered as now until 2 Sept 1752; and the day following to be accounted 14 Sept omitting 11 days.

That in and throughout all his Majesty's dominions and countries belonging or subject to the Crown of Great Britain, the said supputation, according to which the year of our Lord beginneth on the twenty-fifth day of *March*, shall not be made use of from and after the last day of *December* one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one, and that the first day of *January* next following the said last day of *December* shall be reckoned, taken, deemed and accounted to be the first day of the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two; and the first day of *January*, which shall happen next after the said first day of *January* one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two, shall be reckoned, taken, deemed

and accounted to be the first day of the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three; and so on, from time to time, the first day of *January* in every year, which shall happen in time to come, shall be reckoned, taken, deemed and accounted to be the first day of the year; and that each new year shall accordingly commence, and begin to be reckoned, from the first day of every such month of *January* next preceding the twenty-fifth day of *March*, on which such year would, according to the present supputation, have begun or commenced: And that from and after the said first day of *January* one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two, the several days of each month shall go on, and be reckoned and numbered in the same order; and the feast of *Easter*, and other moveable feasts thereon depending, shall be ascertained according to the same method, as they now are, until the second day of *September* in the said year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two inclusive; and that the natural day next immediately following the said second day of *September*, shall be called, reckoned and accounted to be the fourteenth day of *September*, omitting for that time only the eleven intermediate nominal days of the common calendar; and that the several natural days, which shall follow and succeed next after the said fourteenth day of *September*, shall be respectively called, reckoned and numbered forwards in numerical order from the said fourteenth day of *September*, according to the order and succession of days now used in the present calendar; and that all acts, deeds, writings, notes and other instruments of what nature or kind soever, whether ecclesiastical or civil, publick or private, which shall be made, executed or signed, upon or after the said first day of *January* one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two shall bear date according to the said new method of supputation

2 Hundredth years, except every fourth hundred, to be common years of 365 days. Years Bissextile of 366 days.

And for the continuing and preserving the calendar or method of reckoning, and computing the days of the year in the same regular course, as near as may be, in all times coming; be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the several

years of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred, one thousand nine hundred, two thousand one hundred, two thousand two hundred, two thousand three hundred, or any other hundredth years of our Lord, which shall happen in time to come, except only every fourth hundredth year of our Lord, whereof the year of our Lord two thousand shall be the first, shall not be esteemed or taken to be Bissextile or Leap years, but shall be taken to be common years, consisting of three hundred and sixty-five days, and no more; and that the years of our Lord two thousand, two thousand four hundred, two thousand eight hundred, and every other fourth hundred year of our Lord, from the said year of our Lord two thousand inclusive, and also all other years of our Lord, which by the present supputation are esteemed to be Bissextile or Leap years, shall for the future, and in all times to come, be esteemed and taken to be Bissextile or Leap years, consisting of three hundred and sixty-six days, in the same sort and manner as is now used with respect to every fourth year of our Lord.