

THE  
Sheriffs of London

For the time being, are the proper  
MANAGERS and Legal JUDGES  
OF THE

Election of Sheriffs

For the year ensuing.

**T**HE Right of Electing *Sheriffs* being already demonstrated to be long by Law, Charter, and Custom, to the Free-men or Barons of *London*; and this being acknowledged by my Lord *Mayor* and the Court of *Aldermen* on *Saturday* last, in their granting and allowing to the *Common-Hall* the Nomination of both the *Sheriffs*: All that comes under debate at present, is concerning the nature of the Court that is held for the Election of these Officers, and who are the Proper Managers, and as it were Judges thereof. It is certain, That before the Statute of *Lincoln*, all the *Sheriffs* of the Kingdom were chosen in their several and respective County-Courts, where the *Sheriffs* for the time being, did, by putting the Questions, collecting the Suffrages, and declaring upon whom the choice, through the Majority of Votes, had fallen, constantly preside and govern the Elections. And as to this day, the Election of *Coroners* remains vested in the County-Courts, where the several *Suiters* in the respective Courts have the Right and Priviledg of Chusing those Officers; so the managing the said Elections is by all men confessed to appertain to the *Sheriffs* then and there in Office, when and where such Elections are to be transacted. Now, forasmuch as the *Statute of Lincoln* doth no ways extend to the City of *London*, and County of *Middlesex*, because they hold, claim, and enjoy the Election of annual *Sheriffs* of the said City by Charter, &c. and the Election of the yearly *Sheriffs* of *Middlesex* by the Charters, Patents, and Grants of the Kings of *England* at the Fee-Farm Rent of Three Hundred Pound *per annum*; it undeniably follows, That the Court wherein the Choice of the said Officers is transacted and managed by the *Barons* and Free-men, is in the Nature of a County-Court; and that the *Sheriffs* for the time being, are to conduct, rule, and declare the Election.

And seeing the *Common-Hall's* for the choice of Parliament-men for the City of *London*, and I may add, for the Election of *Mayors*, are of the same nature with these which are held for the Election of *Sheriffs*; it naturally and demonstratively ensues, that the *Sheriffs* being granted to be the proper Officers for the putting the Questions, taking the Suffrages, and declaring upon whom the Majority of Hands or Votes have fallen in the Election of Members for Parliament, and in the choice of *Mayors*, so it likewise appertains and belongs to them to guide and manage the Election of the Officers now under debate; and to publish and proclaim upon whom the Citizens do devolve that trust.

And



And forasmuch as the City of *London* is by ancient Prescription, a County, there do thereupon, and by virtue thereof belong unto it, not only *Sheriffs*, but a County-Court, as an incident and adjunct inseperable from a County; and whatsoever hath at any time heretofore been the Prerogative and Right of the Sheriffs in the County Courts of *England*, doth entirely remain to the Sheriffs of *London*, there being no Act of Parliament or Charter, by which they are stript or devested of them.

It is matter of astonishment, how the present Lord *Mayor* comes to pretend to any such Right, Priviledg or Power, seeing all his Predecessors have constantly left the management of this Matter and Affair to the Sheriffs, for the time being, as the Officers to whom it did properly belong. Tho there have been some in the Chair heretofore, who understood the Prerogatives of their Place, and who had as much zeal for the maintaining the Rights of the Chair, as any can be supposed to do, or have.

And should the present *Sheriffs* suffer themselves to be deprived of this Right and Appurtenance of their Office, they would not only betray the Trust reposed in them, but become liable to all such Actions as may or shall be brought against them by those *Citizens* who conceive and esteem themselves injurd. And if upon Tryal of such Actions, it do appear, That my Lord *Mayor* hath no Right to govern the Poll, they will not only entail a perpetual infamy upon their Name, but be condemned to such Fines and Costs as will infallibly ruin and impoverish them.

And for any to alledg, That my Lord *Mayor* may dissolve the Court, if things do not go according to his inclination and mind, is both to put upon him that which he hath no Right, either by Law, Charter, or Act of Common-Council to do, being theré only in the Quality of a *Concivis*, or Fellow-Citizen; and to cloath him with a Capacity, and Power of depriving the City of such Officers, and exposing both the City and himself to such Consequences, as I tremble to mention.

And for any to insist upon the Confirmation of the Gentleman that my Lord *Mayor* hath drunk to, meerly upon that score and motive, is both plainly to destroy the *Plea* which the City have put in to the *Quo Warranto* against their Charter, and to make themselves obnoxious to Indictments, Plaints and Actions, as Betrayers and Subverters of the Rights and Priviledges of the *Corporation*.

For as all the Charters are for the Citizens Election of Two Sheriffs from among themselves; so the Council for the City-Charter, are unanimous, that this is their legal and undisputable Right.

And as to what refers to the present Choice, it was after a fair and peaceable management (notwithstanding many provocations to have begotten Disturbances, and created Riots), declared to have fallen upon Mr. *Papillon*, and Mr. *Duboise*, two as worthy Gentlemen as ever were called to that Office in the City of *London*. Yea, when the *Poll* was demanded, contrary to all sense, and meerly to give the Electors Trouble, it was not only readily granted by the present *Sheriffs*, but all things in the conduct of it, carried with the greatest impartiality, condescension, and forbearance imaginable.

For tho the present *Sheriffs*, as well as the Freeman; are resolved to adhere to their Rights, yet they are not to be provok'd upon by the heats and passions of others, to do any thing which may either be an offence against the Government, or endanger the quiet and peace of the City.

And we are all assured, that his Majesty will neither encourage the infringement of the Laws of the Land, or countenance the overthrowing the Priviledges and Jurisdictions of his Regal Chamber.