

ing twelve meetings in the public room, the candidate is put to the ballot, and if he has two-thirds of the votes of the Members present, he is chosen; if not, he is rejected.

The charge we bring against Sir Joseph Banks, is, that, though not entrusted with any such power, either by statute or custom, and very unfit, from his acknowledged violence of temper, and from his incapacity to judge of literary qualifications, in which he is himself shamefully deficient, to be entrusted with it, he has repeatedly interposed, in a clandestine manner, to procure rejections of proper candidates \*, with the visible design of taking away the privilege of the body at large, and making himself the sole master of the admissions, in other words, the *Monarch* of the Society.

Before we bring our proofs of the fact, we shall examine the justifications of it that have been offered; as, if these are really well-grounded, no doubt it will be unnecessary for the reader to give himself the trouble to proceed.

First then it has been said, that in influencing elections, the President had only exercised a right which every Fellow enjoyed in common with himself, but which it particularly *became* him to exercise, because from his situation he had greater opportunities of being acquainted with the characters of the candidates, than any other Fellow could have; but to this doctrine, did it apply to the complaints, as it will be presently seen it does not, we cannot accede for the following reasons.

In the first place, from what has just been stated of the mode of election, it must appear that there are very few cases indeed in which it can be supposed that a President, however omniscient by nature, or great in connection, can know more of the literary or moral character of a Candidate, than the 456 other Fellows, in whose room the certificate hangs up for 12 weeks. and about 200 of whom have opportunities of conversing together upon it. If after such opportunities, the Society is still liable to be imposed upon, it is much better it should be so, than that the negative should be put with so much danger into one hand. For when a private Fellow exercises his right of asking balls against an improper candidate, he exercises it *pro una vice*, probably, from the purest motives, and certainly with no danger to the freedom of the Society, whether he succeeds or miscarries; but it is not so with the President, for what must be the natural consequence of his repeatedly interesting himself in exclusions? Will it not soon be seen that his favour is the only

\* By taking advantage of his situation on the very night of election to surprise such Fellows, as were ignorant of the case, to put in black-balls, or by frightening the Candidate, by the fear of his opposition, into taking down the certificate.