

derstood the Arts of Government, and ever consulted the good of his People, provided accordingly by the Statute of *Articuli super Cartas*, that the Commons should have the Election of Sheriffs in every Shire, where the Shrievalty was not of Fee: And so it remained till the turbulent Reign of his Successor; in whose 9th Year, by a Parliament held at *Lincoln*, the Nomination of Sheriffs was left to the Chancellor, Treasurer, Barons of the *Exchequer*, and Judges; with a Restriction that no Bailiff or Steward of a great Lord should be appointed, nor any but who had a sufficient Estate within the Shire. It was afterwards ordained by Statute 12 *Rich. II. c. 2.* that the great Officers of the Crown, and all the Judges should be called to the naming of Sheriffs, and be sworn not to ordain, name or make them by any Gift or Brocage, Favour or Affection; but they should be of the most lawful and sufficient Men, to their Estimation and Knowledge. What made the Commons the more easily content themselves with such Restrictions, and consent to this Regulation, was probably the Assurance they had of their regular meeting in Parliament, for the Redress of any Grievance, by the late fixing of their Representation by *Edw. I.* in such a wise Proportion of the Numbers of Representatives for the Counties, great Towns, and lesser Boroughs, as continued to the great Happiness of this Nation, till the beginning of Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign; between which Time and the Death of King *Charles I.* that Proportion was gradually altered, till at last it was entirely destroyed by the Addition of 250 Representatives of poor inconsiderable Boroughs; the Venality whereof hath exposed us to all the Evils of a general Corruption, the greatest Grievance that any Nation can possibly labour under, and which cannot fail of being the Ruin of this, if not speedily remedied.

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