

40. I therefore waited upon the Mayor alone, introduced the subject of my visit in the most delicate manner possible. Without much trouble I prevailed upon him to change the time from 9 a. m. (the hour school opens) to 4 p. m. (the hour school closes) but he would not consent to alter the place of meeting from the Police office to the Town Hall; stating with great vehemence, that he did not care a — for "your young ladies." In the discharge of his duty he would use "all alike." He did not care a — for the greatest lady; he would use her just like he would any body else, &c.* I made answer, that in the County of Oxford, I invariably held trials, in which ladies were concerned, in my dwelling-house, and hoped that he would not insist upon making Miss J. come to the Police office. I then stated that I had been requested to sit with him on the trial of the case, and hoped that it would be quite agreeable to him. He then consented that the trial should take place in the Town Hall, but refused to allow me to adjudicate with him, assigning as his reason, (as he did in his speech in the Town Hall on Monday night) that he had consented to Mr. McNaught † sitting with him, and if he allowed me to do so also, *it would be two against one, and Mr. McKay would not like that.* I expressed my astonishment at such a reason, and suggested, *that if such really were his views*—that Mr. McKay be allowed to call on any other Magistrates; that the extent of my wish was to comply with Miss J.'s request to sit on the case; I did not care how many there might be besides. The answer was that if Mr. McKay asked a dozen, Miss J. would ask as many, and it would not better the matter, *for it would be twelve against twelve*; besides that, "some would be asking James Wilkes to sit, who had laughed at some of his decisions, and therefore did not care about sitting with him." By this time he had worked himself into somewhat of a passion, and declared with loud voice and clinched fists, that McNaught or myself might sit, either of us, *but not both.* I then intimated that all Magistrates had a most unquestionable right to sit and adjudicate on all such trials. This increased his rage, and he said that it was a Police Court ‡ over which he presided as Mayor, and done just what he liked. I saw that it was useless to press the matter any further on that occasion, so bade him good night without intimating to him what course I intended to pursue.

Had I been only *personally* interested in the matter of my request, I would most cheerfully have submitted to his unreasonable

* Forgetting apparently that there would not be much justice in inflicting as heavy a fine upon a "poor girl" as on a "lady" for the self-same offence, or to imprison a "lady" for as long a period as a "gaol bird" for the self-same offence.

† This gentleman was not solicited to sit by Miss Jennings, or by any person at her request.

‡ The summons says nothing about a Police Court or Mayor. In the body of it, he styles himself "William Mathews, one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace," and signs it "William Mathews, J. P."

The act provides that the Mayor alone, or such other J. P., as he may desire, shall adjudicate with respect to any *By-Laws of the Municipality of which he is the head.* But the presumption of a Mayor of any Town usurping to himself the sole right to adjudicate with respect to crimes punishable by Provincial statute, is preposterous in the extreme, and dangerous to the community.

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