

1680. *December 7.* The ROYAL FISHING COMPANY *against* HALTON.

HIS Royal Highness the Duke of York being present, the members of the Royal Fishing Company represented, that his Majesty, by his 5000 pounds sterling of capital or stock, having fifty votes, each 100 pounds giving a vote, and delegating the whole fifty votes to one person, *viz.* my Lord Halton, he engrossed the whole administration of the society into that one person's hands; which made the affair suffer exceedingly in its true interest; for, the fifty votes being the plurality, Halton carried these many years what he pleased; so that they needed only ask his suffrage, which made it resolve in a monopoly.

The Lords (contrary to the Duke of York's private opinion,) took the courage to show their justice and decide against the King; and found, by the contract of copartnery, one proxy could not have all his votes; (though I think it was and is yet lawful to vote by proxies:) but if his Majesty pleased to dispose on and parcel out his votes to fifty several persons, they would each of them have a vote; as my Lord Tweeddale had assigned his son Yester to 100 pounds of his, and so given him also a vote. For Sir G. Lockhart urged that *plus vident oculi quam oculus*; and fifty persons would consult more rationally, and fall upon better expedients for the good of the whole society, than any one man. This touched Halton.

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1680. *December 10.* The EARL of HOME *against* His VASSALS.

IN the Earl of Home's reduction and improbation against his vassals; ALLEGED for some of them,—I cannot take a term to produce any writs but those granted by yourself, seeing you produce nothing but a seasine in your own person which does not proceed upon a retour, (for that would also instruct that your predecessor was infeft,) but upon an adjudication led against yourself, as lawfully charged to enter heir, by Sir Andrew Ramsay of Abbotshall, and now returned in your own person.

This being reported, the Lords found the defence relevant; and that, by virtue of his title in process, the defenders were not obliged to produce any older rights than such as were granted by himself; (and if they had none such, then the certification would do them no hurt;) unless he would produce charters, retours, and seasines standing in his author's and predecessor's persons; in which case, the defenders behoved to produce all posterior rights, unless they excluded him by an older right.

But if it once appear, by their own production, that he is their superior, then he will force them to produce to him all their rights.

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1679 and 1680. JOHN ELPHINGSTON and the MASTER of BALMERINO *against* The EARL of LOTHIAN.

1679. *January 24.*—IN the action John Elphingston and the Master of

Balmerino against the Earl of Lothian, for payment of a sum contained in his father's bond; ALLEGED,—It was a public debt, and never a delivered evident; and James Chalmers, advocate, found it among Sir Thomas Nicolson his master's papers, blank in the creditors' name, with a memorandum about it that it belonged to Balmerino.

Sir Thomas's heirs also appeared, and craved to be preferred thereto.

The Lords repelled (the Nicolson's) their right; and, before answer to Balmerino's claim, ordain the witnesses inserted in the bond (if alive) to be examined, where and when it was subscribed, and what the parties designed at the time, and what was the cause of the granting the said bond. And also ordain Mr Mark Cassie of Cockpen, the Lord Jedburgh, Campbell of Cesnock and others, to be examined if this bond was ever spoken of or mentioned by Balmerino, the time of the treaty and communing betwixt him and old Lothian; and whether Balmerino refused to subscribe a general discharge, because this bond was not excepted therefrom. *Vide* 10th December 1680. *Vol. I. Page 36.*

1680. *December 10.* In Balmerino's pursuit against the Earl of Lothian (24th Jan. 1679,) the probation being this day advised, the Lords found that the bond of 20,000 merks was *ab initio* blank, and that it was unwarrantably filled up in Balmerino's name, and unjustly delivered up by James Chalmer, advocate, being found by him among his master Sir Thomas Nicolson's papers. And seeing, by the depositions of the witnesses examined *ex officio*, it does not appear that either it was for a true onerous cause, or what were the terms of the depositions, the Lords find the said bond void and null, and suspend the letters *simpliciter*; and assoilyie the Earl of Lothian from it.

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1680. *December 14.* DUMBAR of HEMPRIGS *against* LORD ARBUTHNOT

DUMBAR of Hemprigs against Lord Arbuthnot being reported; the Lords found, though the debt was the Lady Arbuthnot's, the defender's stepmother, and that it was never constituted against her husband in his lifetime, yet this Lord, as heir served to him, ought to be liable for her debt *in quantum* either he or his father were *lucrati* by that marriage, with a deduction always of the *onera matrimonii*. And ordained the pursuer to condescend on the *lucrum*, and the defender on the burdens.

The words of the interlocutor, as they were dictated to the clerk, were,—“ Find, albeit the marriage be dissolved, and that there was no decret against the Lady during the marriage, yet that the defender is liable *in quantum locupletior factus est* beyond what is necessary *ad sustinenda onera matrimonii* according to the quality of the person and the estate. And ordain the pursuer to condescend on the *lucrum* made by the defender, and the defender to condescend on the *onera matrimonii*, how far the defender's estate was burdened with that marriage, either by the Lady her liferent provision, or by provisions conceived in favours of the children to be procreated of that marriage; to be considered by the Lords at advising of the cause; and reserving to both parties to object *contra producenda*.” Culross, in his *Decis. Jan. 1583, Allardice*, shows that the Lords, in a case like this, assoilyied *simpliciter*. *Vol. I. Page 122.*