

# THE ABERDEEN PIRATE.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1833.

[PRICE 1d.]

## OUR NEW MAGISTRATES!

"What signifies 't for fook to flye  
"Bout what's been done before them!" *Tullochgorum.*

THE long-wished for change in our system of burgh-government has, at length, been consummated, by the free election of Magistrates which took place, the other day. The result of that election shows, in the strongest light, the feeling of the public on this important subject. Of the chief supporters of the old system not one has been elected, to fill any of the offices with which long possession had rendered them so familiar. This was, indeed, no more than might have been naturally expected. It was not to be supposed that those, who had, all along, steadfastly opposed the new order of things, could reasonably entertain any hopes of sitting in Council with the party whom they had uniformly, and for a long period, successfully excluded from all share in the management of burgh affairs. Party-spirit has, doubtless, prevailed, to a considerable extent, while such changes have been pending; but, it is highly creditable to the good sense, and better feelings of the citizens of Bon Accord, that it has not been carried to such violent excess, as has marked its influence in other quarters. It is to be hoped that the petty distinctions of party will soon be lost in the honest, and wisely directed zeal of all concerned to promote the common weal. This change, so desirable, cannot be accomplished, all at once. People long retain a hankering after usages to which they have been accustomed, even after circumstances, over which they have no control, have compelled them to abandon them. Time, however, the resistless agent in all sublimary matters, must, at length, prevail. At no very distant period, the distinctions between Reformer and Anti-Reformer will be found only in the page of history, where they will be contemplated as calmly as the records of the discussions of remoter times. If the administration of those who formerly bore sway be, in any respect, liable to objection, let their misconduct be regarded, by their successors in office, rather as a warning to themselves, than as matter for sarcastic reproach on men, who but share the fallibility of our common nature. We sincerely hope that the intentions of our new rulers are good. Indeed, we are bound to believe this, until the contrary shall be proved. But, if they should fail in their duty to the public, they must be aware that they cannot plead the imperfection of the new system as an excuse for their conduct. It is a system of their own choice; it rests with themselves to make it the instrument of imparting, to their fellow-citizens, those advantages which it was, surely, intended to convey. A bad system in the hands of honest men will prove far more beneficial than the best system in the management of fools or knaves. Our Magistrates are, neither more nor less, than the servants of the public, and the public have a right to expect that their servants will act wisely, and uprightly. Let the electors be true to themselves, and they have nothing to fear. If their choice of Magistrates is uniformly dictated by enlightened principle, our elections will be a very simple affair. In this case, no one will have the effrontery to stand for office, who is conscious that his public conduct or his principles are liable to objection. The New Council is composed of men who are justly entitled to that marked public confidence which they have obtained. They will doubtless have many very important duties to perform; many inquiries to institute; changes to make; some abuses to reform; and, we hope, some things to approve. Let them discharge the trust, so honourably confided to their wisdom and integrity, in a fearless and conscientious manner. Let them rather study how they may best promote the public good, than how they may most successfully expose individual mismanagement. The necessity of a change is admitted, on all hands; let this necessity be shown by the good effects of the change. The man who detects abuses in our municipal affairs is, certainly, entitled to

the gratitude of the community; but he who points out the path to their correction is a still greater benefactor to the public. The alleged abuses under the old system have frequently been depicted in the strongest colours. It has been held up, whether justly or unjustly, we pretend not to determine, as a guzzling—a wine-bibbing—a jobbing system. It has been allowed that there was doubtless a considerable change, for the better, in these respects, since the period of the bankruptcy of the town; but still, it has been insinuated that the old leaven was not thoroughly purged out; that there still existed the same spirit, quenched, indeed, partly by want of means, and, partly, by sheer shame. It has been said, that the old folks had found their footing giving way; that they saw a storm gathering; and that they, therefore, prudently, reefed their sails. It has been said, that they no longer assumed the arrogant airs which formerly marked their bearing; that they had, indeed, become more courteous, more liberal, more conciliating than formerly—but that, still, all this was merely forced from them by the resistless changes in the spirit of the times: that they, therefore, neither deserved nor obtained the confidence or esteem of the community for concessions which they were compelled to make, for a change of policy, which change of circumstances obliged them to adopt.

How different, say their opponents, their recent conduct, from that of the olden time! Then were the days of—the authoritative look—the consequential strut—the condescending nod! Then were the days of the frequent feast—of the dainty viands—of the circling wine—of the loud laugh—of the sly toast—of the maudlin song—of the no-meaning speech—of the half-whispered return of thanks! Then were the days of the snug job—of the convenient loan—of the reckless scheme—of the improvident expenditure—of the pensioning of poor relations—of the winking at the peccadilloes of the *elect*—of the severe visitation of the backsliders of the *alien*—of the appropriation of public benefits to private purposes! And, after thus portraying the defects of the old system, it is asked, with triumph, what has all this brought upon the abettors of the old system? the loss of public confidence, and an accumulation of public contempt! It is said, that the old folks are now obliged to sink into the privacy of domestic life, there to spin out their remaining days, in bitter ruminations on the past, in cheerless contemplation of the present! in hopeless anticipation of the future! Now, admitting the truth of these representations, what effects ought they to produce on our new rulers? Ought they not to be a beacon to warn them against running against the rocks on which their precursors in office have been dashed! There is every reason to think that they will act for the public good; they have the fear of public opinion before their eyes; they are under the check of free election; they are under the restraints of the novelty of an untried situation. They must not, however, allow time to render them too familiar with place and power. They must regard their office as a temporary trust, for the benefit of the public, not as an inheritance for their own advantage. There must be no feasting at the public expense; no snug jobbing; no convenient loans; no close management; all must be fair, free, and open, in the conduct of our new rulers, if they would wish to avoid the reproaches which they cast on the old folks being hurled with tenfold effect on themselves! To the electors we would say: exercise, according to the best of your judgment, the rights which you have acquired. Your conduct, at the late election, has given general satisfaction; pursue the same course on succeeding occasions. You have long wished for the possession of these rights; now that they are yours, use them like men, like freemen! Never let a false brother be found among the independent electors of Bon Accord!