

not as some do, hold that all governing bodies are rogues, I readily admit, and, acting apparently upon it, our ancestors wisely made the appointments of certain officers under fluctuating governing bodies permanent; for instance, they made the office of the Town Clerks perpetual; in some respects, it is true, to prevent the confusion which must necessarily have been occasioned by his yearly change, but principally his appointment being secure that he might be free of all temptation to falsify the Records to suit designs which might have been formed injurious to the community, of whose rights he was thus the chief guardian; and so anxious was the law in this respect, that it has been found that once appointed, the Town Clerk necessarily holds his office for life. Many similar instances might be adduced, but the one I have given is sufficient as an illustration, and is the most apposite that occurs to the subject of the present Letter.

I may mention, however, that the Clerks of Parliament hold their offices by patent, and cannot be removed. Render the Town Clerks dependent on the Councils, or yearly eligible, and you destroy an efficient check over the bodies whose proceedings it is their duty to register. Let me beseech you, however, Gentlemen, to recollect that I am now speaking on an abstract point, and not at all as regards any individual case. It may be said, I am aware, that now as the Councils are elected by, and responsible to, their fellow-citizens, there is no need for any other check; but it is easy to show that even yet were the Clerks and other Burgal Officers wholly dependent on the Council, it would be a matter of no difficulty to manage matters so as to conceal many transactions from the public entirely; and thus, these transactions being unknown, could never be challenged, and all idea of responsibility would be at an end; and, therefore, I am persuaded, that although it may happen, as it has done in my case, that the Clerk is for a time of different political opinions, from the Council, you will see, on consideration, that it is proper that there should be at least one officer not subject to the fear of losing office, and I am satisfied that at this determination will the public arrive at last; and this brings me to ask how it is possible, conceding Mr. Gordon's principle, that the servants of public bodies should always be of the same opinion with these bodies, that this can always be managed? Take, for instance, the case of a Town Clerk to be elected for one or three years—the Council will naturally choose one of their own sentiments, and having done so they will install him into office, and he will discharge his duties in the best way he can; before, however, the