

the Execution of such Writ shall belong, who are hereby authorized and impowered immediately to proceed to the Execution of such Writ or Writs, according to the Directions of the afore-mentioned Law, without any Regard had to the Space of Time betwixt the Test and Return of such Writ or Writs, so as publick Notice be given of the Election in a County, according to the Directions of the said Law, and Four Days Notice of the Election, in each City or Borrough.

And whereas notwithstanding all the Measures that have been hitherto taken for preventing the Growth of Popery within this Province, It is very obvious, that not only profest *Papists* still multiply and increase in Number, but that there are also too great Numbers of others that adhere to and espouse their Interest, in Opposition to the *Protestant* Establishment: And being under just Apprehensions (from what Steps they have already taken) that if *Papists* should continue to be allowed their Vote in electing Delegates, they, with their Adherents, and those under their Influence, will make such a Party at the Elections of many of the Counties within this Province, as well as the City of *Annapolis*, as to determine the Choice in some of their great Favourites and Adherents, which if they should accomplish, how much it would tend to the Discouragement and Disturbance of his Lordship's *Protestant* Government, is not easy to imagine. It is therefore Humbly prayed, That it may be Enacted,

Preamble.

And be it Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, by and with the Advice and Consent aforesaid, That all Profest *Papists* whatsoever, be (and are hereby declared) incapable of giving their Vote in any Election of a Delegate or Delegates within this Province, either for Counties, Cities or Borroughs; unless they first qualify themselves for so doing, by taking the severall Oaths appointed to be taken by an Act of Assembly of this Province entituled, *An Act for the better Security of the Peace and Safety of his Lordship's Government and the Protestant Interest within this Province*, and subscribe the Oath of Abjuration and Declaration therein mentioned.

None to Vote unless they take the Oaths,

And further, Inasmuch as too many Persons that are really *Papists*, or *Popishly* inclined, act in Disguise, and will not make any publick Profession of their Principles, for the better and more effectual carrying on their wicked and malicious Designs, for the Undermining and Subverting our present Establishment:

Be it therefore further Enacted, by the Authority and Consent aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful for the Sheriff or other Judges of Elections, and such Sheriff or other Judges are hereby required, as often as any of them shall see needful (or upon the Information of any other Person duly qualified to Vote) to tender and administer the Oaths and Subscriptions aforesaid, to any Person or Persons suspected to be *Papists* or *Popishly* inclined; and upon their Refusal, to set aside such Vote or Votes.

If required.

Provided always, That nothing in this Act be construed to debarr or hinder any of the People called and generally reputed *Quakers*, from their Votes in Election, they being otherwise duly qualified

Except Quakers.

And be it likewise Enacted, That in case any Sheriffs or Body-Politick shall make any undue Returns, contrary to the true Intent and Meaning of the Act afore-mentioned, or this present Act, such Sheriff or Body-Politick shall be liable to the same Penalties and Forfeitures as Sheriffs

Penalties of undue Returns.