ANNO DECIMO TERTIO

Georgii III. Regis.

CAP. LII.

An Act for appointing Wardens and Assay-masters for assaying Wrought Plate in the Towns of *Sheffield* and *Birmingham*.

WHEREAS the Silversmiths and Plate-workers in and about the Town of Birmingham, in the County of Warwick, and in and about the Town of Sheffield, in the County of York, are under great Difficulties and Hardships in the Exercise of their Trades, for want of Assayers in convenient Places to assay and touch their Wrought Plate: For Remedy whereof, be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That the several Towns of Birmingham and Sheffield aforesaid shall be, and are hereby appointed for the assaying and marking of Wrought Silver Plate, and for executing the Powers, Authorities, and Directions, given by this Act. Preamble.

And be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Earl of Dartmouth, the Right Honourable Lord Archer, the Right Honourable Heneage Finch, common- The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate.

ly called Lord Guernsey; the Right Honourable George Greville, commonly called Lord Greville; the Right Honourable Francis Conway, commonly called Lord Beauchamp; Sir John Wrottesley Baronet, Sir Henry Bridgman Baronet, the Honourable John Ward, Richard Geast, John Wyrley, Isaac Spooner, Henry Gough, Charles Colemore, John Taylor, Samuel Garbitt, Henry Carver senior, Joseph Wilkinson, Sampson Lloyd junior, Thomas Ingram, Edward Palmer, John Kettle, Joshua Glover, Matthew Boulton, John Francis, Thomas Mynde, Samuel Pemberton, John Turner senior, John Lee, William Sawyer, John Lane of Mosely, James Alston, Matthew Barker, Joseph Adams of Walsall, James Wright, Samuel Galton, and James Jackson, shall be, and are hereby incorporated a Company of or belonging to the said Town of Birmingham; and that the most Honourable Charles Marquis of Rockingham, the Earl of Stafford, the Earl of Effingham, Godfrey Bagnall Clark, Anthony Saint Leger, Samuel Shore the younger, Samuel Tooker, Henry Howard, Walter Oborne, the Reverend James Wilkinson Clerk, Benjamin Roebuck, Thomas Broadbent, John Shore, George Greaves, John Turner, Thomas Bland, George Brittain, Samuel Staniforth, Simon Andrews Young, Joseph Matthewman, John Hoyland, Henry Tudor, John Winter, Albion Cox, John Rowbotham, Joseph Hancock, Matthew Fenton, William Marsden, Thomas Law, and Joseph Wilson, shall be, and are hereby incorporated a Company of or belonging to the said Town of Sheffield, and shall be called and known by the Name of The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate, within such Towns respectively, and shall continue of such Company so long as they live and reside in such Towns respectively, or within Twenty Miles thereof; which Companies respectively shall be enabled, and are hereby authorised, on or before the Fifth Day of July next, to meet at some convenient Place within each Town respectively, and chuse Four Persons by Majority of Voices out of each Company respectively, to be the Wardens of the said Company in each of the said Towns respectively; which said Wardens shall continue for the Space of One Year, and no longer, unless re-elected by the Company in Manner aforesaid.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That each of the said Companies respectively shall be enabled, and are hereby authorised and directed, annually, on the First Monday in July in every Year, out of fit and proper Persons resident in such Towns respectively, or within Twenty Miles thereof, to chuse, by a Majority of Members present at any Meeting to be held for that Purpose, One or more Person or Persons into the said Companies respectively, in the Place and Stead of such of the said Company who shall have died or removed to a greater Distance than Twenty Miles from such Towns respectively, so as by reason of such Choice there shall not be, when the Company is compleat, more than Nine or less than Six Plate-workers Members of each Company respectively; and that immediately after such Companies shall be so filled up in Manner aforesaid, they shall be enabled, and are hereby authorised and directed, to proceed to the Election of the Four Wardens for the Year ensuing, in Manner aforesaid; and if any of the said Wardens so chosen as aforesaid shall happen to die, or remove to a greater Distance than Twenty Miles out of such Town, then the said Companies respectively shall, within One Month after such Death or Removal, chuse another Person of each respective Company, in Manner aforesaid, to be Warden in his Room; and such Person shall and is hereby authorised and required to act accordingly for the Remainder of that Year.

Other Persons to be chosen in Place of those who shall die; and Four Wardens to be elected.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That no Silversmith or Plate-worker in either of the said Towns, or within Twenty Miles thereof, shall knowingly put to Sale, exchange, or sell any Silver Vessel, Plate, or Manufacture of Silver, made or wrought in either of the said Towns, or within Twenty Miles thereof, after the Twenty-ninth Day of September next, or export the same out of this Kingdom, until such Time as such Silver Vessel, Plate, or manufactured Silver, (being of the Standard of Eleven Ounces Two Penny Weight of fine Silver per Pound Troy,) shall be marked as followeth; that is to say, with the Mark of the Worker or Maker thereof, which shall be the First Letters of his Christian and Surname; and also with the

No Silver Plate to be sold, until the same shall be marked with the Initials of the Worker's Name, &c.

Lion Paſſant, and with the Mark of the Company within whoſe Aſſay Office ſuch Plate ſhall be aſſayed and marked, to denote the Goodneſs thereof, and the Place where the ſame was aſſayed and marked; and alſo with a diſtinct variable Mark or Letter; which Letter or Mark ſhall be annually changed upon the Election of new Wardens for each Company, to denote the Year in which ſuch Plate is marked, or Plate being of the Standard of Eleven Ounces Ten-Penny Weight of fine Silver per Pound Weight Troy, with the Mark of the Worker or Maker thereof, which ſhall be the firſt Letters of his Chriſtian and Surname, as aforeſaid, the Figure of a Woman commonly called Britannia, the ſaid Mark or Letter, to denote the Year as aforeſaid, and with the Mark of the Company within whoſe Office ſuch Plate ſhall be aſſayed and marked, upon Pain that all ſuch Silver Veſſels, Plate, or other manufactured Silver, (except ſuch Things as by reaſon of their Smallneſs or Thinneſs are not capable of receiving a Touch), which ſhall be made, expoſed to Sale, exchanged, or exported, contrary to this Act, ſhall be forfeited, or the Value thereof, One Moiety thereof to the King's Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, and the other Moiety thereof to ſuch Perſon or Perſons as will ſue for the ſame; to be recovered by Action of Debt, Bill, Suit, or Information, in any Court of Record in any County or Place wherein ſuch Offence ſhall be committed, and wherein no Eſſoin, Protection, Wager of Law, or any more than One Imparlance, ſhall be allowed.

Peculiar Marks of the *Birmingham* and *Sheffield* Companies.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That the peculiar Marks of the ſaid Companies, directed to be uſed as aforeſaid, ſhall be as follows; that is to ſay, For the Birmingham Company, an Anchor; and for the Sheffield Company, a Crown.

Aſſayers to be elected by both Companies.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That each of the ſaid Companies ſhall, from Time to Time, elect and chuſe, in Manner aforeſaid, One or more able and ſkilful Perſon or Perſons, experienced in the aſſaying of Silver, to be the Aſſayer or Aſſayers; and that ſuch Perſon or Perſons ſo choſen ſhall continue in the ſaid Office during his or their Life or Lives, unleſs

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he or they shall neglect to attend the said Business, or shall die, or be rendered incapable of executing the said Office of Assayer; for which said Assayer or Assayers it shall and may be lawful to detain Eight Grains only from every Pound Troy of Silver he or they shall assay, Four Grains whereof shall be put into the Box of Diet, and the other Four Grains shall be allowed him towards his Waste and Spillings in making the said Assays; and every Assayer and Assayers, chosen in pursuance of this Act, immediately after his or their Election or Elections, and before he or they take upon himself or themselves the Execution of the said Office, shall enter into One Bond or Obligation to the Master of his Majesty's Mint for the Time being, with Two sufficient Sureties, to be approved of by the said Master, in the Penalty of Five hundred Pounds, for the Execution of the said Office, and for the due Payment of all such Fines and Sums of Money as are and shall be charged and imposed on him or them by this Act, for Neglect or Fraud in the Execution of the said Office; and shall also take and subscribe the Oath following; videlicet,

Assayer's Oath.

I *A. B.* do swear, That I will be faithful and true to our Sovereign Lord King *George*, and will, so long as I continue an Assayer, well and faithfully behave myself in the said Office; and no undue Profit to myself take, to the Hurt or Hinderance of any Person that is Owner or Bringer of any Silver in Plate to be assayed, except of Wrought Plate only, Four Grains of every Pound Weight to be taken and put into the Box of Diet, and other Four Grains to be taken likewise of every Pound Weight of Plate wrought, (and not otherwise), towards my Waste and Spillings in making the said Assays; and that I will touch no Silver but what shall be of the Goodness of and according to the Standard of this Kingdom, which, for the Time being, is or shall be appointed by Law for Wrought Plate, or better; and all such Silver as shall be brought to me to be touched, I will carefully examine, to see if it be of all One Sort of Silver, and forward enough in the Workmanship, and whether all the Pieces be fixed together that are intended to be affixed together, and whether

ther it be not charged with unneceſſary Solder; and if I find the ſame liable to either of the Objections aforeſaid, I will not aſſay the ſame; and that I will truly ſet down in Writing all ſuch Silver as ſhall be brought to me to be touched, and the ſame, at all Times, as I ſhall be required, will duly and truly deliver again, (except Eight Grains as aforeſaid); and will true Accounts make thereof, when required by the Wardens of the Company wherein I am choſen Aſſayer; and that I will no Aſſays make of Things new wrought, before that they be marked with the Mark of the Maker or Owner thereof; and that I will, according to the beſt of my Skill and Judgement, make every Aſſay ſo, and in ſuch Sort and Manner, as may beſt aſcertain the true intrinſick Standard of ſuch Plate ſo to be aſſayed; and that I will not put, or wittingly ſuffer to be put, into the aforeſaid Box, any Silver but that Silver which has been ſcraped and taken in my Preſence from the Plate which I ſhall aſſay and paſs for Standard; and that I will not, by myſelf, or in Partnerſhip with any other Perſon, directly or indirectly, be concerned in the buying or ſelling of Silver Bullion, or in the manufacturing of Wrought Plate.

So help me GOD.

Which Oath the Maſter of his Majeſty's Mint in the Tower of London for the Time being, or in his Abſence his Deputy in the ſaid Office, is hereby required and impowered to adminiſter to ſuch Aſſayer.

On Death of Aſſayer, &c. Company to elect another.

Provided always nevertheleſs, and be it enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That if any Perſon choſen Aſſayer in purſuance of this Act, ſhall neglect to attend the ſaid Buſineſs, or ſhall die, or be rendered incapable of executing the ſaid Office; that then, and in either of the ſaid Caſes, it ſhall and may be lawful to and for that Company to whom ſuch Aſſayer did belong to elect and chuſe, in Manner aforeſaid, One other fit and proper Perſon to be the Aſſayer, in the Place and Stead of the Aſſayer falling under either of the Deſcriptions aforeſaid.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That each of the said Companies shall find and provide, within their respective Towns, a proper Place for an Office for receiving in, assaying, and delivering out all Wrought Plate that shall be brought to be assayed in pursuance of this Act; and that all Wrought Plate that shall be there brought for the Purpose aforesaid shall be examined by Two of the Wardens and Assayer of the said Company, to see if it be all of One Sort of Silver, and forward enough in the Workmanship, and whether all the Pieces be affixed together that are intended to be affixed together, and whether it be marked with the Maker or Owner's Mark, or be not charged with unnecessary Solder; and that if they shall find any of such Plate liable to either of the Objections aforesaid, that then they shall return the same without making any Assay thereof; but if they shall find such Plate free from all the Objections aforesaid, that then there shall be drawn, scraped, or cut off, in the Presence of Two of the Wardens and Assayer, so much from each Piece, in proportion to the Weight thereof, as will not exceed in the Whole the Rate of Eight Grains for every Pound Weight; and the Drawings, Scrapings, or Cuttings off, from each Piece, shall immediately after be divided into Moieties in the Presence of the said Wardens and Assayer; and a Moiety of the Drawings, Scrapings, or Cuttings off, from each Piece, be delivered to the Assayer, for him to make his Assays, and the other Moiety shall be locked up with Three different Locks in a Box to be provided for that Purpose, (which shall be called The Assayer's Box), and the respective Keys thereof shall be kept by Two of the Wardens and Assayer of such respective Company by whom such Assayers shall be elected and chosen.

Each Company to provide an Assay Office; and the Wrought Plate to be examined by Two Wardens and an Assayer.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if on View of any of the said Plate so brought to be assayed, and after weighing the same in Water, and trying the Effect of Magnetism, the Wardens and Assayer, or either of them, shall have Suspicion of Iron, or other base Metal, being introduced or concealed in any Piece of Plate so brought to be assayed; that then it

If base Metal be found in any Piece of Plate, the same shall be broken, and the Value forfeited.

shall and may be lawful to and for the said Wardens and Assayer to cut the same, or cause the same, in their Presence, to be cut; and if upon Cutting thereof any unnecessary Iron, or other base Metal, shall be found therein, the said Piece of Plate shall be broken and defaced, and they are hereby authorised and directed to break and deface the same; and the said Plate, or the Value thereof, shall be forfeited to the said Wardens and Assayer, and the Produce thereof be by them applied towards the Expences of the Assay Office.

If no base Metal be found on cutting such Plate, Recompence to be made.

Provided always, nevertheless, and be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if on cutting such Plate, by Authority aforesaid, no unnecessary Iron, or other base Metal, shall be found therein; that then, and in such Case, the said Wardens and Assayer shall forthwith make a Recompence and Satisfaction, in Money, to the Owner of such Plate, to the full Amount of the Damage done to the same, and charge the same to the Account of the Expences of the Assay Office.

Drawings, Scrapings, &c. how to be disposed of.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Moiety of the Drawings, Scrapings, or Cuttings off, of each Piece so to be brought to the Assay Office as aforesaid, and the Moiety thereof, to be locked up in the Assayer's Box as aforesaid, shall be put in separate Papers, and marked with corresponding Numbers, and the Assayer shall make his Report to the Wardens upon each Piece; and such of the said Numbers, as the Assayer shall Report to be worse than Standard, the Pieces of Plate corresponding with such Numbers shall be broke to Pieces in the Presence of the said Wardens and Assayer, and returned to the Owner, he paying Sixpence per Ounce to the Assayer for assaying the same; and such Numbers as the said Assayer shall report to be Standard or better, the Pieces of Plate corresponding with such Numbers shall be forthwith marked, in the Presence of the Wardens and Assayer, with the Company's Mark, and delivered to the Owner or Bringer of such Plate, (he paying for making the Assay thereof such Sums of Money as are herein-after directed to be paid for the same); and the Scrapings belonging to such corresponding

responding Numbers which shall be so reported Standard, or better, shall be taken out of the Assayer's Box and be folded up, and the Name of the Maker of the Plate indorsed thereon, and immediately deposited in a Box to be provided for that Purpose, (which shall be called The Diet Box), and which Box shall be locked with Three different Locks, and the respective Keys thereof shall be kept by Two of the said Wardens and Assayer; and which said Box shall never after be opened but in the Presence of the said Wardens and Assayer, or any of the Diet taken thereout, but for the Purpose of Trial thereof annually, as hereafter is mentioned; and the Moiety of the Scrapings, Drawings, and Cuttings off, which shall be delivered to the Assayer for the Purpose of Assaying, or so much thereof as shall remain after such Process, shall, in the Presence of the Wardens, be put by the Assayer together in the Assayer's Box, in a Part thereof to be appropriated for that Purpose, to be disposed of as by this Act is hereafter directed.

Provided always nevertheless, and be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Plate so brought to be assayed shall be reported to be of the Standard of Eleven Ounces Ten-penny Weight, or better, that then the Moiety of the Drawings, Scrapings, or Cuttings off from such Plate, shall be put in the Diet Box, in a Part thereof to be appropriated for that Purpose, and not blended with the other Diet, to the Intent that the Diet of Plate of each of the aforesaid Standards may be separately tried on the annual Trial of the Diet herein-after directed. Proviso.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That on or before the Twenty-ninth Day of September next, every Silversmith or Plate-worker inhabiting in either of the Towns aforesaid, or within Twenty Miles of either of them, and also every Person who, at any Time after the said Twenty-ninth Day of September, shall follow the Trade of a Silversmith or Plate-worker, before he takes upon him to exercise either of the said Trades shall enter his Name and his Mark, and Place of Abode, with the Wardens of that Company nearest which he shall reside, which shall be done by the said Wardens Silversmith or Plate-worker not entering his Name with the Wardens of that Company nearest which he shall reside,

Wardens upon Demand, without Fee or Reward; and if any such Silversmith or Plate-worker shall not enter his Name and Mark, and Place of Abode, as aforesaid, or shall reside and carry on his said Trade in any other Place than what he has so entered as the Place of his Abode, and shall not have entered his Removal, or shall strike any other Mark on Plate than what is so entered, such Silversmith or Plate-worker so offending shall forfeit the Sum of One hundred Pounds, to be recovered and disposed of as aforesaid.

Shall forfeit 100 *l.*

Persons counterfeiting of Marks or Stamps used by the said Companies;

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person whatsoever shall cast, forge, or counterfeit, or cause or procure to be cast, forged, or counterfeited, any Mark or Stamp used, or to be used, for marking Plate, in pursuance of this Act, or by any Maker or Worker of Silver Plate, or any or either of them; or shall cast, forge, or counterfeit, or cause or procure to be cast, forged, or counterfeited, any Mark, Stamp, or Impression, in Imitation of, or to resemble any Mark, Stamp, or Impression made, or to be made, with any Mark or Stamp used, or to be used, as aforesaid, by the said Companies respectively, or by any Maker or Worker of Silver Plate, or any or either of them; or shall mark or stamp, or cause or procure to be marked or stamped, any Silver Wrought Plate with any Mark or Stamp which hath been or shall be forged or counterfeited in Imitation of, or to resemble any Mark or Stamp used, or to be used, as aforesaid, by the said Companies respectively, or by any Maker or Worker of Silver Plate, or any or either of them; or shall transpose or remove, or cause or procure to be transposed or removed, from One Piece of Wrought Plate to another, or to any plated Vessel, or to any Vessel of base Metal, any Mark, Stamp, or Impression, made, or to be made, by or with any Mark or Stamp used, or to be used, as aforesaid, by the said Companies respectively, or by any Maker or Worker of Silver Plate, or any or either of them; or shall sell, exchange, or expose to Sale, or export out of this Kingdom, any Silver Wrought Plate, or any Vessel of base Metal, with any such forged or counterfeit Mark, Stamp, or Impression thereon, or any Mark,

or transposing Stamps from one Piece to another, and exposing such to Sale;

Stamp, or Impreſſion, which hath been or ſhall be tranſpoſed or removed from any other Piece of Plate, knowing ſuch Mark, Stamp, or Impreſſion, to be forged, counterfeited, or tranſpoſed, or removed, as aforeſaid; or ſhall wilfully or knowingly have or be poſſeſſed of any Mark or Stamp which hath been, or ſhall be, forged or counterfeited, in Imitation of, or to reſemble any Mark or Stamp uſed, or to be uſed, as aforeſaid, by the ſaid Companies reſpectively, or by any Maker or Worker of Silver Plate, or any or either of them; every ſuch Perſon offending in any, each, or either of the Caſes aforeſaid, being thereof lawfully convicted, ſhall, by Order of the Court before whom ſuch Offender ſhall be convicted, be tranſported to ſome of His Majeſty's Colonies or Plantations in America for the Term of Fourteen Years.

ſhall, on Conviction, be tranſported to *America* for 14 Years.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That if any working Silverſmith or Dealer in Wrought Plate, or any Worker or Dealer in any other Metal plated or covered with Silver, ſhall ſtrike, or cauſe to be ſtruck, any Letter or Letters upon any Veſſel, or other Thing made of Metal plated or covered with Silver, or upon any Metal Veſſel, or other Thing made to look like Silver; ſuch Perſon or Perſons ſo offending ſhall forfeit the Sum of One hundred Pounds; to be recovered and diſpoſed of as aforeſaid.

Dealers in plated Metal cauſing Letters to be ſtruck thereon, to forfeit 100*l.*

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That all and every Silverſmith and Plate-worker ſhall firſt fix his or their Mark upon his or their Plate which ſhall be made from and after the Twenty-ninth Day of September next, (except ſuch Things which by reaſon of their Smallneſs or Thinneſs are not capable of receiving the Touch), and ſhall then bring or ſend the ſame to the Office where they ſhall have entered their Mark, and Place of Abode, and the ſame ſhall be there aſſayed according to this Act; and if by the Aſſayer it ſhall be found to be of the Fineneſs of Standard, which for the Time being is or ſhall be appointed by Law for Wrought Plate, or better, then the ſame ſhall be marked with the Company's Marks, in the Preſence of the Wardens and Aſſayer;

Aſſayers to take not exceeding 1*s.* for every *lb.* Troy of Wrought Plate aſſayed.

sayer; and that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Assayer, or such other Person as the Wardens for the Time being of each respective Company shall appoint, to ask, demand, take, and receive, of and from all and every such Person and Persons as shall, from Time to Time, bring to the Assay Office belonging to the said Company any Piece or Parcel of Wrought Plate to be assayed, tried, and marked, such Prices, Sums of Money, or Rewards, as they shall think fit, so as such Prices, Sums of Money, or Rewards, do not exceed the Sum of One Shilling for every Pound Troy, and so proportionably for every greater or less Quantity of Plate so assayed and marked.

1 s. may be taken, tho' the Plate assayed do not amount to the limited Rate.

Provided nevertheless, That if any Parcel or single Piece of Wrought Plate shall be brought or sent to the said Office to be assayed, which, according to the Rate or Price herein-before limited, shall not amount to the Sum of One Shilling, then there shall be paid for assaying and marking such Parcel or single Piece of Wrought Plate a Sum of Money or Reward not exceeding One Shilling; any Thing herein contained to the Contrary in any-wise notwithstanding.

Assayers not to discover any Design, Pattern, &c. of Plate brought to be assayed;

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Assayers so to be chosen by virtue of this Act as aforesaid shall not discover, by Description, in Words, or otherwise, to any Person or Persons whatsoever, any Pattern, Design, or Invention, of any Piece of Silver Plate brought, or to be brought, to the Office to be assayed as aforesaid, or permit the same to be viewed or seen by any Person whomsoever, but the Wardens and other Persons necessarily employed, or to be employed, in the said Office; and also shall keep a Book or Books, wherein shall be entered the Names of every Owner of Plate brought to be assayed, and the Assortment of Plate assayed, and an Account of the Money received for the assaying thereof, and likewise an Account of the Monies arising from the Scrapings and Cuttings-off of the said Plate so brought to be assayed, when the same shall be sold in Manner herein-after directed, and also an Account of the Officers and Servants Salaries and Wages, and other incidental Expences attending the carrying this Act into

and shall enter the Names of Owners in Books; and an Account of Servants Salaries, &c.

into Execution; and that every Member of each respective Company shall have free Access to the said Books, and to the Inspection thereof.

Marks to be locked up in a Box with Three Locks, the Keys of which are to be kept by Two Wardens and an Assayer; and all Plate marked in their Presence.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Marks belonging to each of the said respective Companies shall be locked up in a Box with Three different Locks, and the respective Keys thereof shall be kept by Two of the Wardens and Assayer of such respective Company, and shall never be taken thereout but in the Presence of Two of the said Wardens and Assayer, for the Purpose of marking the Plate which shall have been assayed and reported Standard, and which Plate shall be marked in the Presence of Two of the said Wardens and Assayer, and the Marks immediately after locked up in Manner aforesaid: And that if by Connivance of the said Wardens the Assayer shall mark, or suffer to be marked, any Plate with the Company's Mark, any otherwise than in the Presence of the Two Wardens; or if he shall mark any Plate that has not been duly assayed and found Standard; or if he shall discover, by Description, in Words, or otherwise, to any Person or Persons whatsoever, any Pattern, Design, or Invention, of any Piece of Silver Plate brought to the Office to be assayed as aforesaid; or wittingly or willingly permit or suffer the same to be viewed or seen by any Person whomsoever, but the Wardens and other Persons necessarily employed in the said Office; he shall forfeit and pay the Sum of Two hundred Pounds; to be recovered and disposed of in Manner aforesaid, and shall be turned out of his Office, and be rendered ever after incapable of exercising the Office of an Assayer.

On Connivance of the Wardens, if the Assayer discover Patterns, &c. he shall forfeit 200 *l.*

Scrapings and Cuttings to be weighed Four Times in every Year.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Assayer of each respective Company shall, Four Times in every Year, duly weigh, in the Presence of the Wardens of the said Company, all the Scrapings and Cuttings-off of Silver deposited in the Assayer's Box, after Report thereof made as aforesaid, and enter the true Weight thereof in a Book to be kept for that Purpose; and that when the same is so weighed and entered, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said

Wardens

Wardens to sell and dispose thereof, and, after entering an Account of the Produce thereof in the Book belonging to such Company, containing their Receipts and Payments for and on the Account of the Assay Office, pay and apply the same for and towards such Payments.

Diet Box to be, Once in every Year, opened in the Presence of the Assayer and the Four Wardens;

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Diet Box belonging to each of the said Companies shall, Once in every Year, be opened in the Presence of the Assayer and the Four Wardens belonging to each Company, and the Diet therein be taken out and carefully packed up in Two separate Parcels, if of different Standards, without opening the Papers containing the same, and carefully secured and sealed with the respective Seals of the said Wardens and Assayer, and by them, in each other's Presence, delivered to a Messenger, to be by him conveyed to His Majesty's Mint in the Tower of London, and delivered to the Master of the Mint, or his Deputy, taking a Receipt from him who shall so receive it for the same, which Receipt the said Master, or his Deputy, are hereby directed to give; and that the Messenger conveying the same shall, at the Time of the delivering thereof to the said Master, or his Deputy, make Oath before the said Master, or his Deputy, (which Oath the said Master, or his Deputy, are hereby authorised and directed to administer), that he received the Box or Parcel (as the Case may be) from the Wardens and Assayer of the Company, so sealed as on the Delivery thereof, and that the same had not been opened after he had so received the same.

and conveyed to the Mint.

Master of the Mint to prefer a Memorial to the Lords of the Treasury, for Trial of the Diet by the King's Assay-master;

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Master of His Majesty's Mint for the Time being, or his Deputy, shall, within Fourteen Days next after the said Diet shall have been so delivered over to him as aforesaid, prefer a Memorial to the Lord High Treasurer of Great Britain, or Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury for the Time being, requesting a Time to be fixed for the Trial of the said Diet by the King's Assay-master of His Majesty's Mint before the Lord High Treasurer of Great Britain, or Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury for the Time being, or whom he or they appoint; and that the said Ma-

fier of the Mint, or his Deputy, shall, by Letter, to be sent by the General Post, give such Assayer, whose Diet is to be tried, Notice of the Time and Place appointed for such Trial, that he may be present, if he thinks fit; and shall, on that Day whereon the Lord High Treasurer of Great Britain, or Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury for the Time being, shall appoint, and in the Presence of him or them, or of such Persons to be appointed by him or them, as aforesaid, deliver the said Diet, so received by him as aforesaid, unopened to his Majesty's Assay-master of the Mint aforesaid, who, in the Presence of the Lord High Treasurer of Great Britain, or Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, or of such Persons to be appointed as aforesaid, shall duly assay and try the same by the indented Pieces hereinafter directed to be made, in such Manner as by the Persons then present shall be thought necessary, and make a true Report thereof; and if upon such Trial the same shall be found agreeable in Fineness to the said respective indent Trial Pieces, or better, that then his said Majesty's Assay-master shall return the said Diet to, or to the Order of the Wardens and Assay-master of the Company aforesaid, who are hereby authorised to sell and dispose thereof; and having entered the Produce thereof in the Book of Accounts of the Receipts and Payments relative to the Assay Office from whence such Diet shall be sent, to pay and apply such Produce for and towards the necessary Expence of such Office.

giving Notice by Post to the Assayer, to be present.

Provided always nevertheless, and be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if, on the said Trial, the said Diet shall be found not agreeable in Fineness with the said Trial Pieces, according to the respective Standards thereof, but worse; that then, and in such Case, the Assayer belonging to that Company, whose Diet shall be so tried, shall forfeit and pay the Sum of Two hundred Pounds to be recovered and disposed of as aforesaid, and shall ever after be rendered incapable of acting as an Assayer.

If the Diet is not found sufficient in Fineness, the Assayer shall forfeit 200*l.*

Provided also, and it is hereby enacted and declared, That in case the said Prices, Sums of Money, or Rewards, hereby given, granted, or allowed, to each Company,

Overplus of Money arising to be applied in prosecuting Offenders.

pany, in each of the said Towns respectively, for the allaying and marking Wrought Plate, shall raise more Money than shall be sufficient to defray the necessary Expences of the said respective Assay Offices, then the Overplus Money (if any) shall be respectively applied by each Company, from Time to Time, in the prosecuting Offenders against this Act; and if such Prosecutions shall not require the whole of such Overplus, that then the said Prices, Sums of Money, or Rewards, shall afterwards be lessened in proportion by the respective Companies aforesaid; and they are hereby required to take so much less for the allaying, trying, and marking, Wrought Plate for the future, as will answer the Purposes aforesaid only, without bringing any Profit to any of the said respective Companies; any Thing herein contained to the Contrary thereof in any-wise notwithstanding.

Two indented Trial Pieces to be made by the Wardens and Assayer; which shall be tried at the Mint by the Assay-master.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Wardens and Assayer of each of the said respective Companies shall, from Time to Time, as Occasion shall require, make, or cause to be made, Two indented Trial Pieces, whereof One shall be of the Standard of Eleven Ounces Two Pennyweight of fine Silver, and Eighteen Pennyweight of Alloy in the Pound Weight Troy, and the other of the Standard of Eleven Ounces Ten Penny Weight of fine Silver, and Ten Penny Weight of Alloy in the Pound Weight Troy; and after the said Two Trial Pieces shall be made as aforesaid, they shall be brought to His Majesty's Mint in the Tower of London, and there be assayed and tried by His Majesty's Assay-master; and when the same shall have been so assayed and tried, and found to be of the respective Standards aforesaid, One Moiety of each Piece shall be delivered back to the Assayer who brought the same, and such Moieties shall be deposited by him in his Office as Guides for trying such Plate as shall be brought to his Office to be assayed, and the other Moieties shall remain in His Majesty's Mint, in the Custody of the Master and Worker for the Time being, thereby to try the Diet directed to be assayed by His Majesty's Assay-master as aforesaid.

Sums payable yearly to the Master of His Majesty's Mint.

And it is hereby further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That each of the said respective Companies shall, before the Assay of their Diet, yearly and every Year, pay to the Master of His Majesty's Mint, or his Deputy, for the Use of his Deputy, and to the King's Assay-master, the several Sums following; (that is to say,) To the Master of His Majesty's Mint, or his Deputy,

puty, the Sum of Three Pounds Three Shillings, and to the King's Assay-master the Sum of Ten Pounds Ten Shillings by way of Recompence for the Trouble and Expence they with respectively have and incur by means of the Trial of the said Diet, in Manner aforesaid.

Companies to make Bye-laws.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful to and for the said respective Companies, or the major Part of them, and they are hereby authorised and impowered, from Time to Time, to make Bye-laws, Rules, and Orders, for the Well-government and Management of their respective Offices, and for fixing the Salaries and Rewards of their respective Officers, and for fixing the Time and Manner for receiving in and delivering out Plate brought to be assayed, and for every other Purpose relative to the Conduct or Management of such Office, so as such Bye-laws, Rules, and Orders, do not in any Respect contradict this Act, or the Laws of the Realm.

Wardens to subscribe the following Oath.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That each of the Wardens of the said Companies shall, after his Election, and before he takes upon him the Execution of the said Office, take and subscribe the following Oath; videlicet,

I *A. B.* do swear, That I will, so long as I continue a Warden, well and faithfully behave myself in the said Office, and that I will not discover, by Description, in Words, or otherwise, to any Person or Persons whatsoever, any Pattern, Design, or Invention, of any Piece of Silver Plate, brought, or to be brought, to the Office to be assayed, or wittingly or willingly permit the same to be viewed or seen by any Person whomsoever, but the Persons necessarily employed, or to be employed, in the Assay Office; and that I will in all Things conform to the Rules laid down for my Conduct in an Act of Parliament, passed in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of King *George* the Third, (intituled, *An Act for appointing Wardens and Assay-masters for assaying Wrought Plate in the Towns of* Sheffield *and* Birmingham.)

So help me GOD.

Which Oath any Justice of Peace residing in the County where such Office is established is hereby required and impowered to administer to such Wardens.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person or Persons shall at any Time hereafter recover Judgement in any Court of Record against any

Persons recovering Judgement against an Assay-master, and not being paid the Penalty adjudged, may have the Assay-master's Bond assigned to him.

any Assay-master of either of the Companies aforesaid for any Penalty imposed on him by this Act, for Neglect or Fraud in the Execution of his Office, and such Penalty, together with the Costs adjudged, shall not be paid within the Time prescribed by that Court, wherein such Judgement shall be obtained; that then, and in such Case, it shall and may be lawful to and for the Master of His Majesty's Mint for the Time being, and he is hereby authorised and directed to assign over to such Person or Persons so recovering such Judgement the said Bond or Obligation so directed to be entered into by the said Assayer and his Sureties to the Master of His Majesty's Mint, as aforesaid, in order to enable such Person or Persons to bring One or more Action or Actions thereon against such Assayer and his Sureties, or either of them, or the Heirs, Executors, or Administrators of them, or either of them, for the Recovery of such Penalty so recovered against the Assayer, together with the Costs adjudged; in which last-mentioned Action or Actions it shall be sufficient for the Plaintiff to prove the Execution of the said Bond, and of the Assignment thereof, and the former Judgement recovered against the Assayer, in order to intitle such Plaintiff to Judgement and Execution.

If in any Action brought on the Bond, Verdict be given for the Defendant, Costs shall be paid by the Assignee.

Provided always nevertheless, and it is hereby enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if in any Action to be brought on the same Bond, as last aforesaid, a Verdict should be given for the Defendant, or the Plaintiff be nonsuited, that then the Costs of such Verdict or Nonsuit shall be paid by the Assignee of such Bond, and the Master of His Majesty's Mint be wholly exonerated and discharged therefrom; any Law, Usage, or Statute, to the Contrary in any-wise notwithstanding.

Publick Act.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That this Act shall be deemed and taken to be a Publick Act; and shall be judicially taken Notice of as such, by all Judges, Justices, and other Persons whatsoever, without specially pleading the same.

FINIS.