ANNO TERTIO

GULIELMI IV. REGIS.

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C A P. XX.

An Act to indemnify Witnesses who may give Evidence before either House of Parliament touching the Charge of Bribery in the Election of Burgesses to serve in Parliament for the Borough of *Stafford*. [18th *June* 1833.]

WHEREAS there is Reason to believe that there has been the most notorious, long-continued, and general Bribery and Corruption in the Election of Burgesses to serve in Parliament for the Borough of *Stafford*, and that such Bribery and Corruption are likely to continue and be practised in future unless some Means are taken to prevent the same: And whereas a Petition against such Practices at the last Election for the said Borough has been presented to the Commons House of Parliament: And whereas it may be necessary to examine before the Committee to which the said Petition may be referred, or at the Bar of either Houses of Parliament, several Persons; and the Evidence of such Persons may tend to expose them to Penal Consequences: And whereas it is expedient to indemnify such Persons, upon their making such true and faithful Disclosure and Discovery as herein-after mentioned; be it therefore 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 Autho-

All Persons, except Candidates, implicated in Bribery at Stafford, who may be examined before either House of Parliament, or any Committee thereof, and who shall make a faithful Disclosure, indemnified.

rity of the same, That for the more effectually prosecuting the said Inquiry, every Person not having been a Candidate for the said Borough at the last Election, who may have been implicated or engaged in such alleged Bribery and Corruption at or connected with any Election of Members to serve in Parliament for the said Borough of *Stafford*, and who shall be examined as a Witness before either House of Parliament, or any Committee of either House of Parliament, touching such alleged Bribery and Corruption, and who shall upon such Examination make a true and faithful Discovery and Disclosure to the best of his or her Knowledge touching all Acts, Matters, and Things to which he or she shall be so examined, shall be, and he and she is hereby freed, indemnified, and discharged of, from, and against all Penal Actions, Forfeitures, Punishments, Disabilities, and Incapacities, and all Criminal Prosecutions, which he or she may have been or may become liable or subject to, or which he or she may have incurred or may incur at the Suit of His Majesty, His Heirs or Successors, or any other Person, for or by reason or means of or in relation to any Act, Matter, or Thing done or committed by such Person or Persons in respect of such alleged Bribery and Corruption: Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall afford any Indemnity to any Person with respect to any Action for Bribery at the last Election for the said Borough of *Stafford*, which shall have been commenced before the Eighteenth Day of *March* One thousand eight hundred and thirty-three.

Not to indemnify against any Action brought before 18th March 1833.

Witnesses examined before either House, or both Houses, not to be indemnified unless they shall have a Certificate from the Lord Chancellor, or from the Speaker or the Chairman of the Committee of the House of Commons.

II. Provided also, and be it further enacted, That where any Witness shall be examined before the House of Lords or any Committee of the said House, such Witness shall not be indemnified under this Act unless he or she shall receive from the Lord Chancellor a Certificate in Writing, stating that such Witness has, upon his or her Examination, made a true and faithful Disclosure touching all Acts and Matters to which he or she has been so examined; and where any Witness shall be examined before the House of Commons, or before any Committee of the said House, such Witness shall not be indemnified under this Act unless he or she shall receive from the Speaker of the House of Commons or the Chairman of such Committee a similar Certificate; and where any Witness shall be examined before the House of Lords or any Committee of the said House, and also before the House of Commons or any Committee of that House, such Witness shall not be indemnified under this Act unless he or she shall receive a Certificate from the Lord Chancellor, and shall also receive a Certificate from the Speaker of the House of Commons or the Chairman of the Committee of the House of Commons, to the same Effect; which said Certificates the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker of the House of Commons, or such Chairman of the Committee of the House of Commons, are respectively hereby authorized to give; and if any Action, Information, or Indictment shall at any Time be pending in any Court for Bribery at the last or any former Election for the Borough of *Stafford*, against any Person or Persons, except as aforesaid, who shall have been so examined as a Witness or Witnesses in manner above mentioned, such Court shall, on the Production and Proof of such Certificate or Certificates, stay the Proceedings

In case of Action, &c., the Production of the Certificate shall stay the Proceedings.

ceedings in any such Action, Indictment, or Information, and may, in its Discretion, award to any such Person or Persons such Costs as he, she, or they may have been put to by such Action, Information, or Indictment.

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