

That though the terms in which your petitioners state their grievance, may be looked upon as strong, yet your Honourable House is entreated to believe, that no expression is made use of for the purpose of offence.

Your petitioners, in affirming that your Honourable House is not an adequate Representation of the people of England, do but state a fact, which, if the word "Representation," be accepted, in its fair and obvious sense, they are ready to prove, and which they think detrimental to their interests, and contrary to the spirit of the constitution.

How far this inadequate Representation is prejudicial to their interests, your petitioners apprehend they may be allowed to decide for themselves, but how far it is contrary to the spirit of the constitution, they refer to the consideration of your Honourable House.

If your Honourable House, shall be pleased to determine, that the people of England ought not to be fully represented; your petitioners pray that such your determination may be made known, to the end that the people may be apprised of their real situation; but if your Honourable House shall conceive that the people are already fully represented, then your petitioners beg leave to call your attention to the following facts:

Your petitioners complain that the number of Representatives assigned to the different counties is grossly disproportioned to their comparative extent, population, and trade.

Your petitioners complain that the elective franchise is so partially and unequally distributed, and is in so many instances committed to bodies of men of such very limited numbers, that the majority of your Honourable House is elected by less than fifteen thousand electors, which, even if the male adults in the kingdom be estimated at so low a number as three millions, is not more than the two hundredth part of the people to be represented.

Your petitioners complain that the right of voting is regulated by no uniform or rational principle.

Your petitioners complain that the exercise of the elective franchise is only renewed once in seven years.

Your petitioners thus distinctly state the subject matter of their complaints, that your Honourable House may be convinced that they are acting from no spirit of general discontent, and that you may with the more ease be enabled to inquire into the facts, and to apply the remedy.

For the evidence in support of the first complaint, your petitioners refer to the Return Book of your Honourable House. Is it fitting that Rutland and Yorkshire should bear an equal rank in the scale of county representation, or can it be right that Cornwall alone should by its extravagant proportion of borough members, out-number not only the representatives of Yorkshire and Rutland together, but of Middlesex added to them? Or, if a distinction be taken between the landed and trading interests, must it not appear monstrous that Cornwall and Wiltshire, should send more borough members to Parliament, than Yorkshire, Lancashire, Warwickshire, Middlesex, Worcestershire, and Somersetshire united? and that the total representation of all Scotland should but exceed by one member, the number returned for a single county in England?

The second complaint of your petitioners is founded on the unequal proportions