

they convinced that such belief was ill founded. In that year, a Bill was introduced, for the purpose of giving three additional Members for Cape-Breton; which was met by a general measure proposed by the then Solicitor-General, (Charles R. Fairbanks, Esquire,) fixing the scale of the Representation, in the humble opinion of your Petitioners, upon equitable principles. Although this measure received general support by the Members interested in the equalization of the scale of Representation, yet its friends were not sufficiently numerous, and the local measure for Cape-Breton triumphed.

In the year 1833, your humble Petitioners, although convinced that the time for urging their claims with success upon the consideration of the Legislature had passed, owing to the accession to their opponents of the additional Members for Cape-Breton, yet they, feeling deeply interested in the matter, and relying upon the equal justice of the Legislature, did, by Petition, signed by Freeholders of the County, in number quite unusual in this Country, earnestly press upon that Body a consideration of their rights, and prayed an adjustment of the same; by a general or local enactment. In this Session of the above year, a general measure was again proposed, similar to that of 1832, but which, owing to the strong opposition against it, did not pass into a Law.

In the Petition above referred to, your humble Petitioners, among others in substance, urged the following facts of a local nature, in support of their claims, which they most humbly beg leave to recapitulate, for the information of Your Majesty, and the Members composing your Right Honorable Council, (that is to say:—) As to the necessity of dividing the extensive County of Annapolis, as a proof of such necessity, from one extremity to the other thereof the distance is longer than from the Eastern Boundary thereof to Halifax—being one hundred miles. It being the oldest County in the Province, its population is a very great and growing one, as will appear by the last census; and a late Militia Return will show that Annapolis numbers Five Hundred more Militia Men, than any other County in the Province, Halifax excepted. With a distance in length so disproportionate to its breadth, great inconvenience must arise to the numerous Inhabitants, particularly those among them who may be called upon to discharge the duties of Public Offices of a local nature. To these burthensome inconveniences every Officer, from the Constable up to the Justice of the Peace, can bear testimony. It may be said that the difficulties attending the discharge of Public duties, arising out of extraordinary circumstances, may be obviated by dispensing with such duties. And it may be answered, that the discharge of them is an important privilege to the holders and the community. Although the office of a Constable may be considered of too little importance to call for an investigation, yet it is undoubtedly, a hardship, for one to be compelled to travel from one end of the County to the other, to execute a Justice's Writ for a small Debt of a few shillings. And still harder is it for the unfortunate Debtor, owing such a sum, to be dragged from his family a distance of fifty or sixty miles, and locked up in a Gaol. This will suggest the enormous extent of the Jurisdiction of the Courts of the Justices of the Peace. It is certainly a privilege, that Petit Jurors should decide upon such matters in dispute, as may arise in their immediate neighbourhood.

It is also an important privilege to Grand Jurors and the Community, for them to attend the Grand Inquest of the County, to investigate matters between the Crown and the Subject, and to give their assent to being taxed for the exigencies of the County; but the journey to be performed by such Officers, (notwithstanding the Courts of Justice are held as nearly in the centre of the County as convenience will admit,) in many instances, puts the possibility of their attendance out of the question.

In addition to what has been already stated, as respects the claims of Your humble Petitioners, to an increase of Representation, the Township of Wilmot, in the County of Annapolis, has a peculiar claim, based upon its own merits. By the Provincial Statute 5th George the 3d, Chap. 10, it is enacted, "that, when the Township should consist of Fifty resident Families they should be entitled to elect one person to represent them in the General Assembly." According to this Act Wilmot has long been entitled to a Representative: for now, instead of Fifty Families, its Electors are six hundred. And, although the law of the Land gives a right, that right is refused recognition. Notwithstanding these, with many other facts, were urged upon the consideration of the Legislature, in support of the rights of Your humble Petitioners, to a participation in the benefits of a general or local enactment for a division of their County, and an increase of their Representation, (which, upon no principle of Justice, could or ought to be denied them,) yet, in the said Session of 1833, two such measures, although, before the Legislature, were rendered abortive.

Such, however, was the reliance of Your humble and loyal Petitioners upon the equal justice of the Legislature, and their regard for the character of such justice, that they could not bring themselves to believe that their claims would be finally disregarded, for they were confident that if they should be submitted to the strictest scrutiny, in any way their justness could not be impeached.—If tried by the standard of population, an unanswerable argument in their favour would be the result. If, upon the general ground, of the necessity of preserving the equilibrium of Representation, between the different sections of the Province, (for which there is a most urgent necessity,) they are willing to submit to the decision of any uninfluenced umpire. Furthermore, instead of considering the exclusive measure for Cape-Breton, as an instance of neglect, prejudicial to their rights, Your humble and loyal Petitioners rather considered that they had received a pledge that, in due time, they should receive consideration; and, therefore looked forward, with patient anxiety to