

*First Report.* a law restoring the vote by ballot. This mode of voting annihilates in a great measure the corrupt influence often exercised by lawyers in extensive practice, merchants whose books are filled with charges against the country people, and government officers backed by the dispensers of those honors and emoluments which are ever in the gift of a colonial executive. Bribery would decrease under this mode of voting, for the briber could have no security, and the freeholder though a debtor could act without hope or fear. The sycophant would cease to profit by his subservience, and election expenses and open taverns be effectually curtailed. The new settler upon a hundred acres would be enabled to vote for or against the village trader with whom he dealt, according to his conscience, and without the fear of provoking a lawsuit from a disappointed creditor candidate. A freeholder owes his vote to his country, and ought not to be exposed to suffer injury for the maintenance of his integrity.

Voting by Ballot.

Representatives for towns, should receive wages.

The wages paid to members for counties is ten shillings a day, with travelling expenses, but to members for towns no allowance whatever has been made. Bills have been sent up from the Assembly to the Council in two successive parliaments to authorise the payment of wages to town members, but the Council refuse to pass them. In the last House of Assembly, the bill to give wages to towns' members met with no opposition. Your committee are of opinion that it would tend to render the House of Assembly more free from unconstitutional influence if the constituents of members for towns were authorised to pay them wages. There are comparatively few inhabitants of the towns in this colony who can afford to leave their families and occupations for two or three months in each year for four successive years—hire clerks to manage their establishments in their absence—and bear the expense of each winter's residence in York while performing their duty in the Assembly besides travelling to and from it to their homes. The consequence is, that instead of an independent representation, towns send members who receive their incomes from the executive, such as sheriffs, postmasters, and the law officers of the crown; and the electors are thus deprived of a free choice. In France, although the choice of representatives is restricted to persons of a certain