A

LETTER

TO

MR. LAMBTON,

"I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor."
Bible, Ps. 140.

A PETITION

TO THE

Commons,

Maintaining that ninty-seven Lords appear to usurp two hundred Seats in the

COMMONS HOUSE,

IN

VIOLATION OF OUR LAWS AND LIBERTIES.

"*Resolved*, That it is a high infringement upon our Liberties and Privileges for Lords of Parliament to concern themselves in the elections of Members to serve for the Commons."
See the Journals at the commencement of every Session.

BY MAJOR CARTWRIGHT.

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and may be had of all Booksellers and Newsmen.

1820.

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ERRATA.

Page 19, line 3 from top, *read* beneficent.
19, 7 from bottom, *read* unceasing.
21, 2 from ditto, *read* When the petition was *written*, it was not intended to have noticed *Counties*.
22, 6, nor was it then intended to have omitted the names of the Members returned by Peers.
28, 2, *read* Helleston.

To the foregoing it may be proper to add a somewhat remarkable *Erratum* in the "Votes and Proceedings of the House of Commons," for "Jovis 6° die Julii, 1820," where is found "No. 16. Reform of Parliament.—Petition of John Cartwright, in favour; to lie on the table, "and to be *printed*." [Appendix, 232.] But when we turn to the said Appendix, p. 304, we perceive that Mr. Speaker, who has charge of this service, has *entirely omitted the List of Peers* set forth in Mr. Cartwright's Petition.

MOLINEUX, Printer, Bream's Buildings, Chancery Lane.

LETTER

TO

Mr. LAMBTON,

&c.

Burton Crescent, 3rd. July, 1820.

SIR,

HAD you in the present Session persevered in bringing forward your intended proposition for a *partial* reform of the Commons' House, you would not have been troubled with this letter until the result of your experiment had been known. I was very unwilling to put forth any thing, or to take any other step, that might carry with it the appearance of a wish to prejudice any one before hand against your plan ere it should come regularly before the public. It was my wish to have waited until I could have appealed to your own fresh experience, and to the poignant feelings with which it must have been accompanied, ere I had asked you what ground of hope you had that any *partial* reform whatever would succeed.

But, Sir, as you have now postponed to another year the announcement of your plan, the case is altered; for, in justice to the cause I plead, my argument, according to my own view of the interests of that cause, can no longer be withholden from the public.

What must have been the result of your experiment, as to the *practicability* of a *partial* reform in the representation of the people in the Commons' House of Parliament, is now, I presume, just as well known, as if the experiment had been actually made. With what better

prospect of success in future, any such experiment can be made, it is, Sir, for yourself and your associates in the work of State Reformation (contemplating the deep rooted despotism to be removed—the nature of that despotism—and its peculiar character) seriously to consider.

From the policy of the despots,* shewn on Lord John Russell's puny motion, for a mere transfer of only two seats from a vile sink of corruption in Cornwall, to a first-rate town in Yorkshire, what was the augury you had to draw in favour of your extended suffrage and shortened parliaments ?

division on your proposition could only have added one more mental rivet, to the daily increasing conviction, that, for a truly *radical* corruption, there is,—there can be no remedy, but in a truly *radical* reform. None other can bring into beneficial activity the master springs of the political machine, or restore life to the paralized organs of vitality in the body politic: none other embraces alike the rights and interests of all men, whether poor or rich: none other attracts to its support the honest pride of independence, and the invincibility of united prowess. Hence, Sir, it is that the magnitude of the difference between *partial* reform, and *impartial* or *radical* reform, as motives, and consequently as *means of practicability*, is beyond all estimate.

For *partial* reform, the inducement can operate only on the selfishness of as many persons as, from the class of the *excluded*, are proposed to be lifted up to that of the *monopolists*,—and *monopolists of what?* Why truly of *suffrage without freedom!* For, although millions had suffrage, it would be mere deception and mockery to call them *free*, unless they were members of a *free state* or nation; and how could a nation be free, while a majority of the people should still be *without suffrage*, and consequently *without freedom?* Or, in other words, how *free*, if subject to taxes and to laws (even of life and

* Meaning those who have unlawfully usurped seats.

death) imposed by persons whom not they but other men had chosen; which persons so chosen would, in respect of *them*, consequently be unauthorized legislators and lawless task-masters.

For *partial* reform with such injustice for its basis, the reasoning is necessarily spiritless, cold, and delusive. It is not addressed to man as man. It balks the inquiring intellect. It warms not the patriot bosom. It excites not one generous emotion. At best, it is but a recommendation to one description of the oppressed, to grasp at an empty distinction of a few who are *above* them, that they may get placed where they may be gratified in looking down on more *below* them. Miserable ambition! But even *them* this reasoning never rouzed to aught resembling the ardent pursuit of a common right.

So hopeless the cause, so heartless the flattered, that (not as when justice was claimed by a million of *radical* reformers) a solitary, timid application, for something they are ashamed or afraid to define, can scarcely get hatched, except by the immediate incubation of the patron and his personal connections.

A system so decrepit and humiliating to all parties concerned, both philosophy and christianity, both patriotism and statesmanship alike reject; a system so ignoble, they alike condemn.

Radical Reform, on the contrary, speaks to the very souls of men; it appeals to them as intellectual and moral beings, heirs of immortality, whose bosoms by nature glow with sympathy in whatever to human society is universally beneficial or pleasing. The spirit of *radical* reform is at all times in unison with the high tone and lofty spirit of public virtue, and congenial with the elevated sentiments of those who, from a full conviction of inherent right, are proudly conscious that man is born to freedom.

The arguments for *universality* of suffrage satisfy and

control the well-informed understanding; the motives to a *universality* of the emancipation touch the assenting heart; the *unboundedness* of the blessing charms the captivated imagination; and a dignified notion of duty determines the will; so that when the time and approved leaders call, *radical* reformers promptly stand forward in a cause they know to be the cause of God and man; because *they know that God is just, and man entitled to justice.*

The truths of the doctrine leave no perplexing doubts in the mind; while its accordance with all the noble affections of our nature insures its influence. Hence, the ardent attachment, the enthusiasm, the contempt of persecution in its votaries. See you not here, Sir, that on which the *practicability* of reform depends? See you not here a prophetic revelation of its triumph? See you not here armour and arms, shield and spear, invulnerability and resistless force for the achievement, which await those whose worth and wisdom may place them at the head of the only reformers, who take for their guidance unerring truth and the genuine principles of the constitution of their country?

Where are the *partial* reformers (self-styled "moderate" and "temperate") who, in devotion to liberty, have scorned tyrants, dungeons, and death? Where are the "moderate" and "temperate" in freedom's sacred cause, who, as objects of national veneration for the sublime in character, shall ever acquire strength for raising a resistless barrier, in collision with which despotism shall have its downfall.

When an extinction of freedom was the aim of power, a *Franklin* felt it was no time to be "moderately" virtuous! When the sword was unsheathed to enslave his country, a *Washington* talked not of a "temperate" resistance! A *Quiroga* and a *Riego*—had they crawled among the "moderate" and the "temperate," the tame and the timid, the universal tongue had not hailed them

heroic saviours of Spain!---Where! where are those who by acts that shall speak to the universal heart of England, shall rouze her in the generous race of constitutional reform, that she forfeit not her place among the nations, nor sully that fame, as foremost in political science, by which she has been so long and so gloriously distinguished! For arresting, ere it shall be too late, the evident project of ruling by *corruption* and the *sword* her constitution, civil and military, must be restored,---fully, unequivocally restored, and once more enthroned in the public heart. Aught short of this were utopian, or empyricism, or worse. To that restoration, Sir, there is one from whom, were he in a situation to contribute more than words, deeds would not be wanting; deeds of which, ere you lay down this paper, you may learn the nature.

It hath been metaphorically said, that truth lies at the bottom of a well. In Magna Charta's unlettered and barbarous day, truth, in respect of representation, lay indeed concealed in a well of time five or six hundred years deep; no one then living, knowing where this well and its treasure were to be found.

But in our day of emancipated reason, of cultivated intellect, and political light, that dark, that deep and hidden well, is become a well known fountain, not beyond man's depth; a healing fountain of cheerful, busy, popular resort, and of daily-increasing fame. Such its pellucidness, that on its bed of amber, political truth, like a brilliant set in gold, is distinctly seen in all its lustre.

As superior to adamant, as a heavenly to an earthly nature, this inestimable gem imparts to the fountain's all-healing fluid, so sovereign a virtue, that a single washing therein, as effectually cleanseth the believing leper of our land, as the seven washings in *Jordan* cleansed *Naaman* the Syrian.

When an energetic champion of freedom, pursues his

object by a mistaken course, obstruction is nature's wholesome counsel, whereby the erring patriot is put right; that, in the end, discovering the true road, he may succeed. From the frankness of your mind, arises, Sir, a persuasion that, had you been foiled in an attempt to have introduced a *partial* reform,—foiled by an obstructing nuisance, which none but a national arm could have had strength to abate, you would readily have listened, while it should have been observed, that whenever a defective reform in a people's representation might have been proposed, there must have been proof, that, to the truly important distinction which must ever separate rectitude from expedience, due attention had not been paid.

Political rectitude is that, which is at once morally right and intellectually correct.

Political expedience is that, which, amongst various means of attaining a right end, is a preference of the one that is apparently best, or, where impediments occur, is the most practicable.

But still the *end* must be *right*, or *expedience* is only another word for expressing *unprincipled policy*; for never can it be expedient to do evil, by apostatising from integrity; or to do wrong, by perverting justice, or by violating public liberty.

If *representation* merit its encomium of being "the "happiest discovery of political wisdom," can a patriot legislator, with what is due to his own reputation, neglect to study its nature and its principles? Can he fail to meditate on the resulting duties and gratifications of his high station? Can he disgrace his knowledge by wrong-doing, without a breach of moral obligation,---even without a stain on his honour as a gentleman?

In respect, therefore, of *representation*, how can a statesman's course be misunderstood? If *inequality* be the evil, *equalization* is the remedy. If *monopoly* be the grievance, *distribution* is the redress. If *incompleteness*

be the mischief, *fulness* is the reparation. Or, if a continuance of representative power beyond the prescribed limit of the Constitution, and subversive of rightful inheritance in the successively-rising generations be its corruption, then, returning to a duration in strict accordance with both, is the corrective.

Are not these, Sir, truths which no logic can invalidate; no talent, disprove; no dexterity, elude; no chicanery, confound; no sophistry, obscure; nor power itself, ultimately resist?

These truths have vigorously shot up through the rank weeds of ignorance and apathy, prejudice and perverseness; these truths have reared aloft their honest heads, regardless of calumny and insolence, of malice and misrepresentation; equally despising folly's yelping curs, and iniquity's deep-mouthed blood-hounds. Sneer, sarcasm and buffoonery, apostacy and false evidence, have fallen abashed before them, and these potent children of nature have disdainfully walked over all such adversaries.

Then how long shall erratic patriotism, running after the bubbles of an exploded policy, hesitate to rally around these grand and guiding truths! How long shall feudal barbarism cleave to the elegant scholar of an enlightened age! How long shall absurd, coarse and vulgar notions, cling to noble minds! And, sad symptom of bad times, how long shall Englishmen of eminence affect *not to see*, that they may *not acknowledge* these vital truths? Truths so vital, that, in the absence of an acquaintance with them, a pretence to political science is ludicrous; and in absence of an adherence to them, a profession of public virtue wants a basis for rational confidence, and even hazards an imputation of imposture.

It being an admitted axiom, that despotism is never so sure of final success, as when it wears the mask of free forms and institutions, you must not, Sir, be surprized that there should be those who, in the view they have

of the inveteracy of our corruptions, can by no means wish for the success of a *partial* parliamentary reform, lest it should rather rivet than loosen our chains.

Here, three questions force themselves on our attention. 1st, Under *partial* reform, even to the extent of your plan, would a certain assembly still be obsequious in registering Court edicts? 2dly, Doth human experience warrant an expectation, that a despotism,* avaricious (as in the Grampound case, we have seen it to be) of every single vote it can secure, and a despotism which not only hires a set of yea and nay mercenaries, but likewise bribes into its service troops of wrangling myrmidons, profound in learning, and eminent for talent, to support its iniquity; doth experience, it is asked, warrant an expectation, that such a despotism is to be talked out of its power, or into any new modification of it, by a party too feeble to inspire fear, and whose own system, notwithstanding plausibilities in respect of *degree*, is in *principle*, as unjust, and as contrary to the Constitution, as that of the despot? And 3dly, Must not therefore *partial* reform, whatever the intention and the hope, prove an *ignis fatuus* to the weak and the credulous, misleading them into the quagmires of political thraldom; while it no longer influences persons of reflection?

Then looking back to the best times of a capricious, a mutilated, and nearly strangled representation, since Saxon-England first lay prostrate under the inundation of Norman abominations, and reviewing also the notorious corruptions of a *triennial* parliament, it cannot, I apprehend, Sir, be denied, that for ultimately uprooting liberty, a plan, which should still *exclude* from suffrage a *majority of the nation*, still retain extremes of inequality, still have elections not shorter than *triennial*, and deny the shield of ballot, (with a standing army *unknown to the law*, its familiar instrument) would have in reality a

* See Note, p. 2.

disguised, but a latent strength to that end, and a strength in a geometrical proportion to its apparent improvement on things as they are; and consequently would be far more dangerous than what is now so universally *seen, felt,* and *understood,* and which, because it is *seen, felt,* and *understood,* rapidly disseminates the truths which must, ere long, if left to operate in full force, cause a radical change.

One infected body contains matter of contagion for inoculating millions. There is no safety in any thing short of impossibility to corrupt, or at least in a regimen that must necessarily throw off *annually* any corrupt matter.

If it be among heaven's dispensations that despotism shall not dare to relax in its rigour, shall we not for that dispensation, with fortitude under present pain, adore the goodness of Providence? Can we on one hand, desire that despotism, by sparing the lash, shall become long lived; or, on the other hand, approve, when reforming patriotism does its work by halves? Is such half reforming, the sort of wisdom that is derived from the heavenly fountain of all justice---the eternal source of all rectitude?

Despotism, ever a coward, dreads change. Although for its interest, it dareth not to venture on a new course, yet relying on *corruption* and the *sword,* it blindly pursues its object. Thus *radical* reform hath the advantage of being in a right track for its merits becoming as universally *seen, felt,* and *understood,* as the evil it is destined to remove.

Is it not become evident, that there never will be a time for *any* reform, until *radical* reform shall be *practicable?* When, therefore, that time shall come, will the nation then be so insane as to say to the corruptionists---"Restore but half our constitution; give us back "but half our rights and liberties; and retain in your "polluted hands the other half, as inoculating matter

" for perpetuating our disease, that new corruptions
" may generate new paroxisms of despotism, till in the
" end it prove fatal?"

We have already, Sir, had before us a metaphorical fountain, cheering to contemplate. Then when, reflecting on the gloomy condition of our country, we fall into a melancholy mood; may we not ask:---' If representation, once the community's chief good, become its deadly bane,---if in place of wholesome nutriment it turn to poison,---if instead of health and a blessing it degenerate to a pest and a curse, could such a period, when life must depend on an all-potent specific, be a time for administering a mere potion to lull and intoxicate, instead of a stimulating cordial to recal animation and health?'

For the sake of yet farther illustration, let us, Sir, for a moment, if you please, suppose ourselves in *Constantinople*, at a time when an unexampled plague should rage *universally* even in every apartment of every dwelling throughout that great city.

Let us next suppose, that we there found a physician of more than princely wealth, who, on opening the ground in his garden for making a bath, had happily discovered an inexhaustible spring of medicinal water of so divine a quality, that a single cup of it never failed to operate as a charm, in perfectly curing the dreadful malady.

What, Sir, should we think of the benevolence or patriotism, the morality or piety of this man, if we observed that after drinking himself, he imparted the benefit in his power to those only who occupied the most commodious apartments of the largest houses, leaving a vast majority of the citizens still languishing in all their misery; thus scarcely blunting the inexorable scythe of death, while it daily mowed down its tens of thousands?

Is the picture of such a plague, and such a treatment

of it at *Constantinople*, an exaggerated illustration of the political pestilence and the political doctoring of our own country?

In the first place, doth not that pestilence *universally* banish liberty? What can it more? Is not an *universal* absence of liberty, or in other words national slavery, the political death of a State? In speaking then of such a pestilence, how can we exaggerate? But in the English constitution, have we not a fountain of principles, living waters of intellect, of infallible efficacy, whenever they shall be fully and faithfully applied in a root-and-branch extirpation of slavery, direst of earthly curses!

In the second place, with reference to our own political doctors, who, for staying the boroughmonger plague, are for extending suffrage to a small part only of their countrymen, (now not in the most incommodious situations) do they manifest either greater benevolence or patriotism, morality or piety, or more illumination of mind than the aforesaid Turk, who when, by merely saying, 'be ye made whole,' he might have healed the entire population, and have eradicated the scourge of his city, sacrificed such an object to some motive not to be penetrated, unless it were a latent pride of a rich man, or some inveterate prejudice of one who had his dwelling among the rulers?

But, as when God said, "let there be light, there was light," so when Parliament, as state-physician, shall say to the diseased and afflicted nation, 'be thou made whole,' it shall be made whole. And can we, Sir, be ignorant, that when the awakened and embodied reason of the United Kingdom shall say to Psrliament, 'be thou *radically* reformed,' it shall be *radically* reformed? And do we not further know, that, as a debtor to the nation in a large sum of rights and liberties, Parliament can, at any moment, as easily pay its debt in full as in part; which is an unanswerable argument against a composition?

That assembly (which is the proper physician in ordinary to the State) having appeared too much occupied in amusing and deluding the patient, a physician extraordinary, who had studied the complex case, and the right modes of cure, may perhaps be thought to have shewn only a right sense of duty, in having culled from the political materia medica, the appropriate simples of sovereign efficacy, for removing each of the two grand symptoms of the disease, so as to effect a perfect recovery of the disordered Constitution, and in having also, through the medium of the press, communicated to the patient two prescriptions.

In thus preparing two medicines, which reason (grounded on truths as certain as that *effects cease when causes are removed)* affords authority for believing must prove infallible specifics, those two prescriptions assumed the forms of two bills; first, "*A Bill of Rights and* "*Liberties:* or, *An Act for a Constitutional Reform of* "*Parliament.*" And secondly, "*A Bill of free and sure* "*defence:* or, *An Act for a Constitutional revival of the* "*County power.*"

These medicines (a detergent and a tonic) being compounded of eternal ingredients, endowed with healing powers, as far transcending the waters of *Jordan* or of *Siloam*, as eternity transcends time, why shall they not be competent to cure our national distemper, now well understood, by its diagnosticks,---*corruption* and the *sword*? And why shall not their potency prevent its recurrence, since they would *eradicate its causes?*

Whereas, what in God's name must we call a mere root-invigorating *pruning* of the luxuriance of Parliamentary usurpation, together with a mere deduction of *a tenth part* from a standing army of *one hundred thousand strong*, but a tampering, without curing; but plastering, wiuhout healing; but repelling the virulence of ten thousand ulcers from the surface to the vital organs! Nay, in what light must we view mere motions for paltry remedies, made under the certainty of a contemptu-

ous rejection, motions shedding only darkness over the path of reform, whereas motions for *radical* reform, civil and military, would cause that path to be seen brightly illuminated.

And when *radical*, that is *constitutional* reform, hath in its very essence as much more of the true germ of *practicability*, than *moderate* reform, as in proportion it more ratisfies the human understanding, and more influences the human heart, doth not both virtue and wisdom (whether we look to *principle* or *practicability*, proclaim aloud its infinite superiority?

May then every enlightened Englishman, equally attending to the *universality* of the national plague---to the *virulence* of the decease, and to its being the true *cause* of the people's misery, as well as adverting to the natural causes of unanimity, (of which common right and obvious truth must be the nucleus) raise his earnest voice towards creating and consolidating a PUBLIC OPINION, before which, the hollow fabric of boroughmonger usurpation could not for a moment stand!

You are requested, Sir, to accept a short series of letters to the *Duke of Bedford*, occasioned by the writings of unprincipled calumniators, who assumed to be *prophets*, by daring to *assert* that *radical* reform *would* produce anarchy, mischief, the destruction of property and universal misery. That this *ipse dixit* audacity carries on the face of it proofs of profligacy and ignorance, the writer, on the authority of the moral and natural law of the Divine Being,*---on that also of Christianity, as well as on whatever history, philosophy, and experience, have revealed to us, respecting the principles of Government, trusts he has made manifest.

* A press in the service and pay of the corruptionists, has of late vehemently exclaimed against *blasphemy*, which word signifies—"to speak in terms of impious irreverence of God." How then shall we characterize those who audaciously *assert*, that, to legislate agreeably to *the justice and will of God*, WOULD produce nothing but *evil?* Is not the very sentiment *atheistical?*

Taking, more especially, into the discussion, that master principle in the science of government *representation* (now infinitely better understood than at any former period) it is proved to demonstration that, on the contrary, there is no other earthly system which so well provides for the order, tranquillity, security of property, prosperity and public happiness as that of *radical* Reform.—Can we then wonder that it is thus callumniated by corruptionists, who revel in the spoil and banquet on the blood of the Nation?—the corruptionists, against whom it has taken the field!—Can we be surprized that to the imaginations of the guilty crew, the majestic image of *radical* reform should be the most terrific of all spectres?

Requesting your acceptance also, of a copy of each of the two bills above spoken of, I earnestly entreat your most serious consideration of the foundations on which the several parts of them respectively stand. As an inducement so to do, allow me to report what may even cause the credulous to doubt whether miracles have, or have not, ceased.

I need not inform you that opposition boasts of two gentlemen learned in the law, who, as men of genius and eminent scholars, have been writers in the *Edinburgh* Review, particularly in the political department. Now it is sufficiently notorious, that, in respect of ordinary adversaries, the "burning fiery furnace" of that Review, as a *Nebuchadnezzar* of political literature, is at all times sufficiently fierce; nor can any reader be ignorant that, with regard to *radical* reformers, who refuse to fall down before the golden image it worships, care is always taken "to heat the furnace one seven times more than it was "wont to be heat."

Those two learned gentlemen can tell you, that when, in the presence of "the princes, the governors, the cap-"tains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the "sheriffs, and all the rulers" of our Babylon, the afore-

said "*Bill of Rights and Liberties*" had been cast into the midst of this "burning fiery furnace," so heated to a seven-fold intensity, the said princes, and rulers, and counsellors, saw it come out again unhurt; that the fire had "no power over it, nor was a hair of its head so "much as singed; nor had even the smell of fire pas-"sed on it."

Here, Sir, let us ask what saved it? What delivered it unhurt from the "burning fiery furnace" of hostile criticism? Must not the answer be this? 'Its strict ac-'cordance with the constitution, its correctness of moral 'and political *principle*;* its exact conformity with the 'eternal law of nature, touching human liberty, or, in 'equivalent language, its obedience to the justice and 'the will of the Creator; not forgetting its self-evi-'dent and eminently-facile *practicability*: These were 'the causes which rendered it invulnerable, had the cri-'tical darts instead of gall been even dipt in poison.'

Whether the lying accusation of the antient Babylonian spies and the extraordinary deliverance of the three *radicals in religion* be history or parable, the story beautifully illustrates the means of deliverance from modern political evil, namely, an immoveable reliance on the omnipotence of truth, and an invincible spirit in the assertion of it.

Then why shall *radicals in reform* doubt of their country's deliverance from the "burning fiery furnace" of borough monger despotism, when, all unworthy means rejected, that reform shall be sought in the way which God and nature have appointed; namely, by unceasingly diffusing sound knowledge, and fearlessly asserting the rights of the people?

What notice English *Reviewers* will take of "*The "Bill of Free and Sure Defence*," the author knows not;

* 'When Governments deviate from the strict line of *constitutional* '*principle*, they are very apt to involve themselves in *embarrassment* and '*difficulty*.' Lord Holland on the Alien Act. See *The Times*, 6 July 1820.

but he does know, that each of three patriotic Spaniards, of high estimation in his own country, hath thither returned from exile with that bill in his pocket.

On the present occasion you have been addressed, because you are not to be classed with those English gentlemen who unhappily for their country in its extremity, depute some party leader to think for them. You not only think for yourself, but you have gone through the labor of planning and digesting a scheme of national representation on a *partial*, as the writer has planned and digested one on an *impartial* system.

Compare therefore those two systems in all their points of opposition; examine them in all their bearings on the excess of corruption to be rooted out, and with a just estimate of the present advanced state of knowledge on the subject, and then act as you shall believe to be most consistent with public duty.

The writer has only to add, that so little is he bigotted even to conviction, that whenever yourself, or any other, shall favor him with a course of reasoning carrying with it more weight than that course which has produced his conviction, he shall consider himself under a moral obligation as a man, as well as under a commanding sense of honor as a gentleman, and of duty as a member of the state, to yield obedience to such more weighty reasoning, and to regulate his conduct accordingly.

With much respect, and with a sincere desire that you may never want the means of effectually serving your country,

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN CARTWRIGHT.

J. G. LAMBTON, Esq.
Representative of the County of Durham,
&c. &c. &c.

TO THE

COMMONS HOUSE.

The Petition of the undersigned Member of the State,

SHEWETH,

That after it had been universally known, as a mournful fact, that an unexampled pauperism and poignant misery had in general overwhelmed the labouring part of the community, it is at length seen, in the fifth year of peace, that the tables of parliament are upheaped with gloomy representations from principal agriculturists, master-manufacturers, ship owners, traders and merchants, who so lately with one voice hailed a hollow prosperity, and lauded the wisdom of their rulers; but who, now, awakening from a dream, all complain of a grievous distress and increasing difficulties; each class separately seeking relief, where, as they are taught, by language held on both sides of both houses, it is not to be found; for they are given to understand (what ought to astonish all English people) that the relief they ask *is not in the power of parliament* to administer.

Discouraging as this language to others may be, to your petitioner, it is consoling; inasmuch as it seems to indicate in the speakers, a state of mind favourable to the reception of salutary truth.

Adversity being the known school of wisdom, doubtless parliament will now wish to discern the *sources* of public distress, that it may, if possible, remove the same; will seek to discover the *causes* of its supposed inability, that it may, if possible, regain its potency to protect the people, and to promote their prosperity.

Lawyers who were too much influenced by technical dogmas, pride, prejudice and servility, having figuratively spoken of an "*omnipotence*" in parliament, this careless language misled themselves and others into doctrines the most absurd and mischievous;—doctrines to

have been expected only in an Algiers or a Morocco, or in a state under the stupifying tyranny of an inquisition.

It was maintained that "*Parliament possessed an absolute despotic power, not to be confined either for causes or persons within any bounds;*" aye, a power "*to change and create afresh even the constitution of the kingdom;*" whereas, by the luminous demonstrations made public by our great countryman, *Locke*, it is seen that parliament is a mere vicarious trustee, with powers strictly *limited;* debarred of any authority to do wrong, but invested with full power and ability to do right, for the service, the security and happiness of the people.

As, in the legislature of our free country, an error so lamentable as that which hath been noticed, fully accounts for the present national calamity and consternation, your petitioner hopes that both Houses of Parliament will now, at last, be more disposed than heretofore to look *inwards*, for discerning the *prolific causes* of the national distress; as well as for discovering the *sure means of its removal;* for a removal of the distress must follow a removal of its cause.

Thus looking *inwards*, those *causes* of the calamity will be found in two prominent imperfections; that is, first, in the parliament's democratic organ being in a deplorable condition of almost total decay, corruption and disease; and, secondly, in its aristocratic organ being deeply infected, that is to say, by a large proportion of its members being notoriously implicated in extending the decay, in aggravating the corruption, and in striving to render the diease incurable.

When a strange notion is circulated, of parliamentary *inability to afford national relief*, your petitioner, who holds a contrary opinion, cannot but hope that parliament will note, whether the calamity have come from God or from man. If from God—if for the sins of the people, the Deity had stricken the earth with sterility and loaded the air with pestilence, then man might have

been impotent to have rescued a condemned race from the chastisement of an offended God.

But as a beneficial Creator permitted the earth to yield abundance, and the atmosphere to breathe health, it cannot but be inferred, that the calamity of the nation is the bitter fruit of the unconstitional doctrines, the evil counsels, and the ruinous measures of legislators and rulers.

When Divine Providence, for bringing good out of evil, suffers the misdoings of men in power to bring affliction on a land, a double reformation seems intended. A reformation, in the first place, of the suffering *people*, by recalling them to a knowledge and a care of neglected rights on which liberty and property depend, together with a sense of the moral obligation, as a christian duty to neighbours, of aiding in the re-establishment of those rights, as essential to the welfare of the community: and, a reformation in the second place, of the *government*, by disposing it to listen to the voice of tried wisdom which had been schooled in adversity, unfolding the undeniable principles of a free *constitution*, which holds the lofty character of *a law to the legislature*, and a *criterion of rectitude to executive functionaries.*

As a leading step to a complete constitutional reform, your honourable House stands solemnly and emphatically pledged for abatement of a nuisance, which your petitioner trusts it will at all events determine forthwith to remove.

Your petitioner alludes to that glaring wrong as notorious as the alternation of night and day, which to the aggrieved people hath long been a matter of deep discontent, and theme of increasing complaint; namely, the offensive, the criminal interference in the return of members to serve in the Commons House, by Peers of the realm.

At the commencement of the present session of Parliament, your Honourable House, as appears by its journals, acting up to the laudable jealousy and regular prac-

tice of your predecessors, speaking at the same time the pure constitutional language of a House of Commons, "*Resolved, That it is a high infringement upon the liberties "and privileges of the Commons of the realm, for any lord "in parliament, or any lord lieutenant of any county, to con-"cern themselves in the elections of members to serve for the "Commons in parliament.*"

Thus solemnly pledged to the work of reform, your petitioner trusts that, in a crisis of such urgency as the present, that pledge will be immediately redeemed.

If Lords of Parliament, in scorn and derision of your forbiddance, and in defiance of your resolve, do still, as bold invaders, themselves resolve, that they *will* continue to concern themselves in your elections, 'tis time they were better taught.

If the peerage seek, by usurpation, to secure to itself two hereditary Houses of parliament instead of one, and so to enslave the nation to an odious oligarchy, it is time to arrest a career so criminal.

If the nobility, by a lawless siezure of your seats, aim at divesting the Commons House of the guardianship of the nation's property, by transferring to their own dependent deputies the keeping of the public purse, with a power of taxing the people at their arbitrary discretion, it is high time that an ambition so pernicious should be dashed to the ground.

If, by holding up your Honourable House to the public gaze, as patiently enduring their increasing and successful encroachments, if, by exhibiting it as a captive in chains, tamely submitting to their shameful profanation of its seats, and slavishly licking the foot which tramples in the dirt its privileges and its honour; it be the meaning of those Lords to bring a Commons House into hatred and contempt, as a prelude to extinction, then there is no time to lose for unravelling and defeating so foul a conspiracy; in the performance of which duty good would be returned for evil; by lifting those Lords out of their rotten-borough filth, and replacing them on

the wholesome elevation of rank, conferred for generous services.

Considering that, nearly thirty years ago, lists of peers who thus offended were extensively published by gentlemen (among others) who have now seats in your Honourable House, which lists have since been so exceedingly multiplied as to be familiar to the whole world, your petitioner trusts that his now offering to your Honourable House a similar list, merely for setting forth in due form his complaint and application, will not be imputed to any wrong or illiberal motive; for he stoops not to personal objects or party predilections, nor hath he the slightest intention of incivility. Although sueing for what is of more value than life, yet amicable is his suit. He hath no ill-will; but he claims and expects justice. In the performance of this task, which is a task of regret and pain, he claims to be, and trusts he shall be considered, as a volunteer in the service of your Honourable House, for submitting to it a summary of particulars, whereon it may with order and regularity, proceed, in acting upon its aforesaid resolve, for vindicating its own honour, for asserting its independence, and for maintaining the rights, liberties and privileges of the Commons of the realm.

The subjoined table of particulars, collated with the best authorities, your petitioner hopes will be found correct; although accidental errors in such a document cannot weaken the present claim.

Your petitioner, without at present adverting to any of the other modes and practices whereby the nutriment of representation is turned to poison, or taking any account of the extensive and notorious (although less proveable) partitioning of county representation by combining Peers, hath, in the subjoined table, shown how far the aforesaid Lords, in respect of the representation of towns only, have illegally usurped seats in your honourable House,—seats which are the sacred

inheritance and exclusive property of the much-injured Commons of the realm.

In regard to the injustice and indecency of any persons acting as judges in their own cause, your petitioner trusts that the unlawfully-returned and unqualified persons named in the subjoined list, will all be excluded from your Honourable House, so that none of them may plead or vote on any question touching the seats they illegally occupy.

From the very nature of your petitioner's charge, brought forward because your privileges, your character and independence are deeply affected; while the inherent rights and vital interests of all the Commons of the realm (of whom you are the guardians), and the very existence of the constitutton (of which you are the conservators), are put in imminent hazard by the criminal acts of the offending Lords; it evidently belongs to your Honourable House seriously and vigorously to take up and prosecute the inquiry, for satisfaction of the aggrieved people, by the redress of a wrong so intolerable.

But, indeed, when reflecting on the present fullness of knowledge, in place of guessing ignorance; and swayed by resistless demonstrations, in place of puerile conceits; as well as of proceeding under the guidance of public wisdom, in place of factious sophistry; and with integrity and justice, instead of selfishness and iniquity; your petitioner would exceedingly rejoice should your Honourable House, in preference to an investigation (disreputable to nobility, disgraceful to the nation, and painful alike to your petitioner and to all parties to be employed) rather choose to frame at once a comprehensive and healing statute—a statute competent to redress *all* legislative wrongs, by respecting *all* legislative rights; thereby charming away discord, and silencing the voice of discontent, by *eradicating their causes.*

Thus the measures of all factions would be broken;

the schemes of treacherous expedience would be defeated; the bubbles of visionaries, who dream of gathering grapes of thorns and figs of thistles, would be burst; and the nostrums of empyrics, who, for eradicating a political typhus, carefully reserve infectious matter for future contagion, consigned to oblivion.

In so doing, your Honourable House—the Grand inquest and protector of this Christian nation—would manifest its sense of the wisdom and the goodness of the God and Father of all, who of one flesh made the *rich* and the *poor*, endowing the whole human race in common (as reasoning, moral and responsible beings) with the same inherent right to freedom; and gifting them with intellect, with conscience, and with free-will for their instruction, their guidance and self-preservation.

For your honourable House must be sensible of its obligation to respect nature's eternal law, or, in other words, the will of the Almighty, which, notwithstanding the desperate counsels and unprincipled sophisms of subtile apologists for rotten-boroughs, for usurping Lords and their oppressions, sanctions not an impious *branding* of free men (because poor) with the *slave-mark* of *exclusion* from their inherent common-right, as co-partners with the wealthiest, the highest, and the proudest, in the constitution of their country.

And when your honourable House shall farther consider, that the humblest mortal on earth is equally a co-heir of an immortality with the most exalted who now wear stars, or coronets, or crowns, your petitioner hopes that your Honourable House will rise superior to the mean thoughts, and vulgar prejudices of the uncharitable among the wealthy, the ignorant, the interested, the vain and the proud; and, will acknowledge that, in reference to the respective claims of legislative representation by the poor and the rich, the poor have *equal* right but *far more need.*

Your petitioner also trusts that your Honourable

House will then likewise feel assured, that what is clearly derived from Almighty God, the beneficent Creator of all things, must needs in its nature be good for men and nations ; and that where an entire nation shall fully enjoy that freedom which, by the divine decree, is the inherent right of the community, collectively and individually, there must then be the most solid foundation for wise and good government ; or, in other words, for the security of order, peace and justice ; virtue, prosperity and happiness.

Taking a retrospective view of the wars and bloodshed, of the oppressions and unspeakable calamities which a non-observance of these truths hath produced ; and not overlooking the crimes, the cruelties, and the heart-sickening horrors which have attended the conflict between tyranny and its victims, for quashing reform, and upholding usurpation, your petitioner feels himself moved to declare his rooted conviction, that, without a constitutional representation in a Commons House, neither tranquillity nor political salvation can be the future lot of this land.

He likewise holds himself imperiously called on, before the face of the united kingdom, now under the watchful observance of all the nations which are asserting the rights of freedom, to enter a solemn protest against the imposition of any taxes or the enactments of any laws to affect the rights or liberties, the interests or lives of himself or his countrymen, which may result from the deliberations and votes of those persons who, by or through a concernment or interference, a patronage or influence on the part of Lords of Parliament, have been unlawfully and unconstitutionally seated in your Honourable House.

And, your petitioner prays, that your Honourable House will take the premises into its most serious and early consideration, and grant the relief required by the constitution. JOHN CARTWRIGHT,

June, 1820. *Of Burton Crescent, Middlesex.*

A TABLE,

&c.

Peers of the Realm who appear to have unlawfully concerned themselves in the Elections of Members to serve for the Commons in the present Parliament.	Rank of Peers.	Counties and Towns where the unlawful interference of Peers of the Realm appears to have operated either by nomination or influence.	Number of Members unlawfully returned.	
Armagh	A.Bis.	Armagh	....	1
Anglesea	Marq.	Anglesea	1	
		Milbourn Port	1	
		Carnarvon To.	1	3
Anson	Visc.	Litchfield	....	1
Argyle	Duke	Ayr District	....	1
Aylesbury	Earl	Marlborough	2	
		Great Bedwin	2	4
Bandon	Earl	Bandon Bridge	....	1
Bath	Marq.	Bath	1	
		Weobly	2	3
Bathurst	Earl	Cirencester	....	2
Beaufort	Duke	Gloucester Co.	1	
		Monmouth Co.	1	
		Monmouth To.	1	3
Bedford	Duke	Bedford Co.	1	
		Bedford To.	1	
		Tavistock	2	4
Beverley	Earl	Beeralstone	....	2
Bolingbroke	Visc.	Wotton Basset	....	1
Bradford	Earl	Wenlock	....	1
Bridgewater	Earl	Brackley	....	1
Bristol	Earl	Bury St. Edmunds	....	1
Brownlow	Earl	Clitheroe	1	
		Grantham	1	2
	16			31

Peers of the Realm who appear to have unlawfully concerned themselves in the Elections of Members to serve for the Commons in the present Parliament.	Rank of Peers.	Counties and Towns where the unlawful interference of Peers of the Realm appears to have operated either by nomination or influence.	Number of Members unlawfully returned.	
Buccleugh	Duke	Edinburgh	1	
		Selkirk District	1	2
Buckingham	Marq.	Buckingham Co.	1	
		Buckingham To.	2	
		St. Mawes	2	5
Bulkeley	Visc.	Beaumaris	....	1
Bute	Marq.	Cardiff	1	
		Bossiney	1	2
Caledon	Earl	Old Sarum	....	2
Calthorpe	Baron	Hindon	1	
		Bramber	1	2
Carlisle	Earl	Morpeth	....	1
Carrington	Baron	Buckingham Co.	1	
		Midhurst	2	
		Wendover	2	5
Cawdor	Baron	Carmarthan To.	....	1
Charleville	Earl	Carlow	....	1
Clarendon	Earl	Wotton Basset	....	1
Cholmondeley	Marq.	Castle Rising	....	1
Clinton	Baron	Ashburton	....	1
Cornwallis	Marq.	Eye	....	2
Curzon	Visc.	Clitheroe	....	1
Darlington	Earl	Durham Co.	1	
		Winchelsea	2	
		Tregony	2	
		Camelford	1	
		Ilchester	2	8
De Clifford	Baron	Kinsale	1	
		Downpatrick	1	2
De Dunstanville	Baron	Bodmyn	....	2
Derby	Earl	Lancashire	....	1
Devonshire	Duke	Derby Co.	1	
		Derby To.	1	
		Knaresborough	2	
		Dungarvon	1	5
	20			46

Peers of the Realm who appear to have unlawfully concerned themselves in the Election of Members to serve for the Commons in the present Parliament.	Rank of Peers.	Counties and Towns where the unlawful interference of Peers of the Realm appears to have operated either by nomination or influence.	Number of Members unlawfully returned.	
Donegal	Earl	Belfast	....	1
Dorset	Duchs.	East Grinstead	....	2
Downshire	Marq.	Downshire	....	1
Dundas	Baron	Richmond	....	2
Egremont	Earl	Chichester	1	
		Shoreham	1	2
Ely	Marq.	Wexford	....	1
Enniskillen	Earl	Enniskillen	....	1
Exeter	Marq.	Stamford	....	2
Falmouth	Visc.	St. Michael	....	1
Fitzwilliam	Earl	Yorkshire	1	
		Peterborough	2	
		Malton	2	
		Higham Ferrers	1	6
Foley	Baron	Droitwich	1	1
Galloway	Earl	Stranraer District	....	1
Grafton	Duke	Bury St. Edmunds	1	
		Thetford	1	2
Grosvenor	Earl	Chester Town	....	2
Guilford	Earl	Banbury	....	1
Hardwicke	Earl	Ryegate	....	1
Harewood	Earl	Northallerton	....	1
Harrowby	Earl	Tiverton	....	2
Hertford	Marq.	Orford	2	
		Totness	2	
		Lisburn	1	5
Hopetown	Earl	Stirling District	....	1
Kintore	Earl	Banff District	....	1
Lansdown	Marq.	Calne	....	2
	22			39

Peers of the Realm who appear to have unlawfully concerned themselves in the Elections of Members to serve for the Commons in the present Parliament.	Rank of Peers.	Counties and Towns where the unlawful interference of Peers of the Realm appears to have operated either by nomination or influence.	Number of Members unlawfully returned.	
Lauderdale	Earl	Dunbar District	....	1
Leeds	Duke	Hellesbon	....	2
Londonderry	Marq.	Downshire	....	1
Lonsdale	Earl	Westmorland	2	
		Cumberland	1	
		Appleby	1	
		Cockermouth	2	
		Haslemere	2	8
Marlborough	Duke	Oxford Co.	1	
		Woodstock	1	2
Middleton	Visc.	Whitchurch	....	1
Middleton	Baron	Newark	....	1
Mount Edgecombe	Earl	Lostwithiel	2	
		Bossiney	1	
		Plympton	1	4
Mulgrave	Earl	Scarborough	....	1
Newcastle	Duke	Aldborough	2	
		Boroughbridge	2	
		Newark	1	5
Norfolk	Duke	Arundel	1	
		Steyning	2	
		Horsham	2	
		Shoreham	1	6
Northland	Visc.	Dungannon	....	1
Northumberland	Duke	Northumberland	1	
		Newport (Corn.)	2	
		Launceston	2	5
Northwick	Baron	Evesham	....	1
Onslow	Earl	Guilford	....	2
Orford	Earl	Lynn	....	1
Ormond	Earl	Kilkenny Co.	....	1
Pembroke	Earl	Wilton	....	2
Petre	Baron	Thetford	....	1
	19			46

Peers of the Realm who appear to have unlawfully concerned themselves in the Elections of Members to serve for the Commons in the present Parliament.	Rank of Peers.	Counties and Towns where the unlawful interference of Peers of the Realm appears to have operated either by nomination or influence.	Number of Members unlawfully returned.	
Portarlington	Earl	Portarlington	....	1
Portland	Duke	Nottingham Co.	....	1
Powis	Earl	Ludlow	2	
		Montgomery To....	1	
		Bishop's Castle .. .	2	5
Queensbury.....	Marq.	Dumfries District ..	....	1
Radnor	Earl	Salisbury	1	
		Downton	2	3
Richmond	Duke	Chichester	....	1
Roden	Earl	Dundalk	....	1
Rutland	Duke	Leicester Co.	1	
		Scarborough	1	
		Cambridge	2	4
St. Germains	Earl	St. Germains	2	
		Liskeard	2	4
Sandwich.....	Earl	Huntingdon To.	....	2
Shaftesbury	Earl	Dorchester	....	1
Shannon	Earl	Youghal	....	1
Sidney	Visc.	Whitchurch	....	1
Somers.....	Baron	Hereford	1	
		Ryegate	1	2
Stafford	Marq.	Litchfield	1	
		Brackley	1	
		Tain District	1	3
Thanet.....	Earl	Appleby	....	1
Townsend	Marq.	Tamworth	....	1
Warwick	Earl	Warwick	....	2
Westmorland	Earl	Lyme Regis.....	....	2
Yarborough	Baron	Lincolnshire	....	1
	20			38

PEERS of the Realm who appear to have unlawfully caused the Return of Members to serve for the Commons in the present Parliament: (16, 20, 22, 19, 20) total ..	97
Members who appear to have been unlawfully returned, either through the nomination or influence of PEERS: (31, 46, 39, 46, 38) total	200

The reader will keep in mind, that the foregoing Petition relates only to certain PEERS, who in their *personal* capacity *degrade* the House of Commons by their usurpations. But, by consulting Oldfield's Representative History, Vol. vi. p. 292, he will find three other PEERS, (making the entire number of usurping PEERS a round *hundred)* who are Cabinet Ministers, with the following patronage, in the return of Members, namely,

	Members.
The Earl of *Liverpool*, for the Treasury, county of Hampshire and six Treasury Boroughs, *imposes* on the Commons	11
The Viscount *Melville*, for three Admiralty Boroughs, *imposes*	4
The Duke of *Wellington*, for one Ordnance Borough, *imposes*	1
Then again, there are 90 wealthy Commoners (see Oldfield, vi. 289.) who, for 102 *vile sinks of corruption*, over which they tyrannize, farther *dishonour* the House, by *forcing* on it	137
To which, add the number in the Table of the Petition ..	200
TOTAL of such as (to use the words of the royal proclamation of the 30th of July 1819,) "in gross violation of the law," and to the palpable subversion of the Constitution, corruptly or tyrannically *impose* on the Commons	353 Members.

Then *Query*—Must not *The Solicitor of the Treasury* have been under some extraordinary delusion of intellect, when, for the said crime, he overlooked the whole of the 190 real offenders, but *indicted* a gentleman who, for upwards of 40 years, has indefatigably laboured for restoring to the Commons House that purity and dignity, which could not fail to render it an object of universal respect and veneration at home, as well as of admiration and reverence throughout the whole world ?

THE END.

The following works, by MAJOR CARTWRIGHT, are now selling at DOLBY'S, 299, Strand, and 34, Wardour Street, Soho: at the price attached to each respectively, viz.

1. Lectures on the British Constitution, printed in Script, with blank pages for notes, foolscap folio, 2s.

2. Four Letters to the late Lord Mayor, (Alderman Wood) on the state of Representation, &c. in sets, each set 8d.

3. Letters to Clarkson, on African and English Freedom, 6d.

4. Resolutions of the Hampden Club, 3d.

5. Report of the Proceedings of the Hampden Club Meeting, originally published at 2s. now sold 6d.

6. A Bill of R[illegible]s and Liberties: or an act for restoring the *civil* branch of the Constitution,

7. A Bill of free and sure Defence; or, an Act for restoring the *military* branch of the Constitution.

Amidst the "false doctrine, heresy, and schism," of the present moment, the pure and undefiled principles of the Constitution, as inculcated in the words of the Major, are particularly recommended to the perusal of the public.

W. Molineux, Printer, Bream's Buildings,
Chancery Lane, London.