

Under this Constitution then, a double or virtual Representation may be reasonably supposed.—The Electors, who are inseparably connected in their Interests with the Non-Electors, may be justly deemed to be the Representatives of the Non-Electors, at the same Time They exercise their personal Privilege in their Right of Election, and the Members chosen, therefore, the Representatives of both. This is the only rational Explanation of the Expression, *virtual Representation*. None has been advanced by the Assertors of it, and their Meaning can only be inferred from the Instances, by which They endeavour to elucidate it, and no other Meaning can be stated, to which the Instances apply.

It is an essential Principle of the *English* Constitution, that the Subject shall not be taxed without his Consent, which hath not been introduced by any particular Law, but necessarily results from the Nature of that mixed Government; for, without it, the Order of Democracy could not exist.

\* Parliaments were not formerly so regular in Point of Form as they now are. Even the Number of Knights for each Shire were not ascertained. The first Writs now extant for their Choice, are 22<sup>d</sup> *Edward* I, by which, Two, as at this Day, were directed to be chosen for each County; but the King not being satisfied with that Number, other Writs were issued for choosing Two more. This discretionary Power being thought inconvenient, was afterwards restrained by the Statutes of *Richard* II, *Henry* IV, and subsequent Acts.

In earlier Times there was more Simplicity in the Rules of Government, and Men were more solicitous about the Essentials, than the Forms of it. When the Consent of those who were to perform, or pay any Thing extra-feudal, was fairly applied for and obtained, the Manner was little regarded; but, as the People had reason to be jealous of Designs to impose Contributions upon Them without their Consent, it was thought expedient to have Formalities regulated, and fixed, to prevent this Injury to their Rights, not to destroy a Principle, without which, They could not be said to have any Rights at all.

Before the Introduction of those Formalities, which were framed with a View to restrain the Excursions of Power, and to secure the Privileges of the Subject, as the Mode of Proceeding was more simple, so perhaps this Foundation of Consent was more visible than it is at present, wherefore it

\* See *Treat. Peerage*.