

the most flourishing towns to send representatives to parliament. So that as towns encreased in trade, and grew populous, they were admitted to a share in the legislature. But the misfortune is, that the deserted boroughs continued to be summoned, as well as those to whom their trade and inhabitants were transferred; except a few which petitioned to be eased of the expense, then usual, of maintaining their members: four shillings a day being allowed for a knight of the shire, and two shillings for a citizen or burges; which was the rate of wages established in the reign of Edward III^m. Hence the members for boroughs now bear above a quadruple proportion to those for counties, and the number of parliament men is increased since Fortescue's time, in the reign of Henry the sixth, from 300 to upwards of 500, exclusive of those for Scotland. The universities were in general not empowered to send burgeses to parliament; though once, in 28 Edw. I. when a parliament was summoned to consider of the king's right to Scotland, there were issued writs, which required the university of Oxford to send up four or five, and that of Cambridge two or three, of their most discreet and learned lawyers for that purposeⁿ. But it was king James the first, who indulged them with the permanent privilege to send constantly two of their own body; to serve for those students who, though useful members of the community, were neither concerned in the landed nor the trading interest; and to protect in the legislature the rights of the republic of letters. The right of election in boroughs is various, depending intirely on the several charters, customs, and constitutions of the respective places, which has occasioned infinite disputes; though now by statute 2 Geo. II. c. 24. the right of voting for the future shall be allowed according to the last determination of the house of commons concerning it. And by statute 3 Geo. III. c. 15. no freeman of any city or borough (other than such as claim by birth, marriage, or servitude) shall be intitled to vote therein, unless he hath been admitted to his freedom twelve calendar months before.

^m 4 Inst. 16.

ⁿ Prynne parl. writs. I. 345.