

only for a day or twoⁿ: after which all business then depending in the houses was to be begun again. Which custom obtained so strongly, that it once became a question^o, whether giving the royal assent to a single bill did not of course put an end to the session. And, though it was then resolved in the negative, yet the notion was so deeply rooted, that the statute 1 Car. I. c. 7. was passed to declare, that the king's assent to that and some other acts should not put an end to the session; and, even so late as the restoration of Charles II, we find a proviso tacked to the first bill then enacted^p, that his majesty's assent thereto should not determine the session of parliament. But it now seems to be allowed, that a prorogation must be expressly made, in order to determine the session. And, if at the time of an actual rebellion, or imminent danger of invasion, the parliament shall be separated by adjournment or prorogation, the king is empowered^q to call them together by proclamation, with fourteen days notice of the time appointed for their reassembling.

A DISSOLUTION is the civil death of the parliament; and this may be effected three ways: 1. By the king's will, expressed either in person or by representation. For, as the king has the sole right of convening the parliament, so also it is a branch of the royal prerogative, that he may (whenever he pleases) prorogue the parliament for a time, or put a final period to its existence. If nothing had a right to prorogue or dissolve a parliament but itself, it might happen to become perpetual. And this would be extremely dangerous, if at any time it should attempt to encroach upon the executive power: as was fatally experienced by the unfortunate king Charles the first; who, having unadvisedly passed an act to continue the parliament then in being till such time as it should please to dissolve itself, at last fell a sacrifice to that inordinate power, which he himself had consented to give them. It is therefore extremely necessary that the crown should be empowered to regulate the duration of these assemblies,

ⁿ Com. Journ. 21 Oct. 1553.

^o *Ibid.* 21 Nov. 1554.

^p Stat. 12 Car. II. c. 1.

^q Stat. 30 Geo. II. c. 25.