

man hereditary rights had centered in this king, his son and heir king Charles the first should be told by those infamous judges, who pronounced his unparalleled sentence, that he was an elective prince; elected by his people, and therefore accountable to them, in his own proper person, for his conduct. The confusion, instability, and madness, which followed the fatal catastrophe of that pious and unfortunate prince, will be a standing argument in favour of hereditary monarchy to all future ages; as they proved at last to the then deluded people: who, in order to recover that peace and happiness which for twenty years together they had lost, in a solemn parliamentary convention of the states restored the right heir of the crown. And in the proclamation for that purpose, which was drawn up and attended by both houses\*, they declared, "that, according to their duty and allegiance, they did heartily, joyfully, and unanimously acknowledge and proclaim, that immediately upon the decease of our late sovereign lord king Charles, the imperial crown of these realms did by inheritance birthright and lawful and undoubted succession descend and come to his most excellent majesty Charles the second, as being lineally, justly, and lawfully, next heir of the blood royal of this realm: and thereunto they most humbly and faithfully did submit and oblige themselves, their heirs, and posterity for ever."

THUS I think it clearly appears, from the highest authority this nation is acquainted with, that the crown of England hath been ever an hereditary crown; though subject to limitations by parliament. The remainder of this chapter will consist principally of those instances, wherein the parliament has asserted or exercised this right of altering and limiting the succession; a right which, we have seen, was before exercised and asserted in the reigns of Henry IV, Henry VII, Henry VIII, queen Mary, and queen Elizabeth.

THE first instance, in point of time, is the famous bill of exclusion, which raised such a ferment in the latter end of the reign

\* Com. Journ. 8 May 1660.