

of king Charles the second. It is well known, that the purport of this bill was to have set aside the king's brother and presumptive heir, the duke of York, from the succession, on the score of his being a papist; that it passed the house of commons, but was rejected by the lords; the king having also declared beforehand, that he never would be brought to consent to it. And from this transaction we may collect two things: 1. That the crown was universally acknowledged to be hereditary; and the inheritance indefeasible unless by parliament: else it had been needless to prefer such a bill. 2. That the parliament had a power to have defeated the inheritance: else such a bill had been ineffectual. The commons acknowledged the hereditary right then subsisting; and the lords did not dispute the power, but merely the propriety, of an exclusion. However, as the bill took no effect, king James the second succeeded to the throne of his ancestors; and might have enjoyed it during the remainder of his life, but for his own infatuated conduct, which (with other concurring circumstances) brought on the revolution in 1688.

THE true ground and principle, upon which that memorable event proceeded, was an entirely new case in politics, which had never before happened in our history; the abdication of the reigning monarch, and the vacancy of the throne thereupon. It was not a defeazance of the right of succession, and a new limitation of the crown, by the king and both houses of parliament: it was the act of the nation alone, upon a conviction that there was no king in being. For in a full assembly of the lords and commons, met in convention upon the supposition of this vacancy, both houses came to this resolution; "that king James the second, "having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of the kingdom, "by breaking the original contract between king and people; "and, by the advice of jesuits and other wicked persons, having "violated the fundamental laws; and having withdrawn himself "out of this kingdom; has abdicated the government, and that the "throne is thereby vacant." Thus ended at once, by this sudden

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