

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

OF THE KING'S DUTIES.

I PROCEED next to the duties, incumbent on the king by our constitution; in consideration of which duties his dignity and prerogative are established by the laws of the land: it being a maxim in the law, that protection and subjection are reciprocal^a. And these reciprocal duties are what, I apprehend, were meant by the convention in 1688, when they declared that king James had broken the *original contract* between king and people. But however, as the terms of that original contract were in some measure disputed, being alleged to exist principally in theory, and to be only deducible by reason and the rules of natural law; in which deduction different understandings might very considerably differ; it was, after the revolution, judged proper to declare these duties expressly, and to reduce that contract to a plain certainty. So that, whatever doubts might be formerly raised by weak and scrupulous minds about the existence of such an original contract, they must now entirely cease; especially with regard to every prince, who hath reigned since the year 1688.

THE principal duty of the king is, to govern his people according to law. *Nec regibus infinita aut libera potestas*, was the constitution of our German ancestors on the continent^b. And this is not only consonant to the principles of nature, of liberty, of

^a 7 Rep. 5.^b Tac. de mor. Germ. c. 7.