

thority, as are rooted in and spring from the king's political person, considered merely by itself, without reference to any other extrinsic circumstance; as, the right of sending embassadors, of creating peers, and of making war or peace. But such prerogatives as are *incidental* bear always a relation to something else, distinct from the king's person; and are indeed only exceptions, in favour of the crown, to those general rules that are established for the rest of the community: such as, that no costs shall be recovered against the king; that the king can never be a joint-tenant; and that his debt shall be preferred before a debt to any of his subjects. These, and an infinite number of other instances, will better be understood, when we come regularly to consider the rules themselves, to which these incidental prerogatives are exceptions. And therefore we will at present only dwell upon the king's substantive or direct prerogatives.

THESE substantive or direct prerogatives may again be divided into three kinds: being such as regard, first, the king's royal *character*; secondly, his royal *authority*; and, lastly, his royal *income*. These are necessary, to secure reverence to his person, obedience to his commands, and an affluent supply for the ordinary expenses of government; without all of which it is impossible to maintain the executive power in due independence and vigour. Yet, in every branch of this large and extensive dominion, our free constitution has interposed such seasonable checks and restrictions, as may curb it from trampling on those liberties, which it was meant to secure and establish. The enormous weight of prerogative (if left to itself, as in arbitrary government it is) spreads havoc and destruction among all the inferior movements: but, when balanced and bridled (as with us) by its proper counterpoise, timely and judiciously applied, its operations are then equable and regular, it invigorates the whole machine, and enables every part to answer the end of its construction.

IN the present chapter we shall only consider the two first of these divisions, which relate to the king's political *character* and *authority*;