

ministred for upwards of six hundred years^e, contained a promise “to be true and faithful to the king and his heirs, and truth and faith to bear of life and limb and terrene honour, and not to know or hear of any ill or damage intended him, without defending him therefrom.” Upon which sir Matthew Hale^f makes this remark; that it was short and plain, not entangled with long or intricate clauses or declarations, and yet is comprehensive of the whole duty from the subject to his sovereign. But, at the revolution, the terms of this oath being thought perhaps to favour too much the notion of non-resistance, the present form was introduced by the convention parliament, which is more general and indeterminate than the former; the subject only promising “that he will be faithful and bear *true* allegiance to the king,” without mentioning “his heirs,” or specifying in the least wherein that allegiance consists. The oath of supremacy is principally calculated as a renuntiation of the pope’s pretended authority: and the oath of abjuration, introduced in the reign of king William^g, very amply supplies the loose and general texture of the oath of allegiance; it recognizing the right of his majesty, derived under the act of settlement; engaging to support him to the utmost of the juror’s power; promising to disclose all traitorous conspiracies against him; and expressly renouncing any claim of the descendants of the late pretender, in as clear and explicit terms as the English language can furnish. This oath must be taken by all persons in any office, trust, or employment; and may be tendered by two justices of the peace to any person, whom they shall suspect of disaffection^h. And the oath of allegiance may be tenderedⁱ to all persons above the age of twelve years, whether natives, denizens, or aliens, either in the court-leet of the manor, or in the sheriff’s tourn, which is the court-leet of the county.

BUT, besides these express engagements, the law also holds that there is an implied, original, and virtual allegiance, owing

^e Mirror. c. 3. §. 35. Fleta. 3. 16. Britton. c. 29. 7 Rep. Calvin’s case. 6.

^f 1 Hal. P. C. 63.

^g Stat. 13 Will. III. c. 6.

^h Stat. 1 Geo. I. c. 13. 6 Geo. III. c. 53.

ⁱ 2 Inst. 121. 1 Hal. P. C. 64.

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