

Of PARLIAMENTS. Touching the Antiquity, Use, and Power of Parliaments, and the Qualifications of such Gentlemen as are fit to be chosen the Peoples Representatives.

THE Recital of these several Laws before mentioned, for frequent calling of Parliaments, declaring the same to be of such Importance, or Necessity, to the Safety or Well-being of the Nation, invites us to give the Reader some farther Information touching those most Honourable Assemblies.

*Of the Name and Antiquity of Parliaments.*

THE word PARLIAMENT is French, derived from the three words *Parler la ment*, to speak one's mind, because every Member of that Court should sincerely and discreetly speak his Mind, for the general Good of the Commonwealth; and this Name (saith Coke, 1 *Instit. Fol. 110.*) was used before *William* the Conqueror, even in the time of *Edward* the Confessor. But most commonly in the Saxons time, it was called *Micbegt-mote* or *Witenage Mote*, that is, the Great More [Meeting or Assembly, whence our *Ward-Motes* in London receive their Name to this Day] or the *Wise Mote*, that is, the Assembly of the wise Men and Sages of the Land.

But this word Parliament is used in a double Sense.

1. Strictly, as it includes the Legislative Power of England, as when we say—*An Act of Parliament* :