Report of a Conference concerning the Succession to the English & German dominions.

? 1737

An Account of what passed in a Conference concerning a Proposall contained in a Paper hereunto annexed for establishing by Act of Parliamt that in ye Succession to ye Crown, the male descendts of his Majesty should in all cases be preferable to ye Females & yt ye Princes his descendants not yet born, should not hold ye Kingdom of Great Britain & his Mattys Dominions in Germany together, in case of a Younger Brother or other male of a collateral Line, who might hold those Dominions in Germany, but yt those Dominions in such case should go to such Younger Brother or other male aforesd & his male descendants.

The Particulars are more fully stated in ye said annexed Paper.

The Proposall appearing to be his Mattys wish was received & considered wth an earnest desire to find out proper ways to bring it to effect, but with a persuasion yt his Majesty expected, yt if in deliberating thereupon there should appeare any Inconvenience likely to arise from ye thing it self, or Difficultyes or Dangers in ye methods of making it effectuall, ye same should be faithfully represented to him for his Mattys finall resolution thereupon.

The first part, w[ch] related to ~~[illegible]~~ ye descent of ye Crown of Great Britain to ye males preferably to the females, is a matter so intirely in his Majestye's Power with ye consent of his two Houses of Parliamt, & so agreeable to ye known course of Descents here in other cases, yt there appeared no Difficulty, with relation to ye Method of effecting it, which is plain easy & effectuall by Act of Parliament

Nor to ye expediency, if his Majesty should judge it to be right, & resolve to have it so.

But ye later part, relating to ye Separation of ye Electorate & other Dominions in Germany from ye Kingdom of Great Britain, took up more time.

Two Points seemed to require Consideration 1. The Expediency of ye thing & ye Advantages or disadvantages attending it. & 2. The Method of effecting it.

The 1st is ye principall, & foundation of all. For if no Advantage would flow from it sufficient to over ballance ye Difficultyes & Dangers wch may stand in ye way, (if any such there be) probably it might not be thought worth while to attempt so great an alteration in ye course of ye succession as this might make. And on ye other hand if ye Advantages were great, all Ways ought to be considered yt it might (if possible) be effectually & securely done.

But yet ye Discourse dwelt little upon that Point Because it is what is so perfectly wthin his Majesty's own knowledge, yt he will be able to form ye best Judgmt of it himself.

So ye Discourse turned principally upon ye 2d point The Method of effecting it, & began wth ye present Laws of ye Succession to ye Kingdom & to ye Electorate.

As neither of us was sufficiently acquainted with ye Laws of ye Empire, ye discourse as to them was very lame & proceeded upon Suppositions which possibly might be mistakes.

It was supposed, yt ye Electorate is descendible to ye Males exclusive of ye ffemales, & to ye eldest Son & his male descendants preferably to ye Younger, & his descendants, That ye eldest Son may after his ffather's death renounce for himself & his descendts in favour of his Younger Brother & his male descendts. That nothing can give a Younger son any right or title to ye Succession, but ye renunciation of ye elder in his ffavour. And since the present Proposall is, yt ye Younger Son shall have ye Electorate & yt this be established by Act of Parliamt it was supposed, yt no new Law to alter ye Succession to ye Electorate can be obtained in ye Empire wthout great Difficulty, ffor if there can, that would seem to be ye most natural & ye most effectuall way.

However it was supposed to be certain ye right of Succession to any of ye Parts of ye Empire, cannot be altered by any Act of Parliamt of Gr Britain. And consequently ye any such Act would leave ye Right to ye Succession unaltered, & in ye state it would have been if the Act had not been made: & therefore could affect ye right only indirectly, by making such Limitations with respect to ye Crown of Gr Britain, as should oblige ye eldest Son to choose to give up his right to ye Electorate or to secure his right to ye Crown.

The Discourse therefore in ye next place proceeded with greater Certainty to ye Law of Succession to ye Crown of Gr Brittain, which is ye same now as ye Law of Succession to ye Crown of England was before ye Union.

By that Law, ye eldest Son succeeds preferably to the Younger, all ye Sons preferably to ye daughters, & ye eldest daughter preferably to ye Younger, & ye daughter of ye elder Son preferably to his Brother. But all is alterable by Act of Parliamt. And by Act of Parlt if ye next in course be a Papist or marryed to a Papist He or she is disabled to succeed to ye Crown, & is considered no otherwise than as a Person naturally dead.

And were there an Act of Parliamt to limit the Succession to ye male line, ye Course of ye Descent of the Crown would be just ye same, as ye of ye Electorate, only alterable by Act of Parliamt.

In discoursing on ye Law of Succession to ye Crown, one thing was mentioned, & thought to be of great Importance; ye by our Law there is never any ye least Interregnum, but ye Moment ye King or Queen dyes the Successour is ye same Momt compleatly King or Queen & ipso facto invested with ye whole Regall Power, & in full Possession of ye Throne & of ye right to ye Allegiance of ye Subjects, previous to any Ceremony, of being crowned or proclaimed, or taking any oath or doing any Act whatsoever.

The Act made in ye Parliamt of Scotland to be preliminary to ye Union of ye two Kingdoms, for securing ye Protestant Religion & Presbiterian Church Governmt in Scotland, enacts ye ye Sovereign succeeding

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to her Maty ye late Queen shd in all times coming at his or her accession to ye Crown, swear & subscribe to maintein ye Settlemt in that Act.

Upon ye Queen's death Consideration was had of the import of those words [at his accession to ye Crown] & upon maturely weighing ye words & ye nature of the Case, It was thought not fit yt his Maty should defere taking that Oath so long as till the Coronation when ye Oath relating to ye Church of England was expsly to be taken. Because ye Coronation being a Ceremony in use in Scotland, & therefore not unknown to that Parliamt & being ye proper time for ye King to give assurances to his People to maintein their Rights, they would probably have required it at ye Coronation, but that they would not let a Point which they put such a Value upon, wait for that Ceremony, for which no time was fixed by Law, but would have it earlyer, & (if ye words be taken in the strict sence) at ye very time of his becoming King. But yet on ye other hand, since by ye Law ye time of ye King's accession to ye Crown was ye Moment of ye Queen's death at which time it was impossible for ye King to take the Oath, because it was impossible for him to have notice of it; & our Constitution abhors an Interregnum so much yt it would not suffer yt ye vesting of ye Regall Power should wait ye taking of that Oath. It was held, yt ye proper time for his Maty to take yt Oath, agreeably to both the Act of Parliamt & ye Law of Succession would be when his Maty should first appear in Councill, But, yt ye not taking it sooner did not prevent the Regall Power from vesting compleatly in his Maty, & therefore his Maty was immediately proclaimed, ye Governmt administred by ye Lords Justices in His Matys name, a Session of Parliamt held, & an Act of Parliamt past for continuing ye Revenue, before this Oath was taken, nr was in ye first Councill, many weeks after ye Queens death, & his Majestyes accession to ye Throne

And it was observed yt this Maxim, that there be no Interregnum, has been esteemed here a valuable part of our Constitution, as delivering us from those disorders & Confusions, which naturally attend an ~~the~~ Interregnum

& endanger ye Publick Peace & ye right full Succession, & expose ye Lives & Libertyes & Propertyes of ye Subjects to Violence.

And that we have ye greater Reason to be fond of it because ye inestimable Blessing of his Maties Reign over is probably owing to it, which might have been in great danger of being wholly prevented & certainly could not have taken place wtout bloodshed & the ravages of a civill war & dangerous convulsions, if his Majesty must have taken ye Scotch Oath previous to his Accession to ye throne, & thereby given time to his & our Common Enemyes to have concerted Measures for breaking ye Protestant Succession before his becoming actuall King.

For in that case till ye Oath taken, & known to be taken, none would owe him allegiance, nor could be guilty of Rebellion or High Treason against him, no one could act in his name, nor could ye well: affected have known with certainty their duty or their Authority, or when his Maty did become their King: they would have been uncertain what course to take, when out of all beaten paths of our Constitution, in a Wilderness without track or light: ye disaffected at ye same time pursuing their wicked purposes wtout feare of those Laws which guard ye sacred Person of ye Sovereign & his Crown & Dignity, when once he is King.

The Discourse then proceeded to ye pres^t Proposall. And it was observed, if had the Succession to ye Dominions in Germany been under ye Regulation of ye King Lords & Comons of Gr Brittain in Parliam^t as ye Succession to ye Countyes Palatine in England, & to ye Plantations are, there would have been no dificully in this case.

An Act of Parliam^t can make any Part of Great Brittain or Greland or ye Dominions thereunto belonging to descend to ye second Son & his male descend^ts, while ye Crown is in his elder Brother or his descendants, & upon failure of either of ye two lines, to joyn again wth ye Crown in ye other Line, & separate again, when severall male branches should again exist; & in ye case ye second Son would have as good & clear a right upon his father's dcath

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death to ye part so allotted him, as any subject of Great Brittain has to any part of his Estate of own acquisition or descended to him from his ancestors, & a like remedy at Law for ye enjoyment of it.

We have an instance as much out of ye common course, in ye case of ye Duchy of Cornwall, which by virtue of an Act of Parliament made in ye time of Edward ye 3d in favour of Prince Edward his son called ye Black Prince, descends to this day, to the eldest son of ye King, whenever there is a son, & when there is none, is united to ye Crown, till there is another eldest son, & then goes again to him.

But as was observed before, no Law made here can alter ye Law of Succession to ye Dominions in Germany & therefore ye eldest son will succeed to them notwithstanding any Law which can be made here

Consequently all yt can be done by any Act of Parliament here is to oblige ye eldest son to give up his right to that Succession by certain terms & conditions annexed to ye Crown of Great Brittain.

Two Methods were thought of for ye doing this

1 One to permitt ye eldest son to succeed to ye Crown immediately upon his fathers death according to ye Law as it now stands, but to declare & make it a part of the Constitution, yt he shall make a renunciation of the Electorate & other Dominions in Germany.

2. The other to require the renunciation previous to his taking ye Crown or being King.

1. The former was first spoke of, as being most agreeable to our Constitution, & lesse violent, & therefore more eligible, if it will be effectuall.

Some Instances were taken Notice of, of what has been done

The Act of Parliament in ye 12th & 13th years of King Wm wh declared ye most excellent Princesse Sophia Mother of his present Majesty, to be ye next in Succession in the Protestant Line to ye Crown, & settled ye Crown on her Highnesse & ye heirs of her Body being Protestants, takes notice yt it was requisite, yt some farther Provision should

be made for securing our Religion Laws & Libertyes, & therefore enacts severall particulars, some relating to the Sovereign, his Comunion wth ye established Church, his not going abroad, his Power of pardoning Impeachmts one to his Dominions abroad, yt this Nation should not be ingaged in a War for ye defence of them, others with relation to ye Judges, & to fforeigners, & one to Persons having Offices, to make them incapable of serving as Members of ye House of Commons. And then it declares ye Laws to be ye Birthright of ye People, & yt all the Kings & Queens of this Realm, ought to administer ye Governmt according to ye same.

The Scotch Act above mentioned, which was to be part of ye foundation of ye Union requires ye Sovereign at his accession to ye Crown to swear to maintain ye Establishmt in that Act

The English Act preliminary to ye Union that the Sovereign at his Coronation, shall take & subscribe an oath to maintain & preserve inviolable ye Settlemt of ye Church of England as by Law established

The Act for setling ye Succession of ye Crown made in ye first yeare of King William & Queen Mary enacts, yt every King shall on ye first day of ye meeting of ye first Parliamt next after his coming to ye Crown, sitting in his throne in ye House of Peers in ye presence of ye Lords & Comons therein assembled, Or at his Coronation which shall first happen make subscribe & repeat the declaration therein mentioned agst Popery. And if he shall happen to be then under ye Age of 12 yeares, then at his Coronation or ye first day of ye first Parliamt as aforesd, which shall first happen after he shall have attained ye Age of 12 years.

A like Provision might be made in this case, enacting yt ye King (intended to be bound thereby) shall make & seale a solemn Renunciation of ye Electorate &c in favour of his Younger Brother & his male descendants & do all other Acts necessary to ye putting his Brother in full possession thereof. & this might be required to be done, at his accession to ye Crown, or at his first

Councill, (wch wd be in effect ye same thing) or before his Coronation, or before the first day of ye first Parliamt next after his coming to ye Crown.

But then there was a doubt how far this would be certainly effectuall.

It was observed yt ye Statute of ye 1st year of King William & Q Mary, wch requires making ye declaration against Popery in Parliamt or at ye Coronation, does not say [at ye first day on which a Parliamt shall sit] but [at ye first day on which ye first Parliamt next after his coming to ye Crown shall sit] yt is, ye first day on which his first new Parliamt should sit.

Which is a very materiall Difference because as ye Law now stands, when ye Sovereign dyes ye Parliamt if there be one, otherwise ye last preceding Parliamt are immediately to meet & sit, & therefore ye first day of a Parliamt meeting after ye death of ye Sovereign, will be ye same day on which he dyes, at which time no solemn Act can well be done or be ready to be done. And in ye case of our pesent most gracious Sovereign, his Majesty was at Hanover, ye first day of ye meeting of ye Queens last Parliamt, & therefore could not possibly make ye Declaration aforesd in ye House of Peers yt day: but his Majesty did make it at ye Coronation, which happened before ye first day of ye meeting of his first Parliamt.

The Reason of this remark was, yt it hence appeared, yt there would always be a certain Opportunity of repealing this Law (if there should be a disposition so to do) before ye renunciation is to be made, & then ye obligation to make it would be taken off, & ye Provision intended would be defeated

As upon His Majestyes happy accession to ye throne severall of ye Articles in ye Act of Settlemt were repealed particularly that wch restrained his Maty from going abroad, & yt which required ye Resolution taken in ye Privy Councill to be signed by those who advised them, & that, which disabled Persons having offices to sit as Members of ye House of Comons: all which being restraints & clogs upon His Maty & his Government

not laid upon his Royall Predecessors, & not necessary for ye publick Welfare, were readily given up by ye Parliamt. tho parts of ye Act of Settlemt.

The next Inquiry therefore was what security there would be, yt an Act for such a Renunciation will not be repealed, & yt a Prince in full possession of the throne, & having likewise an undoubted title to ye Electorate will give it up.

The Provisions in ye Act of Settlemt & other Acts above mentioned, which remain unrepealed, are for securing ye Religion established in ye respective parts of Great Brittain, or for Points that have ye appearance of a manifest advantage to ye Subjects of Great Brittain & the Zeale of ye People to preserve them on ye one hand & ye prudent Care on ye other hand, we will probably in all times be had not to begin a Reign with an attempt to breake in upon or weaken their Religious or civill Rights make up together the Security, & a reasonable one, & perhaps ye only one, that these will not be repealed also.

And should ye People of Great Brittain be as fully persuaded, yt ye keeping ye Dominions in Germany together with the Kingdom of Great Brittain would be prejudiciall to this Kingdom, such Opinion would probably secure such act made for ye separation of them, from being repealed

But it seemed a very great doubt whether they would ~~think so or not,~~ be of that Opinion or not, & would be exceeding dangerous to endeavour to convince them of it, because then they might be apt to be uneasy at their being ever kept together, & their uneasiness would rise higher & discover it self in more dangerous Instances, & perhaps at nice conjunctures, in proportion as ye Inconveniences should be represented greater, & their apprehensions of them should increase. And then that Humour which must be relyed upon to preserve the Law for a separation, might possibly bore on a perpetuall separation, though ye Younger Line should fail, and perhaps sooner than is intended.

But it seemed most probable ye they would be pretty in=
different about ye Separation; and if they were, it was
most likely, ye ye Act would be repealed, in Case ye new
King should desire it; partly by ye persuasion of Ministers
& artfull representations of Advantages reall or imaginary
to Great Brittain, by keeping ye Dominions in Germany
united to it, & partly through ye Complaisance of both
Houses to ye new King at his first accession in a thing
personall to himself, & in which they would at least
apprehend no prejudice to Great Brittain, especially
if their former experience in severall successive
Reigns previous to this Act taking place, should have
shewed them none.

It was then a little deliberated, whether if ye Act
should be repealed, it would not have been happyer
ye it had never been passed, least ill disposed Persons
might take occasion from ye repeale to breed ill blood
in ye Prince ye Younger Brother & work him into a
Resentmt for having been ill used, & on ye other hand
infuse Jealousyes of him into ye King & create a
misunderstanding in ye Royall ffamily which might
have a fatall influence on ye publick affairs.

But that soon gave way to another Consideration,
if that should come to be ye Case, ye through the
Complaisance of ye Parliamt, ye continuance or
repeale of such an Act should come to depend in
a manner upon ye Pleasure of ye new King, what
would then remain to trust to.

Such a Law solemnly made by a Prince who
first had fixed ye Crown in his ffamily notwthstanding
ye many difficultyes his Maty has had to struggle
with, might indeed have some ffore to induce his
descendants to submitt ~~to such~~ & conform themselves
to such a declaration of his Royall Pleasure. And on
ye other hand a Prince of ye strictest Honour & Justice
might possibly be led to think himself at full Liberty
to repeal it.

The desire of Power is very naturall to all men, &

so far as it keeps within ye bounds of Justice & aims only at doing more good, it must be owned to be a noble Passion & becoming a Great Prince.

It was then supposed for Argument sake, yt a Young generous Prince newly settled on ye throne of Great Brittain & in possession of ye Regall Power, & intitled to succeed to ye Electorate &c should be told, yt there is an Act of Parliamt requiring yt he renounce ye Electorate &c in favour of his Brother; but yt at ye same time those about him should tell him yt it was in his Power to repeal yt Law & keep ye Electorate &c. and, perhaps out of flattery & to recom: mend themselves to him by a seeming zeal for his Gran: dure, perhaps honestly, from their own reall Opinion of things, should persuade him yt to separate those dominions ye Kingdom would be a prejudice to both, yt by keeping ye Electorate he would be enabled to advance ye wealth & happiness & mutuall advantages of both: if they should tell him (perhaps to give their persuasions greater weight, perhaps truly) yt ye body of his Subjects desired to have them preserved together, yt as to ye Law in being, the Parliamt of Gr Brittain then had as much right to re peal it as a former Parliamt had to make it; yt his Brothers pretensions subsisted merely by an Act of Parliamt made in prejudice of his Birthright, and would cease with it: yt his Younger Brother would have no more right to complain of an Act of Parliamt to restore his right of Primogeniture than he ye then King had to complain of that which took it away; nay indeed yt that Act did not take away his right, nor could affect an Inheritance in ye Empire, & yt his present right to ye Electorate &c was owned by ye very Act which requires him to make a Renunciation of it, & by those who then prefsed him to do it, yt that his Brother has no right at present, nor can have any but what ye Young King shall give him; yt he is under no Obligation but to act agreeably to ye Laws of ye King: dom, which he will do, & keep ye Electorate too, if ye Act be repealed; yt he ought indeed to have a dutyfull Respect to ye Will & Pleasure of his Royall Ancestors,

(12) but yt ye good & great Prince who passed this Act did not then foresee ye present state of Affairs, & shewing or pretending to shew materiall differences in ye Situation of Affairs, & adding yt had ye State of Affairs at ye time of passing that Act been ye same as that Young King found them, yt Act wd never have been thought of. And it was very much doubted whether after this, ye Young King might make any difficulty to consent to ye Repeal of this Act, or ye Parliamt be backward at making their complement to him therein

There did not occurre any method suffict to prevent the Repeale of ye Act.

A clause to make an Attempt to repeal it, High Treason, was mentioned, but at ye same time it could not but be owned, that a method had been actually put in practise in England to break through it

One Act for setling ye Succession of ye Crown in ye Reign of King Henry 8 declared his Marriage wt his first ~~Queen~~ wife Queen Katherine void, & her divorce valid, & his daughter by her illegitimate. Another declared both his Marriages with his 1st & wt his 2d Queen to be null & void & his ~~two~~ daughters by them who were afterwards Queen Mary & Queen Elizabeth to be illegitimate & made it High Treason to go about to repeal it. The two daughters were afterwards by another Act let into the Succession by name, without repealing ye former Act. But when Queen Mary came to ye Crown it was thought fit to repeale so much of it as related to ye Marriage of her Mother & her own Legitimacy, & ye method taken was this. When her first Parliamt met, an Act was passed, yt nothing should be High Treason but what was so declared by a Law made for yt purpose in the 25th Yeare of Edw 3, & then ye Parliamt before any thing else done was prorogued for 3 days, & the penalty being thus gone, at their meeting again ye Act of Henry 8 was repealed, & her mother's Marriage declared good & she legitimate.

Yet this was ~~not~~ materiall ~~further than~~ only as it affected her & her mother in point of Iond, because legitimate or illegitimate ye Crown was setled upon her, & therefore Queen Elizabeth never repealed that part of it which related to her own Legitimacy.

In ye present case, where the Power of ye Prince & ye extent of his Dominions would be directly concerned if there should be ye like inclination to a repeal, ye way is chalked out already.

There was but one thing more thought of under this head; which was, to make it a forfeiture of the Crown not to renounce in a time to be fixed, & that for default of Renunciation at that time, ye next in course of descent should succeed to ye Crown as if the Person so making default were naturally dead.

The inconvenieneys of that were not particularly considered, because it was plain yt it would be liable to be defeated in like manner by a Repeal.

2 The other Method spoken of, was to require the elder of ye two Princes, sons of ye deceased King to make ye Renunciation previous to his being King, yt is, to make ye eldest Son incapable of ye Crown till he renounce ye Electorate, making his renunciation a necessary preliminary to his succeeding to ye Crown, by providing, yt when a King shall dye leaving two Sons (not yet born) ye eldest, previous to his being King, or having ye Regall Power vested in him, shall renounce ye Electorate &c & yt if he refuse ye Younger & his male descendts shall succeed preferably to the elder & his male descendts

But then a Question arose whether ye danger attending this Method would not over ballance ye Advantages of it.

The obvious objection to it was ye great violation it would be of ye Constitution in a very important point by not fixing ye regall Power in ye Succesor ye moment ye

King dyes, but leaving it under uncertainty for some time & perhaps a long time

For it was doubtfull how long ye uncertainty might continue.

Should ye eldest Son of ye deceased King happen to be an Infant of tender yeares, it would be many yeares before he would be capable to make a renunciation, but how many precisely, would depend upon ye Laws of ye Empire fixing ye Age at which Acts of yt kind may be valid., wh were not known to us, neither was it known what was necessary after an Instrumt of renunciation signed, to make it compleat, & what power those who are to receive it, might have to ~~deferre~~ delay it, upon pretence of judging of ye Validity of it, or of being satisfyed in ye proof of its being rightly & fairly done, for it was thought of great consequence not to put ye Settlemt of ye Crown here into ye Power of any Princ or Councill abroad to delay it & keep it in suspence at their Pleasure

But it was supposed yt in all cases it must take up some time, & it would require consideration how ye Governmt here shd be carryed on & who must be King or have ye Regall Power during that time

An absolute Interregnum would be a perfect Anarchy wh would carry ruin with it, & not to be born or thought off.

It was ~~necessary~~ therefore ~~to~~ considerd where the Regall Power, ~~would~~ might be in that time lodged, & how ye Person once possessed of it, shall be obliged to part wh it again.

It was said that whoever has it, must of course be judge of ye performance of ye Conditions required of ye Princ ye eldest Son, & by artifice or perhaps violence at home & intrigues abroad may delay ye compleat performance or however may deferre ye owning it, till there be strength to get ye old Law of Succession repealed & ye Crown selled on him who was intitled only to be temporary King, & ye rightfull heire quite excluded.

That if ye Person pitched upon to have the Regal Power in the Interim be the Younger Brother. It might be thought a Hardship to make his elder Brother his Subject by a Law, though but for a day, & might prove dangerous in ye Event.

When our first King William, comonly called William ye Conquerour dyed, his second Son William Rufus got possession of the throne of England, & kept it to his death, & forced his elder Brother Robert to rest contented with the Duchy of Normandye.

If it should be lodged in any set of men, there seems no way of ascertaining who they shall be, but by taking ye great Officers for the time being or some of them.

But then it would be exceeding doubtfull, whether the Prince would be more safe with them than with his Brother; & some one amongst them might have skill & power & wickednesse enough to settle himself in ye throne. Certainly there would be lodged in them a power sufficient to do this, if they should agree to make use of it.

But if they should retain their Duty to their Master's Son, & resolve to make him their Sovereign, yt they would then act wholly in complaisance to him, & there would then be the same reasons for them to labour to ingratiate themselves with him, as if at first he had been their King & they his Ministers, & if in that case they would have persuaded him to repeal the Law, in this case ~~they~~ would do it themselves

In the mean time, the hazards which would be run seemed to be fright full, & the uncertainties when one Reign should be ended, & the other begun almost insuperably great for what at present appeared

Which last Consideration brought to mind the Preamble of that glorious Act of Settlemt in the 12th & 13th of King William to which we owe our prest Happiness

in having his Maty to reign over us, which represents it to be absolutely necessary for the safety peace & quiet of the Realm to maintain a certainty in the Succession thereof to which the Subjects may safely have recourse.

Upon recapitulation, we could not draw any certain Conclusion from what had been discoursed But we had this Doubt

Yt a Law for a Renunciation, after ye eldest Son should be King, would want inforcemt, & might be repealed by him

That a Law for a renunciation before his being King, might exclude him for ever, or overturn the Constitution, or might be repealed

That if such Law should prove too weake to attain ye end desired, or should be repealed it might yet be a source of misunderstanding & trouble & contention, & serve for a pretext for claims & pretensions, & perhaps ye interposition of foreign Powers, when other Circumstances should yield a proper Occasion.

This is the Substance of every thing which occurred to us upon this important Subject drawn out ~~to a length~~ for feare of not being exact, to a length which stands in need of great Indulgence

The Views may be too short, & contrivances defective, & ye Reasonings imperfect, as what arose upon the first consideration of this great Affair; but such as they are, in obedience to your Majesty's Commands we humbly lay them before You submitting them intirely to Your Majesty, & begging Your Majesty to do us ye Justice to be ~~[illegible]~~ persuaded, that upon this & all other Occasions our thoughts are & shall ever be intirely bent upon promoting every thing that Yo Maty shall think for Your Honour & Service, with the utmost zeal Submission & fidelity.