



P R E F A C E.

As every topographical work adds one link to the chain of national history, the following pages, it is hoped, will not be considered unworthy of supplying the deficiency which has hitherto existed in this division of the county of York.

It was the compiler's intention to add an historical description of the surrounding villages and hamlets, which are included in the liberties of Beverley;¹ but in the progress of collecting documentary evidence the mass accumulated so greatly as to render it perfectly impracticable to do justice to the vicinity, without omitting many valuable documents in the history of the borough: the work, even as it is, has increased to upwards of nine hundred pages, a size far exceeding that which was originally contemplated, and which has greatly increased the expenses of publication.

The compiler of the following sheets, with unremitting

¹ As much valuable information, and some unpublished manuscripts, are in possession of the compiler, an extended history of the surrounding neighbourhood may be published at a future day.

perseverance and intense application, has translated, and endeavoured to arrange, the most valuable extracts from his materials, so as to form a continuous narrative of the history of the town, as well as that of the provostry and collegiate establishment of St. John's; and he trusts that "BEVERLAC" will be as acceptable to the general reader as to the antiquary: yet, however he may flatter himself of this, he is fully aware of the great responsibility of the undertaking, and feels considerable anxiety in placing himself, for the first time, at the tremendous bar of public opinion. He has, therefore, carefully supported every thing he has advanced by ample references to authorities.

An able and indefatigable antiquary,¹ in the preface to one of his valuable productions,² remarks, that "to some the rigid manner, in which every authority is cited, may wear the appearance of pedantry, but the subjoined passage from the Quarterly Review, the beauty of which is only exceeded by its justice, explains in far abler language than his own, the motives by which the author is actuated, and forms his best defence."

"The intrinsic value of a history depends upon the extent and accuracy of research displayed in its compilation; that extent can only be marked, that accuracy can only be established, by copious references. Notes are indispensable to its existence; they are the guarantees of its trustworthiness; they are the only measure which the reader possesses of the credulity or discrimination of

¹ Nicholas Harris Nicolas, esq.

² History of the Battle of Agincourt, p. 9.

the writer. Without them he does not know whether he is depending on the assertions of a Dionysius or a Tacitus; and he may, for any thing he knows to the contrary, be reposing on the tales of the former, that confidence which he perhaps would be willing to concede only to the philosophic narrative of the latter. The personal friends, indeed, of the historian may feel satisfied that he would advance nothing as matter of historic truth, except what he had attentively examined, and expressly believed; but what inference will all other persons draw from a history without note or reference? They will assuredly never rest their belief on its assertions; they will never receive its unsupported details as matter of strict and conclusive evidence."

If it were considered necessary, by a gentleman so extremely accurate as the one alluded to is universally esteemed to be, to adduce this quotation as an apology for *his* style of completing the work in question, how imperiously necessary does it become one so "unknowing and unknown," as the compiler of these pages, to strengthen his narrative with the most copious documents, notes and references. He uses the term *compiler*, from a conviction that scarcely any thing in the following work can be called his own; and if he has not done all that might have been expected of him, he hopes the approbation of the subscribers will be conceded to him for what he has.

The assistance with which he has been honoured by Charles Frost, esqr. of Hull, is of too extensive and

general a nature to be particularized ; it may be sufficient to remark, that it has enabled him to render the work far more complete than it otherwise would have been. His continued kindness throughout the lengthened progress of the undertaking was so essentially serviceable, that he cannot adequately express either his feelings or his thanks.

To sir Richard Colt Hoare, bart. Dr. Adam Clarke, Dr. Meyrick, and N. H. Nicolas, esq. for their politeness in replying to his several letters ; and to John Caley, esq. and W. Illingworth, esq. his respectful acknowledgments are owing ; the two latter gentlemen having furnished him, without *fees*, with several authentic copies of charters and other valuable manuscripts. He is also much indebted to the venerable and reverend archdeacon Wrangham, to the rev. Robert Croft, and to Richard Bethell, esq. for the loan of scarce books.

It is gratifying to him to mention, at the same time, the names of the reverend Dr. Lamb, master of Corpus Christi college, Cambridge ; Dr. Bliss, of Oxford, sub-librarian of the Bodleian library ; Dr. Sissons, of Wakefield ; Mr. Thomas Rickman, architect, of Birmingham ; and Mr. Lawton, ecclesiastical proctor of York ; for their respective communications referred to in the work.

There is scarcely an individual in the town of Beverley in whatsoever grade of society he may move, to whom the compiler has applied, but who promptly, and with the utmost readiness, assisted him with every species of in-

formation in his power to give, whether in manuscript or otherwise, and which must reflect a greater credit on each than any complimentary thanks of his own.

Among many he takes leave to enumerate the reverend Joseph Coltman, the reverend W. R. Gilby, Francis Iveson, Thomas Sandwith, Henry John Shepherd, Thomas Hull, M.D., F. Robertson, Robert Machell, Charles Brereton, H. W. Hutton, Humphrey Sandwith, and Philip Saltmarsh, esqs. Neither can he forget to name Mr. Comins, the master mason of the minster works ; Mr. Gillyat Sumner, of Woodmansey ; Mr. Beaumont, of Brantingham ; Mr. A. Atkinson, and Mr. Prattman, of Beverley.

OCTOBER, 1829.

Previously to September, 1752, the civil or legal year in this country commenced on the day of the Annunciation, the 25th March, whilst the historical year began as at present, on the day of the Circumcision, the 1st January ; thus a confusion was created in describing the year between the 1st January and the 25th March, for civilians called each day within that period one year earlier than historians. For example, the former wrote January 7th,

1658, and the latter January 7th, 1659, though both described the 25th of the following March, and all the ensuing months, as in the year 1659. To prevent errors, that part of each year is usually written agreeably to both calculations, by placing two figures at the end, the *upper* being the civil or legal year, and the *lower* the historical year, thus : February 3, 164 $\frac{8}{9}$ civil or legal year.
 9 historical year.

Hence, whenever the year is so written in the following pages, the lower figure indicates the year now used in our calendar.

The alterations in the calendar, which formed what is usually called the *old* and *new* style, took place on the 2d September, 1752, on which day the old style ceased, and the next day, instead of being called the 3d, became the 14th of September.

When a second figure is NOT used in this work, it is to be remembered the historical year is uniformly expressed, —agreeing with the *anno regni* published in the *Notitia Historica*, a work which is strongly recommended to *all* who have to peruse ancient manuscripts.