



INTRODUCTION.

THIS history of DONCASTER, with the principal towns and villages in its vicinity, it is hoped will afford the reader both entertaining and useful information.

The receptacles of the dead are here explored—their virtues, their charities, their geniuses recorded.—The learned divine—the brave warrior—the renowned statesman—the ingenious artist, and industrious farmer, all claim a place in these pages.

The country within this district is picturesque and delightful; it contains so many beauties of nature and vestiges of art, that the description may afford ample scope both for the genius of the poet, and the researches of the antiquary.

The author, well aware, that he is neither possessed of invention requisite for the one character, nor of scientific knowledge for the other, would not have presumed to offer this work to the public, had he not been favored with the kind assistance of many learned friends in the neighbourhood. Their communications have extricated him out of many difficulties, which might otherwise have proved insurmountable; and their kindness and approbation have not only encouraged him to persevere in this undertaking, but to pursue it with gratification and delight.

Should it be asked why this work was not consigned to abler hands? the answer is, authors of genius will rarely submit to the drudgery of compiling; and, perhaps, there is no species of composition, which requires more zeal in inquiry, or more labor in procuring and arranging the materials, than in works similar to this now offered to the public.

To accomplish his purpose, the author has not been satisfied with mere verbal intelligence, nor relied entirely on the kind communications of friends; but has also found it necessary to visit every church, town and village, of which he has given a description.

Probably the reader will find but little amusement in perusing the charters granted by different Kings to the corporation of Doncaster, or in the private grants and conveyances; but, as the history of the borough and soke of DONCASTER is the principal object in this publication, the author has been indefatigable in his inquiries, for whatever might contribute to the knowledge and interests of the inhabitants. Nor has he been less assiduous in procuring such general information as he could obtain, relative to the neighbouring towns. To give, however, so particular an account of them as of Doncaster, he hopes will not be expected, as it would render his work more voluminous, than was intended. Consequently, his description of the seats of different families will be but short. The reader must not here expect to find an account of the dimensions of different apartments, nor of *all* the paintings contained in them: descriptions, which seem to occupy too much room in our modern tours; while, perhaps, the owner's improvements on his estate, or the virtues of his ancestors are left unnoticed and unrecorded.

After the general acknowledgement here made of information received from gentlemen in this neighbourhood, the author feels himself particularly bound to mention the name of WILLIAM RADCLYFFE, Esq. Rouge Croix Pursuivant of arms in the college of heralds: by his profound knowledge of heraldry, and indefatigable researches in the British Museum, the Herald's Office, and other archives of antiquity, the author has been enabled to rescue from oblivion the memory of many a British worthy; to developpe many a dark inscription; and to ascertain a number of interesting events, which otherwise might not have appeared in this work.

His particular obligations are also due to EDWOOD CHORLEY, of Doncaster, doctor in physic, for his kind assistance respecting the natural history of this district, also to ROBERT WYLDE MOULT, of Wickersley, Esq. and to Mr. JOSEPH HUNTER, of Sheffield, for their liberal communications; nor must he omit his acknowledgments to the clergy in general, of the deanery of Doncaster, for their useful information respecting their livings, and other particulars relative to their churches.