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P R E F A C E.

**H**AVING met with great success in my two former attempts to introduce a more general knowledge of the Heraldic Science, by "The short and easy introduction to Heraldry;" and "The Pocket Peerage of England, Scotland, and Ireland;" I am induced to offer to the public a third, on the different Orders of Knighthood, extracted from manuscripts and printed books of the best authority; and for the satisfaction of those who choose to apply to the originals, the several authors are inserted at the beginning of this work.

This abridgement may perhaps be thought unnecessary, while the learned works of Selden, Segar, Ashmole, Favin, and many others, are extant; but, as most of them are voluminous and expensive, and some only to be met with in the libraries of the curious, it may at least be useful to those who cannot purchase the originals.

There are many persons in business, who, however willing to be informed, have not leisure; while others are wearied and grow indifferent, by reading elaborate works, yet would receive pleasure, as well as information, from a concise account, which contains what they must search for with great labour in the folio volumes of the above authors.

This work contains, beside articles of entertainment to the historian, much information to all lovers of antiquities; many ancient monuments may from hence be explained

plained (if the person was of any old or extinct Order of Knighthood) by comparing the ornaments with the engraved plates of collars and badges.

It may likewise afford assistance to the connoisseur, in ascertaining the persons represented in old portraits or historical pieces, when decorated with any of the above badges.

This collection will be a great advantage to many artists, viz. Historical, Portrait and Heraldic painters, Statuaries, Modellers, Engravers, Chasers, Enamellers, Jewellers, Embroiderers, &c.; who have frequent occasion to refer to works on this subject, for the collars, stars, badges and mottoes, which are here collected and accurately represented, being the most extensive collection of the Orders of Knighthood ever engraved or published in Great Britain.

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How far I have succeeded in compiling and arranging this work, is, with submission, left to my impartial readers to determine. Whatever may be the event, I have this consolation, that no labour or attention has been wanting on my part to make it useful to the public, having carefully examined and compared the different authors whose works on this subject are printed, with many of the original papers and records preserved in that noble repository of ancient and modern literature the British Museum.

If any of my readers will be kind enough to point out such errors as may have escaped my observation, or will suggest any hint for the improvement of the work; their remarks will be gratefully attended to.

May 10, 1784.  
No 8, Bentinck-Street, Soho.