

LIVES OF THE PRINCES OF WALES,

HEIRS TO THE THRONE OF ENGLAND;

FROM THE MOST AUTHENTIC SOURCES BOTH PRINTED AND MS.

BY FOLKESTONE WILLIAMS, ESQ.

Author of "SHAKSPEARE AND HIS FRIENDS," &c.

WITH PORTRAITS AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS, FROM DRAWINGS BY J. P. HARDING, ESQ., F.S.A.

In small 8vo.

HITHERTO no attempt has been made to place before the public histories of those princes of the different dynasties that have possessed the sovereignty of England, who stood next in succession to the crown, and bore the time-honoured title of Prince of Wales. It is true that some of these distinguished personages succeeded to the throne, and have, as kings, attracted the attention of historians: these writers, however, cannot, whilst tracing the course of events, find time to touch, except very slightly, upon the most pleasing portion of regal biography. The minor details, exhibiting the early development of character, are left for the antiquary who has industry to search for them among the MS. labours of our most painstaking chroniclers. Several of these documents have from time to time been brought from their obscurity and carefully printed; but still there is a large mass of historical material in the different public and private libraries in this kingdom, unknown to the general reader, that would assist in completing a series of portraits, which independently of the extraordinary interest that peculiarly belongs to them, possess other national recommendations in being inseparably connected with such glorious achievements, romantic adventures, and picturesque incidents, as are to be found in no other part of our annals.

The life of EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE opens to us the brightest chapter in the chivalry of England, which is continued with almost equal attraction in the no less adventurous career of HENRY OF MONMOUTH;—tragedies more touching than the best representations of the stage, may be seen in the histories of EDWARD OF CAERNARVON, RICHARD OF BORDEAUX, and the ill-fated princes of the houses of YORK and LANCASTER;—the adventures of the STUART princes, throw the inventions of the imagination into the shade; and those of the HOUSE OF BRUNSWICK, if less marvellous, convey equally characteristic pictures of the times to which they belong. There are other members of this noble gallery, who, having won the love of all classes of the community by their superior virtues and intelligence, were in early manhood snatched away by death from the throne for which they seem so admirably qualified. Of their histories, so little is generally known that their names have almost been forgotten; nevertheless, PRINCE ARTHUR, eldest son of Henry VII., PRINCE HENRY, eldest son of James I., and PRINCE FREDERIC, father of George III., have left materials for biography, which cannot fail of being read with the deepest interest. It is therefore confidently expected that "THE LIVES OF THE PRINCES OF WALES," will prove one of the most entertaining, as it must be one of the most truly national works ever published; and no effort will be spared to make it as acceptable to the historical scholar, as to the general reader.

The first volume, containing an Introduction, and the Lives of EDWARD OF CAERNARVON, afterwards King Edward II., EDWARD OF WINDSOR, afterwards King Edward III.; and EDWARD OF WOODSTOCK, commonly called the Black Prince, will be published immediately.