

THE CROAKERS

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The Croakers by Joseph Rodman Drake & Fitz Greene Halleck

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JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE & FITZ GREENE HALLECK

THE CROAKERS

JAMES
CALHOUN



THE
CROAKERS

BY

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

AND

FITZ GREENE HALLECK

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA
First Complete Edition

Est. in 1848



NEW YORK

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Wendell J. Loring Esq
with the kindest regards
his friend
John P. Mearns

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PREFACE.

The publication, or rather, the printing a limited edition for private circulation, by special subscription, of the following poems, has arisen from the desire frequently expressed by the friends of the authors to possess the *СЮЛКЕРС* in an authentic form. More than once since their first appearance in the columns of the daily newspapers, efforts have been made for their collection in print, and one or two unauthorized gatherings have thus been made, while numerous copies more or less complete, prepared with considerable trouble, have been circulated in manuscript. There appears to be now a good opportunity for a more permanent edition of the poems. The times are sufficiently removed from the first publication to do away with any feeling of asperity, however slight, which may have attended their original appearance; for the verses occasionally, it must be admitted, had their sharp satirical points, though they were sheathed in good humor and alleviated by polished musical expression. While any feeling of hostility is thus obliterated, we are not too far removed from the date of these productions to lose the benefit of consultation with contemporaries in the explanation of allusions growing day by day more obscure. A liberal supply of notes, indeed, is indispensable to the understanding and enjoyment of the *СЮЛКЕРС*. These have been supplied with no little painstaking from the best resources at hand, and it is believed will present a fair claim to accuracy.

The collection will be found to contain several original Croakers by Mr. Halleck, which, though written at the period of the others, have not hitherto seen the light, while several additions of a similar nature have been made from the manuscripts of Drake. The new poems are indicated in the table of contents, to which we may also refer for the dates of publication.

We cannot present these youthful publications of the authors to the reader, without a farther expression of admiration, not merely of their felicity in literary execution which ranks them with the best local satires, but of the general good humor without harshness or ill will by which they are characterized. True wit and humor know how to gain their ends without lacerating the sensibilities of the individual. We are none of us out of the reach of these weapons, or insensible to their severities; but we believe it may be said of the CROAKERS, that their stroke, though never pointless, has inflicted no unseemly injury nor left any lasting wound. They are written in the language of poets with the self-respect of the gentleman. There are no lines to crop for their indelicacy, or apologies to be made for transgressing the privileged limits of this species of literature.

To New Yorkers, the CROAKERS will always have a special interest for their illustrations of the notable acts of notable men of the last generation in the city and state, and it may not be too much to say that what is in this way of real interest to New York, may not be altogether unworthy of attention in an historical point of view throughout the country.