

**SKETCHES AND
ECCENTRICITIES OF
COL. DAVID CROCKETT,
OF WEST TENNESSEE**

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Sketches and eccentricities of Col. David Crockett, of West Tennessee by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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S K E T C H E S
AND
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OF
COL. DAVID CROCKETT,
OF WEST TENNESSEE.

"Ralentem dicere verum, quid vobis?" — Hor.

L O N D O N :
O. RICH, 12, RED LION SQUARE.

1834.

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P R E F A C E .

III. HIST. SURVEY PAPERS CLARK

So fashionable has it become to write a preface, that, like an epitaph, it now records of its subject, not what it is, but what it ought to be. The mania for book-making has recently assumed an epidemic character, and, like the late pestilence, unaffected by all changes of weather, save that a murky evening generally aggravates its symptoms, it makes its attacks from quarters the least expected, and emanating from beneath the dim light of some old rusty lamp, sheds abroad its sleepy, yawning influence. A book and preface are now considered indissoluble ; so much so, that to see a book without a preface would be as rare as to see a preface without a book. Yet some men have been so lost to all fashion, as to send forth the treasures of genius without this expected formality ; but as I do not aspire to that elevated niche in the temple of Fame, which such men have been allowed to occupy by universal consent, I must

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permit my better feelings to predominate, and clothe my first-born babe in all suitable garments, before I turn her loose upon a heartless world. Were I to set her adrift without this necessary appendage, my heart would smite me ; and I should never meet a poor beggar, thinly clad, breasting the storms of winter, but that with sorrow I should think of the destitute condition of my pretty bantling.

Having thus resolved upon a preface, I will write as long as my humour prompts, or until the fit under which I am now labouring wears off.

It is perfectly ridiculous, in my opinion, for a man to write a book, which he believes calculated to interest, instruct, amuse, or, in the phrase of the trade, to *take*, and then sit down and write an elaborate apology for doing so : nor is it less absurd to ask favour from the hands of would-be-critics—self-constituted judges of modern days—whose mere dictum creates a literary vassalage—beneath whose blighting influence, the finest specimens of genius, when linked with poverty, wither and die—and whose sole duty it is to blazon forth the fame of some one, whom public opinion has placed above them ; or, to puff into notice another, who has money—not mind—enough to

carry him along. But, as regardless of this class of gentry as I am careful of my own comfort and convenience, I have really laboured under the impression, that, in writing for my own amusement, I had a right to select my topics and consequently I have been grave or merry, as my humour prompted.

At this time, when, in every ephemeral tale, a red hunter must be treacherous, brutal, savage, and accompanied with the tomahawk and scalping knife, I should perhaps offer some apology for speaking of them in a different light, in my introduction; but my apology is—it was my pleasure to do so.

Gentle reader, I can promise you, in no part of this volume, the wild rhodomontades of "Bushfield;" nor can I regale you with the still more delicate repast of a constant repetition of the terms "*bodyaciously*," "*tetotaciously*," "*obflicated*," &c. Though I have had much intercourse with the West, I have never met with a man who used such terms unless they were alluded to, as merely occupying a space in some printed work. They have, however, thus been made to enter, as a component part, into the character of every backwoodsman; and, perhaps, I hazard something in

leaving the common path ; but my duty commands it—and though the following memoir may wear an air of levity, it is, nevertheless, strictly true.

In describing backwoodsmen, it has become customary to clothe their most common ideas in high-sounding, unintelligible coinage—while my observation induces me to believe that their most striking feature is the fact, that they clothe the most extravagant ideas in the simplest language, and amuse us by their quaintness of expression, and originality of comparison. With these remarks I submit to you the SKETCHES AND ECCENTRICITIES OF COLONEL DAVID CROCKETT.

I know there are those, who dwell in the splendid mansions of the east, and whose good fortune enables them to tread a Turkey carpet, or loff upon a sofa, to whom a faithful representation of the manners and customs of the “far off West,” will afford a rich repast ; and there is another class for whom this volume will possess many charms, when I remark that it entertains for the “*blue devils*” the most deep and deadly enmity. And, still farther, the learned, though they may see little to admire in the composition of this work, may yet find amusement in the peculiar eccentricities of an original mind : and the grave philosopher, also, is

here presented with a subject of deep and lasting meditation.

Finally, most gentle reader, I hereby guaranty, that there shall not be found, in the volume before you, a single sentence, or a single word, calculated to crimson the cheek of innocence, or give a license to vice.