

**AN EXCURSION TO THE  
MAMMOTH CAVE, AND THE  
BARRENS OF KENTUCKY. WITH  
SOME NOTICES OF THE EARLY  
SETTLEMENT OF THE STATE**

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An Excursion to the Mammoth Cave, and the Barrens of Kentucky. With Some Notices of the Early Settlement of the State by R. Davidson

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TO  
THE MAMMOTH CAVE,  
AND THE  
BARRENS OF KENTUCKY.

WITH SOME NOTICES OF  
THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE STATE.

BY THE  
REV. R. DAVIDSON.

LEXINGTON, KY.

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TO THE  
REV. ALEXANDER McCLELLAND, D. D.

AS A TOKEN OF ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE,  
TO BE MEASURED NOT BY ITS WORTH, BUT BY ITS  
SINCERITY,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME  
'S RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY HIS FORMER PUPIL,

THE AUTHOR.





## PREFACE.

It has long been the fashion to apologize for authorship; a practice at once superfluous, and open to the charge of mock-modesty. It is superfluous; because the public will examine and judge for themselves, and their opinion will neither be forestalled nor propitiated by prefatory confessions. It is, in addition, open to the charge of mock-modesty; because no man should ask the community to read what he acknowledges is not worth reading; while, on the other hand, the fact of his publishing is a proof that his real and ostensible opinion differ.

These gentlemen would be very indignant, were the public to take them at their word; as Swift once treated a lady who

was profuse in apologies for her dinner. This was over-done, and that was under-done, and she lamented there was nothing fit to eat. "If that be the case," cried the testy Dean, "I'll e'en go home, and dine on a herring." Doubtless our apologizing authors would resent acquiescence, and appeal in a towering passion, with Fielding, to Prince Posterity.

The trick savours somewhat of coquetry, like the stratagem of Galatea, who hit her swain with an apple, and then hid behind the willows, but not till she had first allowed him to get a glimpse of her in her flight;

"Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit antè videri."

Such literary coquetry never deceives; nor can he who employs it succeed in his object, of beguiling the public into a high opinion, not only of his merit, but of his modesty also.

The second of the two essays in this little volume, is a compilation of gleanings; some of them never before published,

and others newly arranged from various scattered sources, which, it is hoped may prove interesting to others, as well as to the writer.

As for the first, it is readily acknowledged to be not unlike the famous treatise written by somebody, "*de omnibus rebus, et quibusdam aliis*;" about every thing in the world, and a little besides. It was originally designed to furnish an hour's rational entertainment to an intelligent auditory, and if the public can derive any amusement from it, in its present form, they are heartily welcome.

Should the more critical feel disposed to censure, I must only take refuge with the ingenious Montaigne, and borrow his vindication of the "*leaps and skips*," with which his amusing volumes abound. With him, I must justify my rambles by the example of Plato, one of whose dialogues began with love and ended with rhetoric, and that of Plutarch,—high authorities, surely!—whose argument is stuffed with foreign matter, and is found only by acci-