



CHRONICLES AND STORIES

OF THE

CRAVEN DALES.

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EDITOR OF "ANCIENT POEMS, BALLADS, AND SONGS OF THE
PEASANTRY OF ENGLAND."

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION

BY THE

REV. ROBERT COLLYER,

OF NEW YORK.

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

THE major part of the "Chronicles and Stories of the Craven Dales," which we have the pleasure of publishing for the first time in book form, were originally contributed by the author, Dr. Dixon, to the pages of a small monthly publication issued from one of the Skipton printing offices in the years 1853-7. By arrangement with the author this re-publication was undertaken, in the belief that all the personal friends and admirers of Dr. Dixon, and many others who are interested in the historical associations, legends, and traditions of the Craven district—famous alike for its antiquities and folk-lore as for its beautiful natural scenery—would be glad to possess the Stories in this more permanent and handy form.

Dr. Dixon's keen interest in everything relating to Craven induced him to collect and treasure up with great care every scrap of information that he met with, pertaining to the men and manners of the olden time. The quaint and humorous incidents narrated by Craven Dalesmen around the winter fireside, the weird stories and fairy legends, handed down by fathers to sons, were treasured in the retentive memory and skilfully interwoven by the able hand of the author. For the present work Dr. Dixon re-wrote many of the chapters, amending and extending them according to his later judgment and taste, making use, too, of all his more recent gleanings. He had well-nigh completed his self-imposed task—to him, indeed, a labour of love—when a somewhat brief illness in 1876 resulted in his death at the age of 73 years. This mournful event is the explanation of the abrupt conclusion of the last chapter of the Stories.

It may be well to remark that, as the author of the *Chronicles*, Dr. Dixon, assumed the name of "Stephen Jackson, Esq., of The Flatts, Malham Moor," and to gain for this pseudonym more general acceptance and belief, he penned the imaginative description of "The Flatts," contained in the first chapter.

Generously complying with our request, the Rev. Robert Collyer, of New York, formerly a resident in Craven, and an admirer of the literary works of Dr. Dixon, has written an Introductory Chapter, which is admirably in keeping with the general scope of the work, and which will enhance its value to antiquarians, and especially to all lovers of Craven.

24, High-street, Skipton,
March, 1881.

