

INTRODUCTION.

DURING a residence of three years, 1845-6-7, in the upper part of the State of Missouri, I was occasionally employed in redeeming a promise made to an editor of a newspaper in Virginia, the state from which I emigrated, to send him for his paper such materials of a frontier character, as I might be able to pick up, and as would form interesting communications for his columns. When I took up my residence in that State, I found myself among a people much moved and stimulated by western enterprise; a people not only familiar with frontier scenes and events, but deeply interested in things far beyond the limits of their own state. Many of them I observed were engaged in the Santa Fe trade, and were making their regular annual trips across the plains to New Mexico. I frequently sought the company of such gentlemen, whom I found not only intelligent, but kind, and ready to