



Odd Leaves from the Life of a Louisiana Swamp Doctor (Library of Southern Civilization)

Henry Clay Lewis

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Odd Leaves from the Life of a Louisiana Swamp Doctor is a series of sketches that follow the outlandish misadventures of Dr. Madison Tensas - Lewis' literary persona. Many of these stories were first published in New York's Spirit of the Times. Using dialect, comic imagery, folklore, picaresque autobiography, and the form of the mock oral tale, Lewis presents a vigorous - even grotesque - vision of the southern backwoods, where life was often violent and brutal, sometimes shockingly funny, and always wildly different from the polished society of townsmen and wealthy planters. In an expansive new Introduction, Edwin T. Arnold places Lewis' writing in the context of the times, discussing its role in the development of southwestern humor as a literary genre. Arnold emphasizes Lewis' contribution to southern letters through the author's psychological use of the narrating persona and the complex correlation between setting and theme.

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