

**Dickory Cronke**

**By**

**Daniel Defoe**

Preface:

The formality of a preface to this little book might have been very well omitted, if it were not to gratify the curiosity of some inquisitive people, who, I foresee, will be apt to make objections against the reality of the narrative.

Indeed the public has too often been imposed upon by fictitious stories, and some of a very late date, so that I think myself obliged by the usual respect which is paid to candid and impartial readers, to acquaint them, by way of introduction, with what they are to expect, and what they may depend upon, and yet with this caution too, that it is an indication of ill nature or ill manners, if not both, to pry into a secret that is industriously concealed.

However, that there may be nothing wanting on my part, I do hereby assure the reader, that the papers from whence the following sheets were extracted, are now in town, in the custody of a person of unquestionable reputation, who, I will be bold to say, will not only be ready, but proud, to produce them upon a good occasion, and that I think is as much satisfaction as the nature of this case requires.

As to the performance, it can signify little now to make an apology upon that account, any farther than this, that if the reader pleases he may take notice that what he has now before him was collected from a large bundle of papers, most of which were writ in shorthand, and very ill-digested.

However, this may be relied upon, that though the language is something

altered, and now and then a word thrown in to help the expression, yet strict care has been taken to speak the author's mind, and keep as close as possible to the meaning of the original. For the design, I think there is nothing need be said in vindication of that. Here is a dumb philosopher introduced to a wicked and degenerate generation, as a proper emblem of virtue and morality; and if the world could be persuaded to look upon him with candour and impartiality, and then to copy after him, the editor has gained his end, and would think himself sufficiently recompensed for his present trouble.