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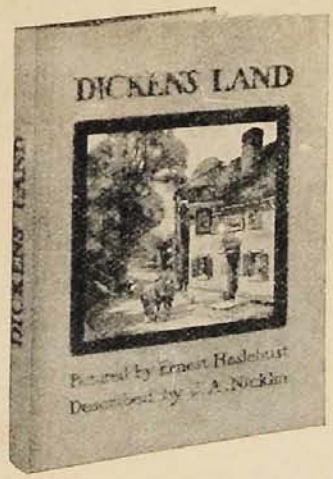

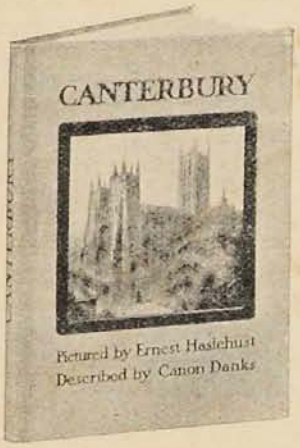

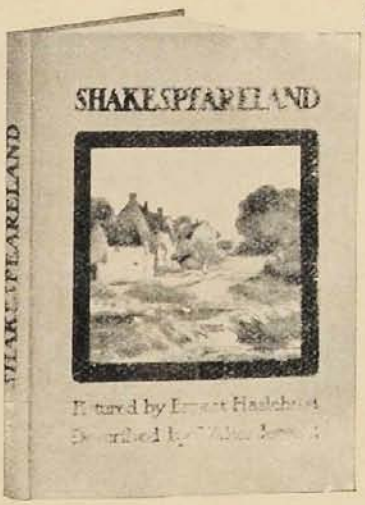

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CHARLES DICKENS . . . . . .

THE LIFE AND WORK OF DICKENS . .

CHARLES DICKENS: HIS WORK AND HIS PERSONALITY . . . . . .

THE TRUE STORY OF DORA COPPERFIELD

CHARLES DICKENS

By G. K. CHESTERTON

CONSIDERED merely as literary fashions, romanticism and realism are both tricks, and tricks alone. The only advantage lies with romanticism, which is a little less artificial and technical than realism. For the great majority of people here and now do naturally write romanticism, as we see it in a love-letter, or a diary, or a quarrel, and nobody on earth naturally writes realism as we see it in a description by Flaubert. But both are technical dodges and realism only the more eccentric. It is a trick to make things happen harmoniously always, and it is a trick to make them always happen discordantly. It is a trick to make a heroine, in the act of accepting a lover, suddenly aureoled by a chance burst of sunshine, and then to call it romance. But it is quite as much of a trick to make her, in the act of accepting a lover, drop her umbrella, or trip over a hassock, and then call it the bold plain realism of life. If any one wishes to satisfy himself as to how excessively little this technical realism has to do, I do not say with profound reality, but even with casual truth to life, let him make a simple experiment offered to him by the history of literature. Let him ask what is of all English books the book most full of this masterly technical realism, most full of all these arresting details, all these convincing irrelevancies, all these impedimenta of prosaic life; and then as far as truth to life is concerned he will find that it is a story about men as big as houses and men as small as dandelions, about horses with human souls and an island that flew like a balloon.

We can never understand a writer of the old romantic school, even if he is as great and splendid as Dickens is great and splendid, until we realise this preliminary fact to which I have drawn attention. The fact is that these merely technical changes are merely technical, and have nothing whatever to do with the force and truth behind. We are bound to find a considerable amount of Dickens's work, especially the pathetic and heroic passages, artificial and pompous. But that is only because we are far enough off his trick or device to see that it is such. Our own trick and device we believe to be as natural as the eternal hills. It is no more natural, even when compared with the Dickens devices, than a rockery is natural, even when compared with a Dutch

flower bed. The time will come when the wildest upheaval of Zolaism, when the most abrupt and colloquial dialogue of Norwegian drama, will appear a fine old piece of charming affectation, a stilted minuet of literature, like Little Nell in the churchyard, or the repentance of the white-haired Dombey. All their catchwords will have become catchwords; the professor's explanations of heredity will have the mellow foolish sound of the villain's curses against destiny. And in that time men will for the first time become aware of the real truth and magnificence of Zola and Ibsen, just as we, if we are wise, are now becoming aware of the real truth and magnificence of Dickens.

This is even more true if we look first at that fundamental optimistic feeling about life which, as it has been often and truly said, is the main essence of Dickens. If Dickens's optimism had merely been a matter of happy endings, reconciliations, and orange flowers, it would be a mere superficial art or craft. But it would not, as in the case discussed above, be in any way more superficial than the pessimism of the modern episode, or short story, which is an affair of bad endings, disillusionments, and arsenic. The truth about life is that joy and sorrow are mingled in an almost rythmical alternation, like day and night. The whole of optimistic technique consists in the dodge of breaking off the story at dawn, and the whole of pessimistic technique in the art of breaking off the story at dusk. But wherever and whenever mere artists choose to consider the matter ended, the matter is never ended, and trouble and exultation go on in a design larger than any of ours, neither vanishing at all. Beyond our greatest happiness there lie dangers, and after our greatest dangers there remaineth a rest.

But the element in Dickens which we are forced to call by the foolish and unmanageable word optimism is a very much deeper and more real matter than any question of plot and conclusion. If Mr. Pickwick had been drowned when he fell through the ice; if Mr. Dick Swiveller had never recovered from the fever; these catastrophes might have been artistically inappropriate, but they would not have sufficed to make the stories sad. If Sam Weller had committed suicide from religious difficulties, if Florence Dombey had been murdered (most justly murdered) by Captain Cuttle, the stories would still be the happiest stories in the world. For their happiness is a state of the soul; a state in which our natures are full of the wine of an ancient youth,

in which banquets last for ever, and roads lead everywhere, where all things are under the exuberant leadership of faith, hope, and charity, the three gayest of the virtues.

There is, of course, an optimism which is evil and debasing, and to this it must be confessed that Dickens sometimes descends. The worst optimism is that which, in making things comfortable, prevents them from becoming joyful; it bears the same relation to an essential and true optimism that the pleasure of sitting in an arm-chair bears to the pleasure of sitting on a galloping horse. It is the optimism which denies that burning hurts a martyr. More profoundly considered, it may be called the optimism which, in order to give a being more life, denies him his individual life; in order to give him more pleasure, denies him his especial pleasure. It offers the hunter repose, and the student pleasure, and the poet an explanation. Dickens, as I have said, sometimes fell into this. Nothing could be more atrocious, for instance, than his course of action in concluding "David Copperfield" with an account of the great Micawber at last finding wealth and success as a mayor in Australia. Micawber would never succeed; never ought to succeed; his kingdom was not of this world. His mind to him a kingdom was; he was one of those splendid and triumphant poor who have the faculty of capturing, without a coin of money or a stroke of work, that ultimate sense of possessing wealth and luxury which is the only reward of the toils and crimes of the rich. It is but a sentiment after all, this idea of money, and a poor man who is also a poet, like Micawber, may find a short cut to it. To make such a man, after a million mental triumphs over material circumstances, become the mere pauper and dependent of material success is something more than an artistic blunder; it is a moral lapse; it is a wicked and blasphemous thing to have done. The end of "David Copperfield" is not a happy ending; it is a very miserable ending. To make Micawber a mayor is about as satisfying a termination as it would be to make Sir Lancelot after Arthur's death become a pork butcher or a millionaire, or to make Enoch Arden grow fat and marry an heiress. There is a satisfaction that is far more depressing than any tragedy. And the essence of it, as I have said, lies in the fact, that it violates the real and profound philosophical optimism of the universe, which has given to each thing its incommunicable air and its strange reason for living. It offers, instead, another joy or peace which is alien and

nauseous ; it offers grass to the dog and fire to the fishes. It is, indeed, in the same tradition as that cruel and detestable kindness to animals which has been one of the disgraces of humanity : from the modern lady who pulls a fat dog on a chain through a crowded highway, back to the Roman Cæsar who fed his horse on wine and made it a political magistrate.

The same error in an even more irreverent form occurs, of course, in the same book. The essence of the Dickens genius was exaggeration, and in that general sense Dora, in "David Copperfield," may be called an exaggerated character ; but she is an extremely real and an extremely agreeable character for all that. She is supposed to be very weak and ineffectual, but she has about a hundred times more personal character than all Dickens's waxwork heroines put together, the unendurable Agnes by no means excluded. It almost passes comprehension how a man who could conceive such a character should so insult it, as Dickens does, in making Dora recommend her husband's second marriage with Agnes. Dora, who stands for the profound and exquisite irrationabilty of simple affection, is made the author of a piece of priggish and dehumanised rationalism which is worthy of Miss Agnes herself. One could easily respect such a husband when he married again, but surely not such a wife when she desired it. The truth is, of course, that here again Dickens is following his evil genius which bade him make those he loved comfortable instead of happy. It may seem at first sight a paradox to say that the special fault of optimism is a lack of faith in God ; but so it is. There are some whom we should not seek to make comfortable : their appeasement is in more awful hands. There are conflicts, the reconciliation of which lies beyond the powers not only of human effort but of human rational conception. One of them is the reconciliation between good and evil themselves in the scheme of nature ; another is the reconciliation of Dora and Agnes. To say that we know they will be reconciled is faith ; to say that we see that they will be reconciled is blasphemy.

Dickens was, of course, as is repeated *ad nauseam*, a caricaturist, and when we have understood this word we have understood the whole matter ; but in truth the word caricaturist, is commonly misunderstood ; it is even, in the case of men like Dickens, used as implying a reproach, Whereas it has no more reproach in it than the word organist. Caricature is not merely an important form of art ; it is a form of

art which is often most useful for purposes of profound philosophy and powerful symbolism. The age of scepticism put caricature into ephemeral feuilletons; but the ages of faith built caricature into their churches of everlasting stone. One extraordinary idea has been constantly repeated, the idea that it is very easy to make a mere caricature of anything. As a matter of fact it is extraordinarily difficult, for it implies a knowledge of what part of a thing to caricature. To reproduce the proportions of a face exactly as they are, is a comparatively safe adventure; to arrange those features in an entirely new proportion, and yet retain a resemblance, argues a very delicate instinct for what features are really the characteristic and essential ones. Caricature is only easy when it so happens that the people depicted, like Cyrano de Bergerac, are more or less caricatures themselves. In other words caricature is only easy when it does not caricature very much. But to see an ordinary intelligent face in the street, and to know that, with the nose three times as long and the head twice as broad, it will still be a startling likeness, argues a profound insight into truth. "Caricature," said Sir Willoughby Patterne, in his fatuous way, "is rough truth." It is not; it is subtle truth. This is what gives Dickens his unquestionable place among artists. He realised thoroughly a certain phase or atmosphere of existence, and he knew the precise strokes and touches that would bring it home to the reader. That Dickens phase or atmosphere may be roughly defined as the phase of a vivid sociability in which every man becomes unusually and startingly himself. A good caricature will sometimes seem more like the original than the original; so it is in the greatest moments of social life. He is an unfortunate man, a man unfitted to value life and certainly unfitted to value Dickens, who has not sat at some table or talked in some company in which every one was in character, each a beautiful caricature of himself.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF DICKENS

By F. G. Kitton

THE asseveration that "Dickens" is "a name to conjure with" seems almost a truism. The innumerable editions of his works so constantly pouring from the press abundantly testify to the continued and unabated popularity of the most famous novelist of the Victorian epoch. As regards the circumstances appertaining to his wonderful career—the start in life under harassing conditions, the brilliant success attending his initial efforts in authorship, the manner in which he took the world by storm — there is, I believe, no parallel in the history of Literature.

Charles Dickens was born at No. 387, Commercial Road, Mile End, Landport, in the island of Portsea; like David Copperfield, he was born on a Friday, the natal day being February 7th, 1812. The baptismal register of Portsea Parish Church (St. Mary's, Kingston), where he was christened, records that three names were bestowed upon him, Charles John Huffam, the second being that of his father, and the third that of his godfather, Chrisopher Huffam, a "Rigger to his Majesty's Navy," who lived at Limehouse Hole, on the north bank of the Thames. The birthplace in Landport is an unpretentious tenement of two storeys, surmounted by a dormer window, and fronted by a small railed-in garden. John Dickens, the father of Charles, had filled a clerical position in the Navy Pay Office, Somerset House, whence he was transferred to a similar post at Portsea. About four years after the birth of Charles (the second child), the Dickens family removed to Chatham, residing there until the boy was eleven years old. It was at Chatham, where he first went to school, that he imbibed his earliest impressions of humanity.

London, however, was again to be the home of John Dickens —the mighty Metropolis which, with its phantasmagoria of life in its every aspect, its human comedies and tragedies, ever attracted the great writer, whose magic pen revelled in the delineation of them. It was in 1823 that the Dickens family took up their residence at 141, Bayham Street, Camden Town—then the poorest part of the London suburbs. There had come a crisis in the affairs of the elder Dickens which

necessitated the strictest economy, and the house in Bayham Street was nothing but "a mean tenement, with a wretched little back garden abutting on a squalid court." This was the beginning of a sad and bitter experience in the life of Charles Dickens. Here he seemed to fall into a solitary condition, alienated from all other boys of his own age. Recalling the circumstances in after years he observed to Forster: "As I thought, in the little back-garret in Bayham Street, of all I had lost in losing Chatham, what would I have given, if I had had anything to give, to have been sent back to any other school, to have been taught something anywhere?" Not only did the exceptionally intelligent lad miss the pleasures of association with his schoolfellows and playmates at Chatham, but he no longer had access to the famous books whose acquaintance he had made there—"Don Quixote," "Robinson Crusoe," "The Arabian Nights," *et hoc genus omne*—which, as admirers of his works will remember, he was so fond of quoting. The account given by Forster of the Bayham Street days is painful reading, and we are told that, thus living under circumstances of a hopeless and struggling poverty, the extreme sensitiveness of the boy caused him to experience acute mental suffering. After a short residence in Bayham Street, the family removed to Gower Street North (the house was demolished a few years ago), and an effort was made to bring grist to the mill by an attempt on the part of Mrs. Dickens to start a school for young ladies; but the venture proved abortive, notwithstanding the fact that Charles did his utmost to aid the project by leaving "at a great many doors, a great many circulars," calling attention to the advantages of the establishment. John Dickens's financial difficulties increased, tradesmen became pertinacious in their claims for a settlement of long-standing debts, which could not be met, until at last the father was arrested, and lodged in a Debtors' Prison—events which the novelist vividly recalled and duly set forth (in "David Copperfield") (in Pickwick Papers)

At this awkward juncture some relatives of the family, named Lambert, realising that an opportunity should be given to the poor, neglected lad of earning a livelihood, found him an occupation in their blacking-manufactory (started in opposition to the famous Warren), and here he earned a few shillings a week by covering and labelling pots of paste-blacking! While infinitely preferable to a state of enforced idleness, under demoralising conditions, the boy's

experience during what is usually referred to as " the blacking-bottle period " for ever remained a terrible nightmare, and the Novelist pointedly referred to that unhappy time when, in " David Copperfield," he observed that no one could express " the secret agony " of his soul as he sank into the companionship of those by whom he was then surrounded, and felt his " early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man " crushed in his breast. In respect of a miserable and neglected boyhood, Alphonse Daudet suffered as did Charles Dickens, and, phœnix-like, both emerged triumphantly from the ashes of what, to them, appeared to be a cruel conflagration of their desires and aspirations. There is no doubt that the ordeal of poverty, with its unhappy accompaniments, had counteracting advantages in the case of Charles Dickens ; his natural abilities were sharpened, as well as his powers of observation, his excellent memory enabling him in after years to record those actualities of life which render his books a perpetual joy and delight. Fortunately, brighter days were in store. The elder Dickens (in whom it is easy to detect glimpses of Mr. Micawber) was in a position to send Charles to a reputable school in the Hampstead Road, known as Wellington House Academy, where he remained two years, and on leaving it he entered another scholastic establishment near Brunswick Square, there completing his education, rudimentary at the best.

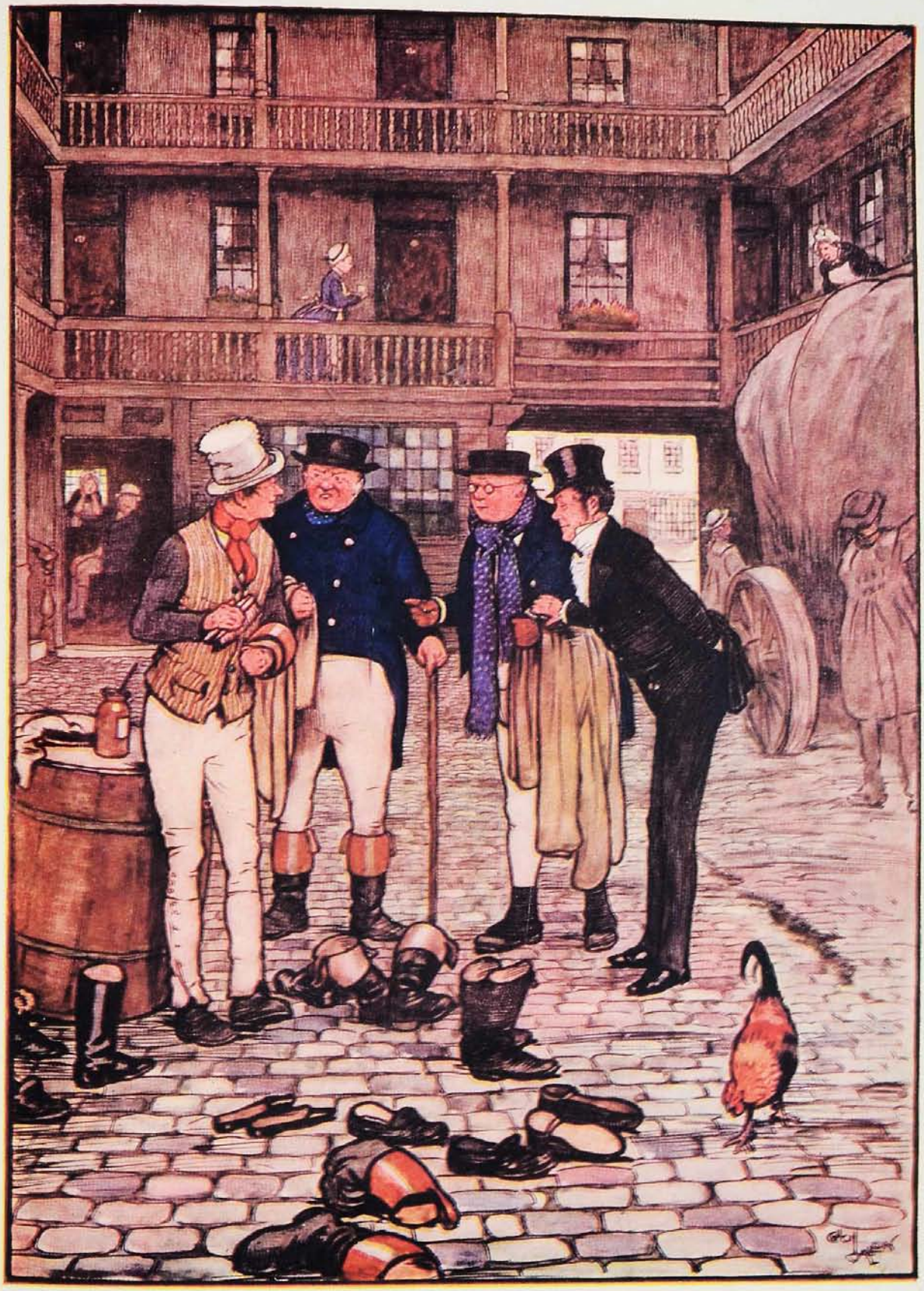
The year 1827 proved a memorable one for Charles Dickens, for then it was that he, in his fifteenth year, " began life," first as a clerk in a lawyer's office in Lincoln's Inn, then with a firm of attorneys in Gray's Inn, where his weekly salary amounted to something under a sovereign. As was his wont, he made mental memoranda of his environment, noting the manners, customs, and peculiarities of lawyers, their clerks and clients, for the result of which one needs only to turn to the pages of the immortal " Pickwick." His father, who had left the Navy Pay Office, turned his attention to journalism, and at this time had become a newspaper parliamentary reporter. Charles, craving for a similar occupation, in which he believed there might be an opening for greater things, resolutely determined to study shorthand. His persevering struggle with the mysteries of stenography were recalled when recording David Copperfield's experience—a struggle resulting in ultimate victory. Following in his father's footsteps, he, at the age of nineteeen, succeeded in obtaining an appointment as a reporter in the Press Gallery at the House of Commons,

where he was presently acknowledged to be the most skilful shorthand-writer among the many so engaged there.

Dickens had just attained his majority when, in 1833, he made his first venture into the realm of Fiction. He has himself related how, one evening at twilight, he stealthily entered "a dark court" in Fleet Street (it was Johnson's Court) and, with fear and trembling, dropped into "a dark letter-box" the manuscript of his first paper—a humorous sketch entitled, "A Dinner at Poplar Walk" (afterwards called "Mr. Minns and his Cousin"); and how, when it "appeared in all the glory of print," he walked down to Westminster Hall, and turned into it for half-an-hour, because (he explains) his eyes "were so dimmed with joy and pride, that they could not bear the street, and were not fit to be seen there." To this initial effort (which was published in the old *Monthly Magazine*, December, 1833) there is a slight reference in the forty-second chapter of "David Copperfield," where the youthful hero intimates that he "wrote a little something, in secret, and sent it to a magazine, and it was published in the magazine." His journeys across country by coach or postchaise, when reporting for his newspaper (*The Morning Chronicle*), proved invaluable from a literary standpoint, inasmuch as those expeditions by day and night and in all seasons afforded him special opportunities of studying human idiosyncrasies, as he necessarily came into contact with "all sorts and conditions of men." The success of his little paper in the *Monthly Magazine* induced him to try his hand at others, for gratuitous publication in the same journal. They bore no signature until the sixth sketch appeared, when he adopted the curious pseudonym of "Boz;" this had for some time previously been to him a familiar household word, as it was the nickname of his youngest brother, Augustus, whom (in honour of "The Vicar of Wakefield," one of his favourite books) he had dubbed Moses, which being facetiously pronounced through the nose became Bozes, and being shortened became Boz. The time had now arrived when he considered himself justified in endeavouring to increase his stipend as a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle* by offering to contribute to its pages a similar series of sketches, for which he should be remunerated, and the proposal was acceded to. Accordingly, we find several papers, signed "Boz," in the *Evening Chronicle*, an offshoot of the *Morning Chronicle*. Some of his sketches of "Scenes and Characters" (signed "Tibbs") appeared

simultaneously in *Bell's Life in London*, and a couple also in "The Library of Fiction," edited by Charles Whitehead. Early in 1836, Dickens collected a number of these articles and stories, and sold the copyright for £100 to Macrone, who published them in two volumes under the title of "Sketches by Boz."

But the "Boz" Sketches were presently to be eclipsed by a work which immediately took the world by storm, and upon which the reputation of Dickens securely rests. He wrote the "Pickwick Papers" when he was only three-and-twenty, and the book rapidly achieved a degree of popularity which we cannot but regard as astounding even in these days of large editions. The "Pickwick Papers" originated in this way. The junior partner of Messrs. Chapman and Hall called upon the rising author at his rooms in Furnival's Inn with a proposition that he should furnish the letterpress for a "monthly something" that should be a vehicle for certain sporting plates by a humorous draughtsman named Seymour. The first idea of a sort of Nimrod Club did not appeal to Dickens, for the excellent reason that he was no sportsman, and it was therefore decided that he should exercise a free hand, allowing the illustrations to arise naturally from the text. To give a complete "History" of the "Pickwick Papers" would occupy considerable space. Suffice it to say, that the book was issued in shilling monthly parts (1836-37), that it was illustrated by means of etchings; that the sale of the first few numbers was so small that publishers and author were in despair; and that the success of the work was assured as soon as Sam Weller made his first bow to the public,—a character which, by reason of its freshness and originality, called forth such admiration that the sale of ensuing numbers increased until a circulation of forty thousand copies was attained! The creation of Sam Weller, therefore, was the turning-point in Dickens's fortune, and so great became the popularity of the book that the name of "Pickwick" was bestowed by enterprising tradesmen upon their newest goods, while portraits of Dickens himself were in the ascendant. People of every degree, young and old, revelled in the pages of the "Pickwick Papers"—judges on the bench as well as boys in the street—and we are reminded of Carlyle's anecdote of a solemn clergyman, who as he left the room of a sick person to whom he had been administering ghostly consolation, heard the invalid ejaculate, "Well, thank God,



From "The Pickwick Papers."
Illustrated in colour by Cecil Aldin.
(Chapman & Hall.)

SAM WELLER AT THE WHITE HART.
By Cecil Aldin.

'Pickwick' [the monthly number] will be out in ten days, anyway!"

The identity of the author of "Pickwick," by the bye, was not disclosed until that work was nearly completed. It had given rise to much conjecture until the name of the young writer was at length revealed, when the following "Impromptu" appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany*:—

> "Who the *dickens* 'Boz' could be
> Puzzled many a learned elf,
> Till time revealed the mystery,
> And 'Boz' appeared as *Dickens'* self."

As soon as the first number of the "Pickwick Papers" was launched (that is, in April, 1836), its author took unto himself a wife, the bride being Miss Catherine Thomson Hogarth, eldest daughter of Mr. George Hogarth, his fellow-worker on the *Morning Chronicle*. By her he had several children, and among those surviving are Mrs. Kate Perugini, a clever painter, and Mr. Henry Fielding Dickens, the eminent K.C. Mrs. Dickens survived her husband nine years and five months.

Before the last of the twenty numbers of "Pickwick" was launched, the author had become a public favourite. Certain sage prophets foretold that as "Boz" had risen like a rocket, he would of a surety fall like the stick. But, as events proved, they were wrong, for Dickens not only became the most popular novelist of the 'thirties and 'forties, but, he has maintained that supremacy. Story after story flowed from his pen, each characterised by originality of conception, each instinct with a love of humanity in its humblest form, each noteworthy for its humour and its pathos, and nearly every one "a novel with a purpose," having in view the exposure of some great social evil and its ultimate suppression. Following "Pickwick" came "Oliver Twist," attacking the Poor Laws and "Bumbledom"; "Nicholas Nickleby," marking down the cheap boarding-schools of Yorkshire; "The Old Curiosity Shop" and "Barnaby Rudge"; "Martin Chuzzlewit"; "Dombey and Son"; "David Copperfield"; "Bleak House," holding up to ridicule and contempt the abuse of Chancery practice; "Little Dorritt"; "A Tale of Two Cities"; "Great Expectations"; "Our Mutual Friend"; and, finally, the unfinished fragment of "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," to which Longfellow referred as "certainly one of his most beautiful works, if not the most beautiful of all." Of his

many minor writings, special mention should be made of the series of Christmas Books, the first of which, "A Christmas Carol," has become almost a text-book, and we know that by his readings of this touching allegory to enthusiastic audiences Sir Squire Bancroft has afforded substantial aid to many deserving charities. Dickens is appropriately termed "the Apostle of Christmas," and it is undoubtedly true that his Yuletide stories were the pioneers of Christmas literature.

Having thus briefly reviewed the literary career of Charles Dickens, it becomes almost essential to consider him from a personal and social point of view, in order to thoroughly realise what manner of man he was. Referring to his personal characteristics, Forster says that to his friends (and their name was Legion), Dickens was "the pleasantest of companions, with whom they forgot that he had ever written anything, and felt only the charm which a nature of such capacity for supreme enjoyment causes everyone around it to enjoy. His talk was unaffected and natural, never bookish in the smallest degree. He was quite up to the average of well-read men, but as there was no ostentation of it in his writing, so neither was there in his conversation. This was so attractive because so keenly observant, and lighted up with so many touches of humorous fancy; but with every possible thing to give relish to it, there were not many things to bring away." He thoroughly endorsed the axiom that "what is worth doing at all is worth doing well." He was most methodical in his habits, and energetic to a degree. "In quick and varied sympathy, in ready adaption to every whim and humour, in help to any mirth or game, he stood for a dozen men. . . . His versatility made him unique." Concerning the Novelist's personality, the following testimony has recently been placed on record by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, a surviving member of the "Dickens Brigade" of young men who revered him as "the Master": "I say advisedly, there never was, and never could be, so genial, amiable, unaffected, and untiring a person in his treatment of friends and guests. He was always eager to listen rather than to speak—to take a second or third place; more anxious to hear, rather than to tell, an amusing story. His very presence was enough, with the bright, radiant face, the glowing, searching eyes, which had a language of their own, and the expressive mouth. You could see the gleam of a humorous thought, first twinkling there, and had a certain foretaste

and even understanding of what was coming ; then it spread downwards—the mobile muscles of his cheek began to quiver ; then it came lower, to the expressive mouth, working under shelter of the grizzled moustache ; then, finally, thus prepared for, came the humorous utterance itself ! "

Dickens was intensely fond of the Drama, as evidenced not only by the frequent reference in his writings to theatres and actors, but by the fact that he himself was an actor of an exceptionally high order, and it is conceded that had he adopted the Stage as a profession he would have attained first rank. Indeed, it was by the merest accident that he did not enter the profession, for, when he was about twenty, he applied for an engagement to the stage-manager at Covent Garden Theatre, and an appointment was made, which Dickens failed to keep on account of a terrible bad cold. After that he never resumed the idea. In later years he became the leading spirit of a wonderful company of amateur actors, who, on one occasion, performed before her late Majesty Queen Victoria, by special request.

As a reader, too, Dickens stood pre-eminent. His very first public reading took place, early in the 'fifties, at Chatham, in aid of the Rochester and Chatham Mechanics' Institution, and the subject of the reading was the " Christmas Carol." He gave public readings from his own works both in Great Britain and America, and an entertaining account of his tours may be found in Mr. George Dolby's volume, " Charles Dickens as I Knew Him." There can be no doubt that the mental tension caused by these readings (which covered a period of some fifteen years), supplemented by the strain of literary and editorial labours, curtailed the brilliant career of England's greatest Novelist. It was at his charming rural retreat, Gad's Hill Place, near Rochester (his home from 1856), that Dickens breathed his last, on June 9th, 1870, in his fifty-ninth year. " Before the news of his death even reached the remoter parts of England," says Forster, " it had been flashed across Europe ; was known in the distant continents of India, Australia, and America ; and not in English-speaking communities only, but in every country of the civilised earth, had awakened grief and sympathy. In his own land it was as if a personal bereavement had befallen everyone."

CHARLES DICKENS:

HIS WORK AND HIS PERSONALITY

By B. W. Matz

THE literary atmosphere of the last few years has been permeated with Dickens. Readers of every nationality have been turning to his books again—some persons have made acquaintance with them for the first time. In the process one has come across a Philistine or two, who, being of the latter category and having chosen the story of "Oliver Twist" to start with, has exhibited in his conversation a burning desire to "tick it off" in a twelve-line review after the present fashion of criticising novels, half-read and undigested. Such a judge is quite satisfied with himself if he has discovered a few faults in the construction of the story, and having entirely overlooked the many qualities which have made it the great book it is, he presumes to stand aghast at the novelist's popularity, and to wonder how it was ever attained. He is not really serious; a little pedantic perhaps, as befits the modern manner, but easily and willingly forgiven, and perhaps as easily convinced that the test of time is after all the best, the absolute touchstone of greatness.

Speaking generally, the books of Dickens—almost all of them—have stood this final test, and although there may be—indeed we know there are—certain readers who say that they do not care for them, as there are persons who have yet to learn the fascination of golf or the pleasure of eating asparagus, it is an indisputable fact that the reverse is the prevalent and popular opinion, and the fact remains that Dickens's books have never lost their hold on the English-speaking race, or for the matter of that upon any other race into whose language they have been translated. His reputation as the most popular novelist in the history of literature is, at the present time, actually at its highest.

There have been in the past those, who, whilst admiring his greatness at the time, have predicted an eventual eclipse of his genius. The case of the critic in the *Quarterly Review* in 1837, who, speaking of Dickens's undoubted qualities, predicted that, having gone up like a rocket, he would come down like a stick, will be remembered. On the other hand, an American critic said sixty years ago, in remarking how solidly Dickens's reputation was established, that "the deluge of swashy literature may pass over it, the

wind's shallow waves of changing fashion, or superstition, or politics, without shaking it; because it is founded on a rock. . . . In short, the works of this author . . . shall be admired at some later day, not on account of antiquity, but in spite of it; because they have set forth nothing less general than the truth of nature, and appeal to all men by a common bond."

To-day we know the truth; posterity has inherited the treasure of his books, and no one denies posterity's right, even if some cavil at it.

For many months previous to the centenary of his birth, (February 7th, 1912), all eyes were fixed on that day, particularly those of the student and enthusiast: and it had been hoped that the anniversary would see permanently established in London something of a practical nature and value connected with Dickens's name, such as one of his London homes secured to the nation, as Shakespeare's at Stratford, Carlyle's in Chelsea, or Scott's at Abbotsford; and the present writer expressed a hope in the pages of THE BOOKMAN for November, 1910, that some such scheme might be ultimately set on foot. But other schemes took the place in the public eye which such a scheme required, and so we have had to bow our heads and wait awhile.

However, although the year of Dickens's centenary passed by, leaving nothing behind of a tangible form as a connecting link between his greatness and his association with his own great city, there is no diminution in the nation's pride in its heritage, and every indication that so unexampled a genius will retain the affection and regard of his countrymen, not merely as its premier novelist, but as one of its most notable men.

There is no intention in these few words to attempt to estimate the comparative value of Dickens or of his books as an asset of the nation. That has been done so often and so ably in volume after volume, and all the pages of this volume are not available to us, even were we bold enough to make the attempt. Nor is there a single phase even of their many-sided variety that could be approached with the hope of saying anything that has not been said before, although it is possible (as the monthly publication of a contemporary proves) to be continually adding fresh light to various incidents in his books and life, topographically, bibliographically, and pictorially. But avoiding the temptation to select some phase which might only appeal to the student, and be of interest only to him of the meticulous

mind, it may be more appropriate to glance at the more generally attractive features of Dickens's life and personality as they are revealed in his books.

Most novelists, we presume, adapt certain incidents from their own lives to certain requirements of their novels. The creation of a character has its genesis in someone they have known or have met, and the more the writer is endowed with the imaginative genius, the more he elaborates and embroiders upon the fabric of his own observation. The fact that Dickens had this power to a greater extent than most men is not to be taken as indicating that he was in any sense a copyist rather than a great creative genius, but that he realised better than other writers that Nature, human or otherwise, was the truest and most permanently valuable material for his purpose, because it is universal. He not only saw with an eye and realised with a mind abnormal in their quality, but he placed on record what he saw and conceived in character and scenes, in such a manner as to make the reader see and conceive as clearly and as vividly as he had done.

He had this power when a lad, and it matured as years went on. In his first sketches the art of dramatising, so to speak, incidents of his childhood days at Chatham came naturally to him. The people he met there when only eight or nine years of age furnished him with models, as incidents of their lives furnished him with action. And when he became a young man in a business office, he found material for other sketches, of which "Making a Night of It" is but one instance. Those who have read his letters to his friend Kolle will find how faithfully the environment of those days is conveyed into the "Sketches," whilst the prototype for this sketch referred to will be easily discovered.

And so on through all his books the same thing occurs. In some cases his portraiture of friends and acquaintances, such as Squeers, Skimpole, Boythorn, Miss Mowcher, caused him some uneasiness for the pains he had taken. But when he put himself into his books it mattered to no one at the time because no one knew. Yet he is in many of his own books. The most notable and lifelike presentment of himself, of course, is in "David Copperfield." Here we have, on his own evidence, given to his friend Forster, certain details of his life as boy and young man pathetically and dramatically pictured for us. David's career is not, of course, a minute account of Dickens's early experience, but phases of David's life are identical with phases in the life of Dickens.

The blacking-factory period of his life is reflected in the similar period of Copperfield's, with the wine-bottle trade substituted for the blacking-bottle trade, and we know that the novelist loathed his post as much as Copperfield did his. But although he kept his secret from his own family and friends until years after, Dickens did not hesitate to introduce it into his books. How this early period of his suffering boyhood affected him, and how accurately it is described in fiction, is as familiar as are the details of the real history told in his biography. Forster did not hesitate to give them to the world as told him by the novelist, because nothing could better exemplify the courage and fortitude of his friend, or show what a noble character and genius had emanated from hardship and incredibly uncongenial discouragements. When one thinks of it all, and realises how Dickens brought himself by his own determination to be one of the greatest men of his age, one can see how easily, without heroism, his genius might have been snuffed out.

Without such strong will his life and character must have been different. The experiences of his early days affected him throughout his career, and many times in his other books we find his thoughts have drifted back to Hungerford tairs, although he confesses to a horror of going near the place, and studied to avoid it. Take the following passage describing Clennam : " A man who had, deep-rooted in his nature, a belief in all the gentle and good things his life had been without. Bred in meanness and hard dealing, this had rescued him to be a man of honourable mind and open hand. Bred in coldness and severity, this had rescued him to have a warm and sympathetic heart. Bred in a creed too darkly audacious to pursue, this had rescued him to judge not, and in humility to be merciful, and have hope and charity." This is but the recollection of his own trials coming vividly into his mind, with the added joy and satisfaction in the knowledge that good could come from such a life.

Nor did he confine his personal touches to his own career. We have pictures of the domestic troubles of his father, the interlude in the Marshalsea Prison and the whole struggle for existence of the family in those grey days, presented in his masterpiece, not in dull narrative, but with the magic of a romantic story exhibiting all its attendant humour and pathos—real in itself, yet with its actual reality veiled.

We have suggested that many of the " Sketches by Boz " are but incidents of his early days, both at Chatham and

during his youthful apprenticeship as a solicitor's clerk, and we know how much of his experiences found their way into the "Pickwick Papers." His schooldays and school-fellows are faithfully made history in "Our School," his reporting escapades have furnished him with many a chapter and exciting story, and his family and friends were used as models, such as his father as Mr. Micawber, his mother as Mrs. Nickleby, his sister as Mrs. Gargery, his sister's little son as Tiny Tim, Mrs. Roylance as Mrs. Pipchin, and scores of others. In his own weekly paper, *Household Words*, he frequently contributed an autobiographical chapter in the shape of a sketch or story. Two occur to me at the moment, entitled respectively "Gone Astray" and "New Year's Day," both dealing with his boyhood, the former relating how he was lost in London, and the wonderful things he saw during that time, the second telling how he was taken out to see the Soho Bazaar by "a grim and unsympathetic old personage of the female gender," whom he refers to as Mrs. Pipchin. This paper forms a delightful sketch which was, as he suggests, founded on fact "to the best of my remembrance and self-examination of the past."

But perhaps the member of his family who figured in and influenced certain of his writings most was his wife's girl-sister, Mary Hogarth, whose early death dealt him such an irreparable blow. She was but seventeen when she died suddenly soon after he went to live at Doughty Street, and whilst he was writing "The Pickwick Papers." So terrible was the crushing blow to him, and so utterly prostrated was he, that the continuance of his immortal book had to be postponed for a while. She had endeared herself to him by her sweetness of nature "even more," as we have been told, "than by graces of person," and she had made herself an ideal in his life. And throughout his career, her amiable good nature served him as inspiration for such characters as Rose Maylie, Little Nell, and more than one other of his charming young women; indeed he never seemed to let her pure nature fade out of his memory. In his letters to Forster he refers to the subject of her death more than once as years rolled by. On one particular occasion when abroad he describes a vision he had, in which he saw her and recognized her voice and "knew it was poor Mary's spirit"; and on another, he reminds his friend that "this day eleven years poor dear Mary died." There can indeed be no doubt that the loss of his "dear friend and companion" affected

him greatly, and inspired many of the affectionate and gentle thoughts of young life which are to be found in his books.

One might enlarge upon the theme that the books of Dickens contain not only cameos of his own life and that of his friends and family, but pictures of the places he knew and loved. Wherever he found himself, either on a holiday or business journey, there he found material for his books, and such material has become far more living and real by his facile pen, and far more valuable for creating and establishing the atmosphere of the world he knew, than any minute description of an historian. It is in this way that our knowledge of Dickens is so personal and intimate. He aimed through all his writings at securing the confidence of his readers. He wrote to please them first, and he wrote of things and people they could understand. And therein, like Shakespeare, his books have the universal appeal, for like him also, "he does not depict men as kings, but kings as men; not men as peasants, but again peasants as men."

The following words which Dickens puts into the mouth of David Copperfield when the latter is struggling for a livelihood as an author, may be taken to express the thoughts of the novelist himself :

> " In pursuance of my intention of referring to my own fictions, only when their course should incidentally connect itself with the progress of my story, I do not enter on the aspirations, the delights, anxieties, and triumphs of my art. That I truly devoted myself to it with my strongest earnestness and bestowed upon it every energy of my soul, I have already said. If the books I have written be of any worth, they will supply the rest. I shall otherwise have written to poor purpose, and the rest will be of interest to no one."

It is unnecessary to ask if the books of Dickens are of worth. Posterity has decided for us.

"I rest my claims to the remembrance of my country upon my published works, and to the remembrance of my friends upon their experience of me in addition thereto," was the novelist's own memorable utterance. No expressed desire of any great man has ever been more completely realised.

THE TRUE STORY OF DORA COPPERFIELD

By Sir W. Robertson Nicoll

I HAVE just read one of the most delightful and revealing books ever put in print. It is not published, and copies are very difficult to obtain. The title is "Charles Dickens and Maria Beadnell ('Dora'): Private Correspondence between Charles Dickens and Mrs. Henry Winter (*née* Maria Beadnell), the Original of Dora Spenlow in 'David Copperfield' and Flora Finching in 'Little Dorrit.'" Edited by Professor George Pierce Baker, of Harvard University. It is based on a series of unpublished letters by Charles Dickens, which found their way into the hands of an American collector, Mr. Bixby. The letters cannot be published, for the present, at least, and the copyright must not be interfered with; but I am free to give a general outline of the contents. As time goes on, it becomes more and more obvious that not very much has been added to Forster's "Life of Dickens." This book, however, is a real addition. No one who reads it can ever forget it, and in so far as the secret of Dickens' personality can be discovered, we may find it here. There are disclosures of significant facts which were not known even to Forster. There are important identifications with characters in the novels unknown even to Dickens's intimate friends. There are life experiences of his which he locked up in his own breast, and never thought to bring out any more. The letters verify many disputed points in "David Copperfield," and show that in important respects the love affairs of its hero were those of Dickens himself. They also prove conclusively that in "Little Dorrit" Dickens narrated much of his own experience. Many good judges are of opinion that "Little Dorrit" is the least interesting of the whole series, but now we shall read it in a new light, for in a sense it is a continuation of "David Copperfield," and it is enlivened with a new dramatic interest. We know now who Dora in "David Copperfield" was, and we know what we never could have believed, that the same Dora is in "Little Dorrit" assigned the garrulous part of Flora Finching. I proceed to give an outline of the story.

I

We have very few letters written by Charles Dickens in his youth. Among published letters there are about three dated before 1837, when Dickens was already twenty-five years of age. One of these, written in 1833, is to his future brother-in-law, Henry Austin, and two of 1835 are to his *fiancée,* Miss Catherine Hogarth. Also, there is a letter in Hotten's little book, " Charles Dickens : The Story of his Life." In September, 1860, Dickens carefully destroyed in the field of Gad's Hill all correspondence received by him. This makes the find recorded in Professor Baker's book acutely interesting.

In 1830 the manager at Smith, Payne and Smith's, the bankers, of No. 1, Lombard-street, was John Beadnell. He lived close by, at No. 2, Lombard-street, sharing house with his brother, George Beadnell, who had a position in the bank, and later became its manager. George Beadnell had three daughters, Margaret, Anne, and Maria. In 1830, when Dickens was first introduced to the Beadnells, he was just entering on his eighteenth year. Maria Beadnell was nineteen. Dickens was introduced by his friend, Henry Kolle, a quilt-printer, of No. 14, Addle-street, Aldermanbury. Kolle was engaged to one of the daughters, and afterwards married her.

At this time Dickens had given up his work in a law office, recognising the painful slowness of his advance, and with tremendous labour and speed had conquered the mysteries of Gurney's system of shorthand. When he was introduced to the Beadnell family he was on the eve of becoming a member of the staff of the *True Sun.* In the Beadnell family he found the pleasant domesticities which he missed in his own home. Among the young men frequenting the house were two close friends of his, David Lloyd and Henry Kolle. Lloyd married Margaret Beadnell on April 20th, 1831, and Kolle married the second sister on May 21st, 1833. Young Dickens fell at once in love with Maria Beadnell, and Maria flirted with him very desperately. Dickens at that time was keenly intelligent and most ambitious. He was reading assiduously in the British Museum. He took out his first book the day after he reached eighteen, the prescribed age. He had an extensive and peculiar and hardly-gained knowledge of London. He said himself, " I looked at nothing in particular, but nothing escaped me." It will be seen that with his natural genius he must have shone in the merry circle in the midst of which he found himself. At that time he had scarcely determined

his life's course, and was seriously thinking about going on the stage. He was writing plays and acting them. In private theatricals he soon become famous.

But he was hardly likely to be counted eligible by a prosperous bank manager, clever, handsome, and promising as he was. Maria Beadnell was a wilful coquette, and though Dickens fell madly in love with her, she hesitated, sometimes responding, and at other times becoming chill. At the same time, the family regarded the love-making with amused tolerance, and so did Maria. The parents sent Maria to school in Paris between the autumn of 1831 and 1833. Dickens cherished his passion till it became infatuation, but the girl seems to have thought little of him. She behaved as Estella behaved to Pip. "She made use of me to tease other admirers, and she turned the very familiarity between herself and me to the account of putting a constant slight on my devotion to her. If I had been her secretary, steward, half-brother, poor relation—if I had been a younger brother of her appointed husband—I could not have seemed to myself further from my hopes when I was nearest to her. The privilege of calling her by her name, and hearing her call me by mine, became under the circumstances an aggravation of my trials; and while I think it likely that it almost maddened her other lovers, I knew too certainly that it almost maddened me. She had admirers without end. . . . There were picnics, fête-days, plays, operas, concerts, parties —all sorts of pleasures through which I pursued her—and they were all miseries to me. I never had one hour's happiness in her society, and yet my mind, all round the four and twenty hours, was harping on the happiness of having her with me unto death." The devouring concentration with which Dickens pursued what he desired was fully exemplified at this time. He never wavered for an instant in his life.

Maria Beadnell had a friend, Mary Anne Leigh, who seems to have been partly in love with Dickens. She did her best to embroil the lovers, and I fancy the task was easy. It is tolerably plain that Maria Beadnell thought she could do much better. She did not know any more than Dickens's father and mother knew what was in the lad. So by 1833 Dickens was turned bitterly away. He was full of desolation and wretchedness, but considered that he had been coldly and deliberately trifled with. He had received sunshine one day and contempt the next, while he had never acted capriciously or with reserve. Maria excused herself by some

gossip about Mary Anne Leigh. Dickens declared that he had been totally and entirely misunderstood; that he had endured more from his sweetheart than any creature breathing ever bore from a woman before; that his love would be lasting. Like other proud lovers, he went on his knees at last, put aside all pride, and prayed intensely for a response. Maria returned some of his letters, but kept copies of them. This is peculiar, but, in the end, she gave a cold and reproachful reply, and in May, 1833, Dickens went his way, and the relations between the two were broken off for more than twenty years.

II

In 1835 Dickens became engaged to Miss Catherine Hogarth, whom he married on April 2nd, 1836. He suffered keenly, but he had the strength of purpose to cut himself free from the Beadnell group, and to throw himself into work. It was in December, 1833, that he began to print in the *Old Monthly Magazine* the first of his "Sketches by Boz," which were published in volume form in 1836. It is easy to see that he took many hints from the Beadnell group for the figures in "Sketches." The Military Young Gent, Miss Julia Mills, and Mr. Tupple are among them. But the wound was not healed. He had recurrences of the mood described in Headstone's appeal to Lizzie: "I have never been quit of you since I first saw you. Oh, that was a wretched day for me. That was a wretched, miserable day! . . . I have in my way won a station which is considered worth winning. . . . You draw me to you. If I were shut up in a strong prison, you would draw me out. I should break through the wall to come to you. If I were lying on a sick bed, you would draw me up to stagger to you and fall there." Again, in another passage: "'Out of my thoughts! You are part of my existence, part of myself. You have been in every line I have ever read since I first came here, the rough, common boy whose poor heart you wounded even then. You have been in every prospect I have ever seen since—on the river, on the sails of the ships, on the marshes, in the clouds, in the light, in the darkness, in the wind, in the woods, in the sea, in the streets. You have been the embodiment of every graceful fancy that my mind has ever become acquainted with. . . . Oh, God bless you, God forgive you! . . . All done, all gone!' So much was done and gone, that when I

went out at the gate, the light of day seemed of a darker colour than when I went in."

III

Yes, Dickens recovered from the blow, but it did not leave him the same man, nor did he ever forget. He married and was happy enough for a time. He began to feel a sense of "one happiness I have missed in my life, and one friend and companion I have never made." He began to write his autobiography, but when he arrived at the period in his early manhood to which his infatuation for Maria Beadnell belonged, he "lost courage and burned the rest." Then he set himself to the writing of "David Copperfield," into which he put his own soul. This was the book of all his books which he liked best. He had in his heart of hearts a favourite child, and his name was David Copperfield. As he was writing his principal hesitation occurred in connection with the child-wife, Dora, who was drawn from Maria Beadnell as he remembered her and imagined her.

IV

On February 25th, 1845, Maria Beadnell was married to Henry Louis Winter. By this time she had reached the comfortable age of thirty-four. There was no communication of any kind between her and Dickens for many years. But ten years passed by, and in February, 1855, Mrs. Winter wrote to Dickens. Her letter arrived along with a handful of others. Dickens suddenly remembered, opened it, and was delighted. He replied warmly, if not exuberantly. He recalled their old trysting places, her green cloak, his happiness, his misery. He proposed that Mrs. Dickens should call on Maria and arrange a day for a quiet meeting. Later on he confessed that whatever of fancy, romance, energy, passion, aspiration, and determination belonged to him could never be separated from her for whom he would have died with the greatest alacrity. He said that he had never heard the name Maria without starting and thinking of the deep love he once bestowed upon her. He referred her to "David Copperfield," and told her she would see the touches of herself in Dora. People had praised him for the pretty love-making in "David Copperfield," not knowing that it was truth, neither more nor less. He asked her to read

the book, and to think " How dearly that boy must have loved me, and how vividly this man remembers it."

Maria seems to have written explaining that she would have married Dickens if it had not been for her parents, and he replied with simple and touching emotion in one of the most remarkable letters ever written. He refuses to believe her when she says that she is now " toothless, fat, old, and ugly." He recalls how her eyebrows had a tendency to join together. He had always been reminded of her when a girl played the harp. Maria had asked for an interview, and again he heartily responded. He promised to buy presents in Paris for her little girl.

Then, alas, they met. Alas and alas! for his eyes no sooner fell on the object of his old passion than it shivered and broke to pieces.

So Dickens wrote of her in "Little Dorrit," where he is Arthur Clennam, she is Flora Finching :

Most men will be found sufficiently true to themselves to be true to an old idea. It is no proof of an inconstant mind, but exactly the opposite, when the idea will not bear close comparison with the reality, and the contrast is a fatal shock to it. Such was Clennam's case. In his youth he had ardently loved this woman, and had heaped upon her all the locked-up wealth of his affection and imagination. That wealth had been, in his desert home, like Robinson Crusoe's money ; exchangeable with no one, lying idle in the dark to rust, until he poured it out for her. Ever since that memorable time, though he had, until the night of his arrival, as completely dismissed her from any association with his Present or Future as if she had been dead (which she might easily have been for anything he knew), he had kept the old fancy of the Past unchanged, in its old sacred place. And now, after all, the last of the Patriarchs coolly walked into the parlor, saying in effect, " Be good enough to throw it down and dance upon it. This is Flora."

Flora, always tall, had grown to be very broad too, and short of breath ; but that was not much. Flora, whom he had left a lily, had become a peony ; but that was not much. Flora, who had seemed enchanting in all she said and thought, was diffuse and silly. That was much. Flora, who had been spoiled and artless long ago, was determined to be spoiled and artless now. That was a fatal blow.

This is Flora !

" I am sure," giggled Flora, tossing her head with a caricature of her girlish manner, such as a mummer might have presented at her own funeral, if she had lived and died in classical antiquity, " I am ashamed to see Mr. Clennam, I am a mere fright, I know he'll find me fearfully changed, I am actually an old woman, it's shocking to be so found out, it's really shocking ! "

He assured her that she was just what he had expected, and that time had not stood still with himself.

" Oh ! But with a gentleman it's so different and really you look so amazingly well that you have no right to say anything of the kind, while, as to me you know—oh ! " cried Flora with a little scream, " I am dreadful ! "

"You mustn't think of going yet," said Flora—Arthur had looked at his hat, being in a ludicrous dismay, and not knowing what to do; "you could never be so unkind as to think of going, Arthur—I mean Mr. Arthur—or I suppose Mr. Clennam would be far more proper—but I am sure I don't know what I'm saying—without a word about the dear old days gone for ever, however when I come to think of it I dare say it would be much better not to speak of them and it's highly probable that you have some much more agreeable engagement and pray let Me be the last person in the world to interfere with it though there *was* a time, but I am running into nonsense again."

Was it possible that Flora could have been such a chatterer in the days she referred to? Could there have been anything like her present disjointed volubility in the fascinations that had captivated him?

"Indeed I have little doubt," said Flora, running on with astonishing speed, and pointing her conversation with nothing but commas, and very few of them, "that you are married to some Chinese lady, being in China so long and being in business and naturally desirous to settle and extend your connection nothing was more likely than that you should propose to a Chinese lady and nothing was more natural I am sure than that the Chinese lady should accept you and think herself very well off too, I only hope she's not a Pagodian dissenter."

"I am not," returned Arthur, smiling in spite of himself, "married to any lady, Flora."

V

The end of the story is dreary enough, and credible enough. Mrs. Winter wrote from time to time letters apparently exuberant, but she was repeatedly checked by courteous refusals. Her husband failed, and she appealed to her old lover. But Dickens declined to be drawn into responsibility, and suggested that her father ought to help. Her father, it seems, left £40,000. Mr. Winter entered the ministry, becoming a curate at Little Eversham, Cambridge, in 1866. He was afterwards Vicar of Alnmouth, Northumberland, where he died on March 22nd, 1871. Mrs. Winter died in 1886.

There is other matter of profound and thrilling interest in this volume bearing on the most unfortunate incident in Dickens's life. The whole story shows how hot his heart was; what vehemence, concentration, and fury of will he threw into his life from the first.

From "The Pickwick Papers."
Illustrated in colour by Frank Reynolds, R.I.
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

MR. ALFRED JINGLE.
By Frank Reynolds, R.I.

From the painting by Daniel Maclise, R.A.
Now in the National Portrait Gallery.

CHARLES DICKENS
IN 1839.

When this portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1840, Thackeray referred to it in terms of the highest praise. "Look at the portrait of Mr. Dickens," he wrote, "well arranged as a picture, good in colour and light and shadow, and as a likeness perfectly amazing: a looking-glass could not render a better facsimile. Here we have the real, identical man Dickens; the artist must have understood the inward Boz as well as the outward before he made this admirable representation of him. What cheerful intellectuality is about the man's eyes and large forehead! The mouth is too large and full, too eager and active, perhaps: the smile is very sweet and generous."

JOHN DICKENS,
FATHER OF THE NOVELIST.

ELIZABETH DICKENS,
MOTHER OF THE NOVELIST.

From Paintings by John W. Gilbert, in the possession of Mr. Henry Fielding Dickens, K.C.

387, MILE END TERRACE,
PORTSMOUTH,

Where Dickens was born February 7th, 1812.

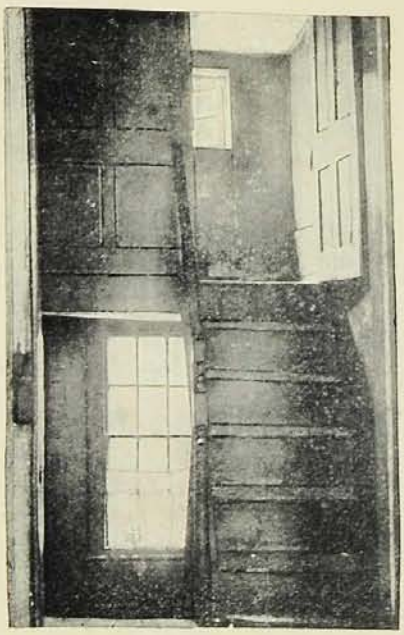


Photo by T. W. Tyrrell.

THE LITTLE BACK GARRET
IN BAYHAM STREET.

10, NORFOLK (NOW
CLEVELAND) STREET,
FITZROY SQUARE,

Where Dickens lived 1814–16.

16, BAYHAM STREET,
CAMDEN TOWN,

Where Dickens lived 1823–4.

These, and other of Dickens's homes and haunts are referred to in "Charles Dickens and London" (page 90).
The illustrations are from Forster's "Life of Charles Dickens." With 500 portraits, facsimiles, and other illustrations collected, arranged and annotated by B. W. Matz. Memorial Edition. Two vols. (Chapman & Hall.)

Photo by T. W. Tyrrell.

LITTLE COLLEGE STREET
(NOW COLLEGE PLACE),
CAMDEN TOWN,

Where Dickens lived in 1824.

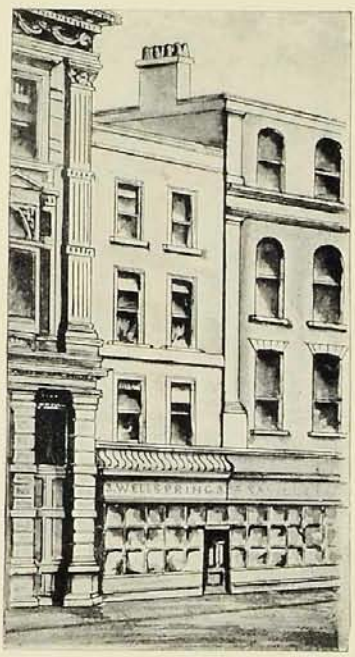


Photo by T. W. Tyrrell.

THE BLACKING
WAREHOUSE,
3, CHANDOS STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

Photo by T. W. Tyrrell.

LANT STREET, BOROUGH,

Where Dickens lodged in 1824.

At Little College Street, and at Lant Street, Dickens lodged whilst he was working in the Blacking Warehouse, near Hungerford Stairs, spending his Sundays in the Marshalsea, where his father was a prisoner for debt and had most of his family living with him.

From a drawing by Fred Barnard.
Lent by Messrs. Chapman & Hall.

LITTLE CHARLES DICKENS AT THE BLACKING WAREHOUSE. (The "Murdstone & Grinby's" of "David Copperfield.")

"How much I suffered, it is, as I have said already, utterly beyond my power to tell. No man's imagination can overstep the reality. But I kept my own counsel and I did my work. I knew from the first that if I could not do my work as well as any of the rest, I could not hold myself above slight and contempt. My rescue from this kind of existence I considered quite hopeless and abandoned, as such, altogether. I am solemnly convinced that I never for one hour was reconciled to it, or was otherwise than miserably unhappy; but I bore it."—Fragment of Autobiography in Forster's "Life of Dickens." (Chapman & Hall.)

Drawn by Ruth Cobb.

CHARLES DICKENS,
AN IMAGINARY PORTRAIT.

"When I was a very small boy . . . I got lost one day in the City of London."
From "Gone Astray," by Charles Dickens. With an Introduction by B. W. Matz. Illustrated. (Chapman & Hall.)

WELLINGTON HOUSE ACADEMY,
HAMPSTEAD ROAD.

Drawn by Fred Barnard.

THE BOYS OF THE ACADEMY SOLICITING
ALMS IN DRUMMOND STREET.

Dickens was taken from the Blacking Warehouse and sent to school. "At Wellington House Academy he remained nearly two years, being a little over fourteen years of age when he quitted it." Dr. Henry Danson, who had been one of his schoolfellows there, wrote to Forster: "I quite remember Dickens on one occasion heading us in Drummond Street in pretending to be poor boys and asking the passers-by for charity—especially old ladies."—Forster's "Life of Dickens." (Chapman & Hall.)

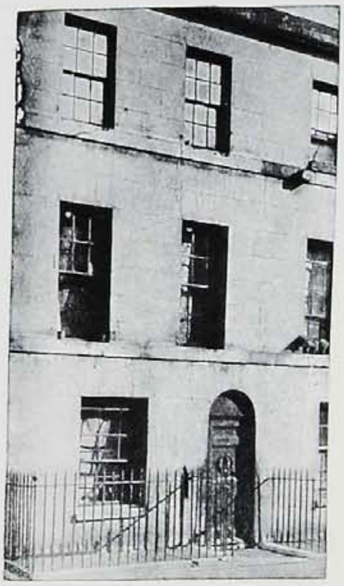


Photo by T. W. Tyrrell.

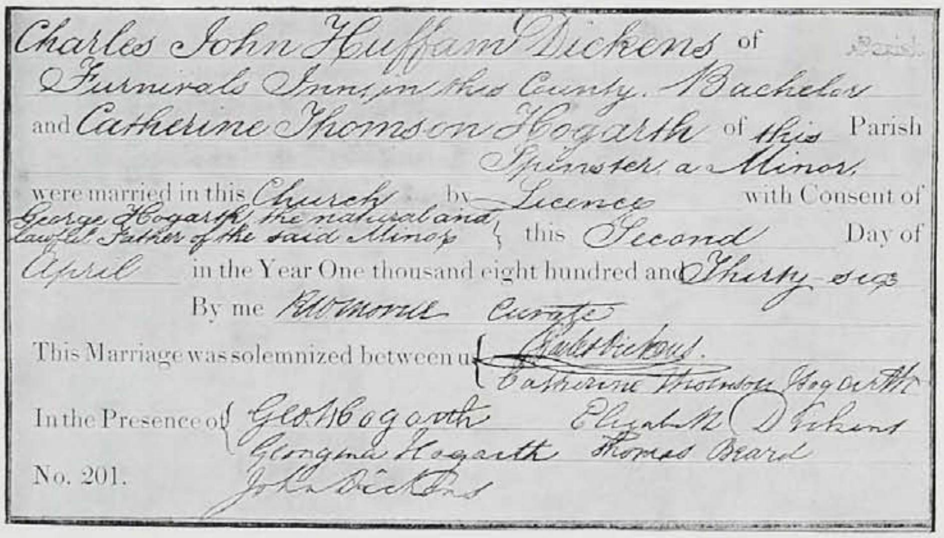
13 (FORMERLY 29), JOHNSON STREET, SOMERS TOWN,

Where Dickens lived 1825–29

Photo by T. W. Tyrrell.

18, BENTINCK STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE,

Where Dickens lived 1833–34.



Charles John Huffam Dickens of
Furnivals Inn, in this County. Bachelor
and Catherine Thomson Hogarth of this Parish
Spinster a Minor,
were married in this Church by Licence with Consent of
George Hogarth, the natural and lawful Father of the said Minor this Second Day of
April in the Year One thousand eight hundred and Thirty-six
By me R W Moore Curate
This Marriage was solemnized between us { Charles Dickens. Catherine Thomson Hogarth
In the Presence of { Geo. Hogarth Elizabeth Dickens Georgina Hogarth Thomas Beard John Dickens
No. 201.

DICKENS'S MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

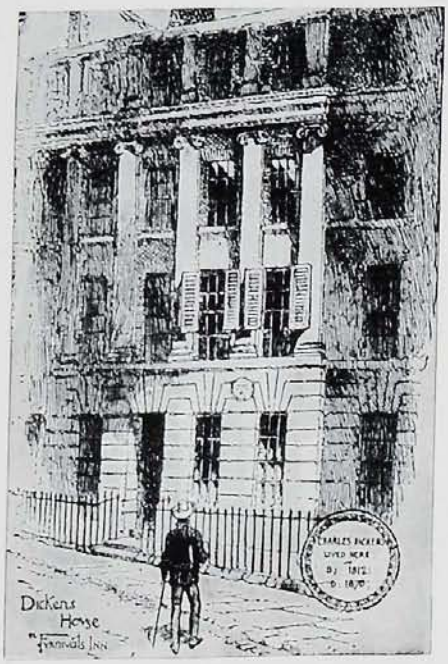
(Reduced facsimile).

Dickens was living in Furnival's Inn when he married. He had written the "Sketches by Boz," for the *Monthly Magazine*, and the *Evening Chronicle*, and the first monthly part of the "Pickwick Papers" had just made its appearance. Shortly after his marriage he removed to Doughty Street.

BOZ,
IN 1836.

From a Drawing by Samuel Laurence.
In the possession of Horace N. Pym.

Of this portrait F. G. Kitton writes in "Charles Dickens by Pen and Pencil": "The artist has succeeded in rendering with marvellous skill the fire and beauty of the eyes—the sensitiveness and mobility of the mouth."

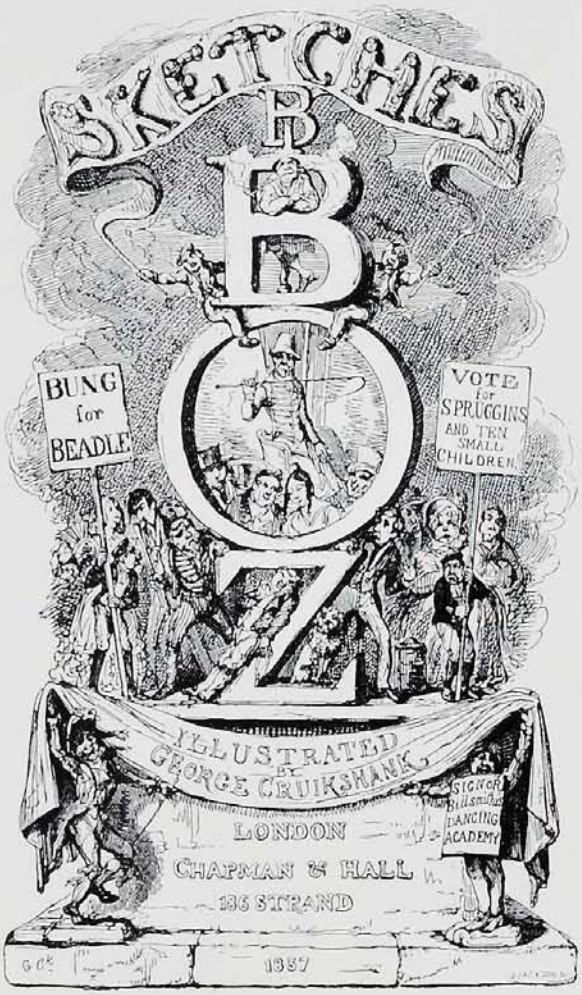


Drawn by F. G. Kitton.

DICKENS'S CHAMBERS IN FURNIVAL'S INN, 1836-7.

48, DOUGHTY STREET,

Where Dickens lived 1837–9.



WRAPPER DESIGN BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK FOR THE MONTHLY PARTS OF "SKETCHES BY BOZ." *(Reduced facsimile.*

Whilst Dickens was writing "Pickwick," Thackeray called on him at Furnival's Inn, proposing himself as illustrator, in succession to Seymour, who had committed suicide. At Doughty Street Dickens finished writing "Pickwick," and wrote "Oliver Twist" and "Nicholas Nickleby."

Photo by Walter Dexter. THE BULL HOTEL, ROCHESTER.

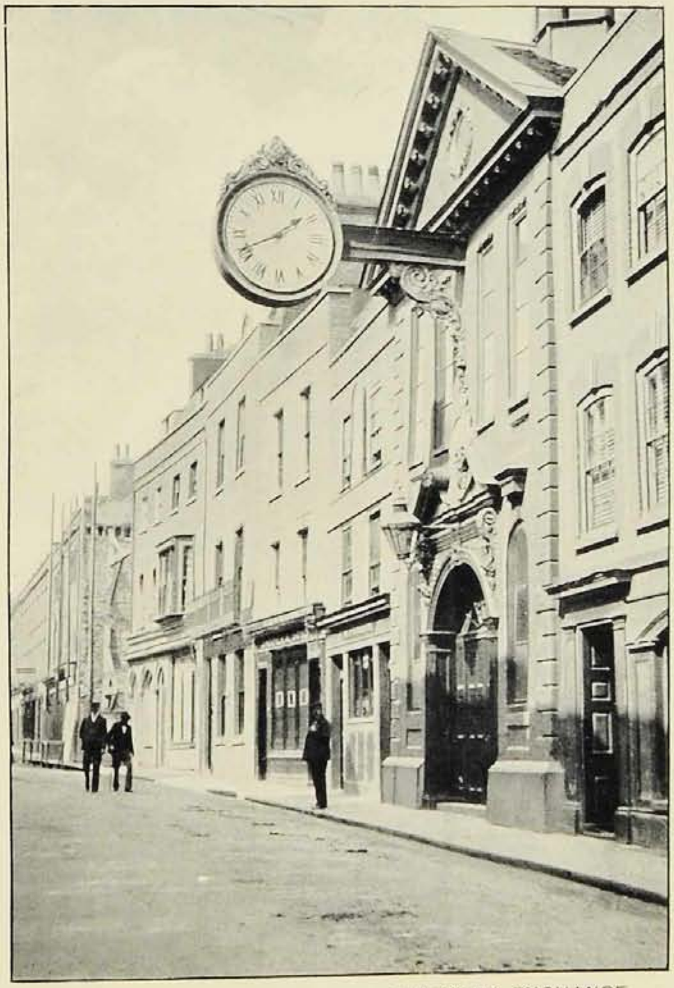


Photo by Walter Dexter THE CORN EXCHANGE, ROCHESTER HIGH STREET.

Mr. Pickwick, with Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Jingle, came by coach from London to Rochester, where they put up at the Bull Hotel. Dickens describes Rochester in "The Great Winglebury Duel," one of the stories in his first book, and, as Cloisterham, in his last book, "Edwin Drood." It entered largely into the recollections of his childhood, and writing of these in after years he related "how he thought the Rochester High Street must be at least as wide as Regent Street, which he afterwards discovered to be little better than a lane; how the public clock in it, supposed to be the finest clock in the world, turned out to be as moon-faced and weak a clock as a man's eyes ever saw."

From "The Childhood and Youth of Dickens."
by Robert Langton. (Hutchinson).

PARLOUR OF THE LEATHER BOTTLE,
COBHAM, KENT.

When Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Winkle and Mr. Snodgrass arrived at Cobham in pursuit of Mr. Tupman, who had fled from Dingley Dell in despair after Miss Wardle had eloped with Jingle, they found the Leather Bottle, "a clean, commodious village ale-house," and asked for Mr. Tupman. "'Show the gentlemen into the parlour,Tom,' said the landlady. A stout country lad opened a door at the end of the passage, and the three friends entered a long, low-roofed room, furnished with a large number of high-backed, leather cushioned chairs, of fantastic shapes, and embellished with a great variety of old portraits and roughly-coloured prints of some antiquity. . . . At the table sat Mr. Tupman."—*The Pickwick Papers.*

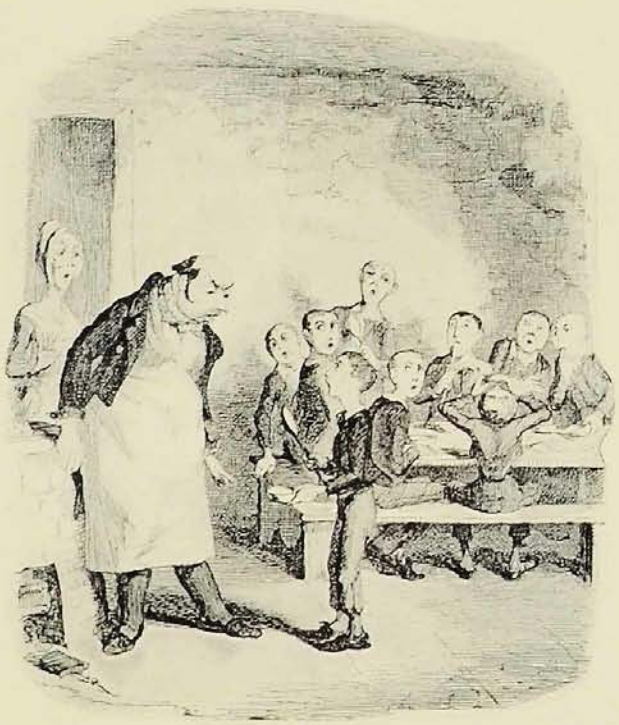
THE RACQUET COURT, FLEET PRISON.

From "The Pickwick Papers." Topical Edition.
(Chapman & Hall.)

"These staircases received light from sundry windows placed at some distance above the floor and looking into a gravelled area bounded by a high brick wall with iron *chevaux-de-frise* at the top. This area, it appeared from Mr. Roker's statement, was the racquet ground."—*The Pickwick Papers.*

From "The Pickwick Papers."
Drawn by Hablot K. Browne (Phiz).

MR. PICKWICK MEETS MR. JINGLE IN THE FLEET PRISON.



From "Oliver Twist."
Drawn by George Cruikshank.

OLIVER ASKS FOR MORE.

From Engravings lent by Messrs. Chapman & Hall.

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.
(1792-1878).

HABLOT K. BROWNE (PHIZ)
(1815-1882).

From a drawing by Sir John Millais, in the National Portrait Gallery.

JOHN LEECH
(1817-1864.)

Three of Dickens's earliest illustrators. Cruikshank illustrated the "Sketches by Boz," and "Oliver Twist." Phiz illustrated ten of the novels, "Pickwick" being the first and "A Tale of Two Cities", the last of these. Leech illustrated, wholly or in part, all of the "Christmas Books."

"How should you like to grow up a clever man, and write books?" said the old gentleman.

"I think I would rather read them sir" replied Oliver.

"What! Wouldn't you like to be a book-writer?" said the old gentleman.

Oliver considered a little while, and at last said he should think it would be a much better thing to be a bookseller; upon which the old gentleman laughed heartily, and declared he had said a very good thing, which Oliver felt glad to have done, though he by no means knew what it was.

Vide Oliver Twist in which the old gentleman does not say, though I do that Chapman and Hall are the best of booksellers past present or to come; and my trusty friends. which I give under my hand for the benefit of Edward Chapman, his book, this fourteenth day of November 1839.

Witness Boz.

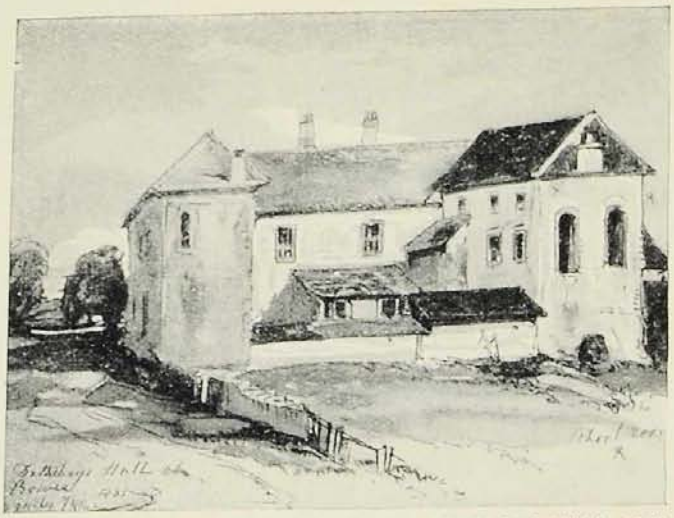
FACSIMILE OF INSCRIPTION IN A COPY OF "THE PICKWICK PAPERS" PRESENTED BY DICKENS TO EDWARD CHAPMAN, 14 NOVEMBER, 1839.

From "Oliver Twist."
Illustrated by Charles Pears' character studies,
and a frontispiece in colour by Fred Barnard.
(The Waverley Book Co.)

BILL SIKES.
By Fred Barnard.

FAGIN IN THE CONDEMNED CELL.
"He sat down on the stone bench opposite the door."
Drawn by J. Mahoney.

From "Oliver Twist."
With twenty-eight illustrations by J. Mahoney.
(Chapman & Hall.)



From a Drawing by Miss Ryland.
In the South Kensington Museum.

DOTHEBOYS HALL, 1841.

From "Nicholas Nickleby."
Drawn by Phiz.

BRIMSTONE-AND-TREACLE DAY
AT DOTHEBOYS HALL.

Dotheboys Hall is said to have borne a close resemblance to Shaw's Academy, at Bowes, Yorkshire, but Dickens asserted that "Mr. Squeers is the representative of a class and not of an individual." The Hall is described in "Nicholas Nickleby" as "a long, cold-looking house, one story high, with a few straggling outbuildings behind, and a barn and stable adjoining."

From a Sketch by Samuel Laurence in 1837.

CHARLES DICKENS.

Photo by Walter Dexter.

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP, PORTUGAL STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

The Old Curiosity Shop in Portugal Street claims to be the original of the quaint old house Dickens described as the home of Little Nell and her grandfather. Doubts have been cast on its authenticity, but in appearance and situation it is like enough to the Old Curiosity Shop of Dickens's fancy to satisfy all but very fierce experts.

GEORGE CATTERMOLE.

DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.

From a Painting by
E. M. Ward, A.R.A.

RICHARD DOYLE.

Doyle collaborated with Leech, Maclise and Stanfield in illustrating "The Chimes," etc. Maclise painted and drew some of the best of the earlier portraits of Dickens.

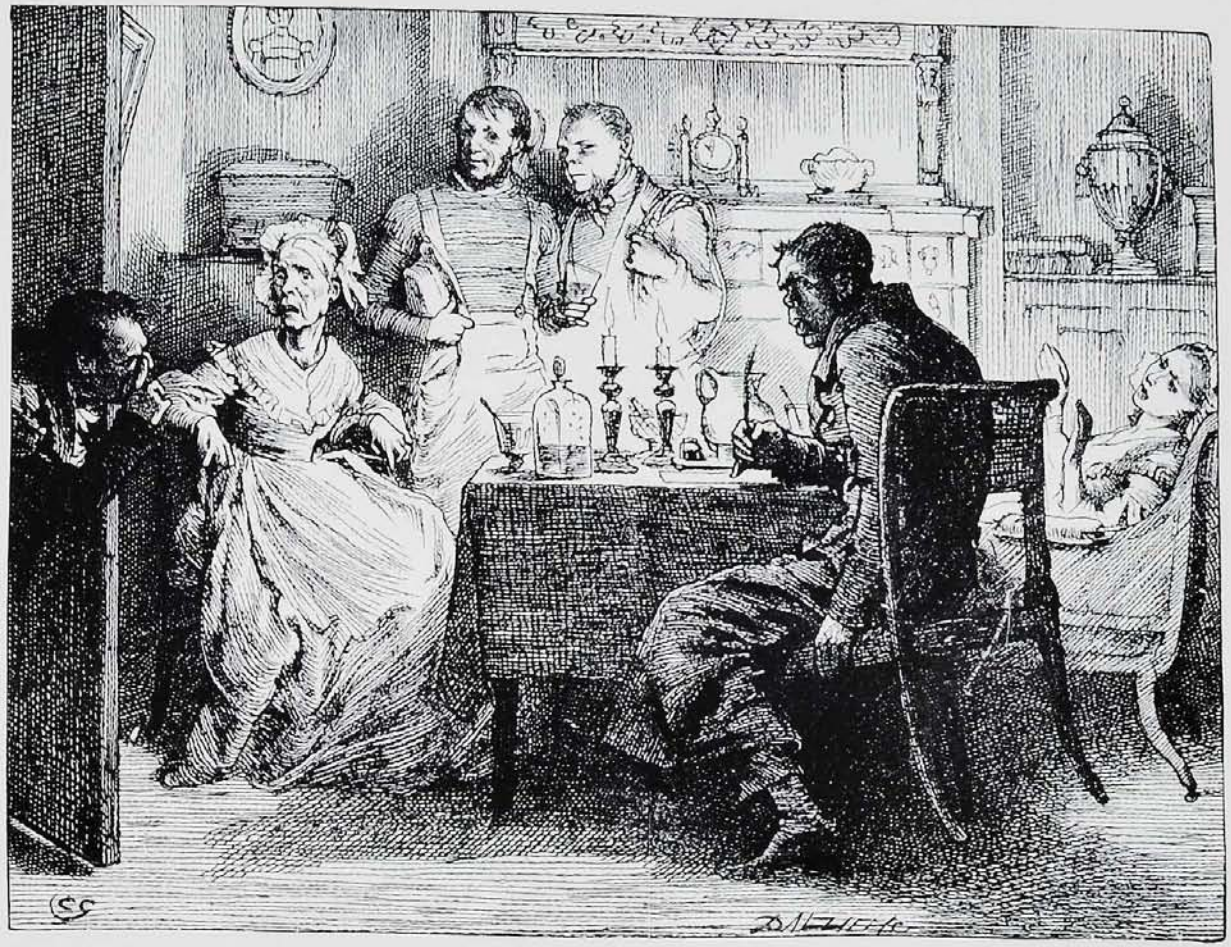
Drawn by George Cattermole.
From " The Old Curiosity Shop." (Chapman & Hall.)

THE STRANGER BRINGS LITTLE NELL HOME.

From a Drawing by George Cattermole. In the South Kensington Museum.

THE GRAVE OF LITTLE NELL.

" The Old Curiosity Shop " made its first appearance in " Master Humphrey's Clock," and was illustrated by Cattermole, Phiz and Maclise.

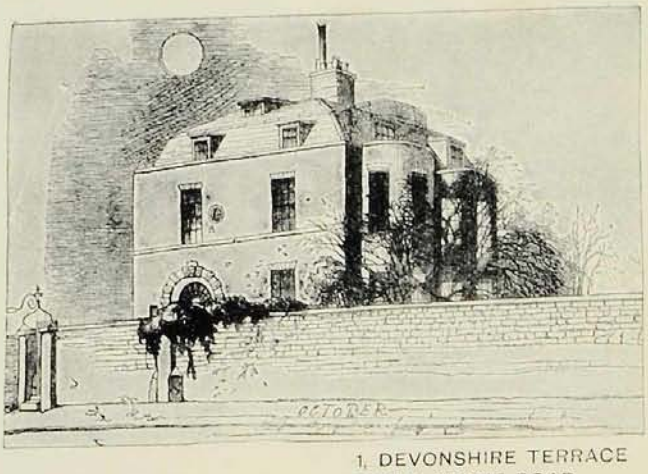


From "The Old Curiosity Shop."
(Chapman & Hall.)

"AQUILINE!" CRIED QUILP, THRUSTING IN HIS HEAD.
Drawn by Charles Green.

From a painting by R. J. Lane,
In the possession of His Majesty the King.

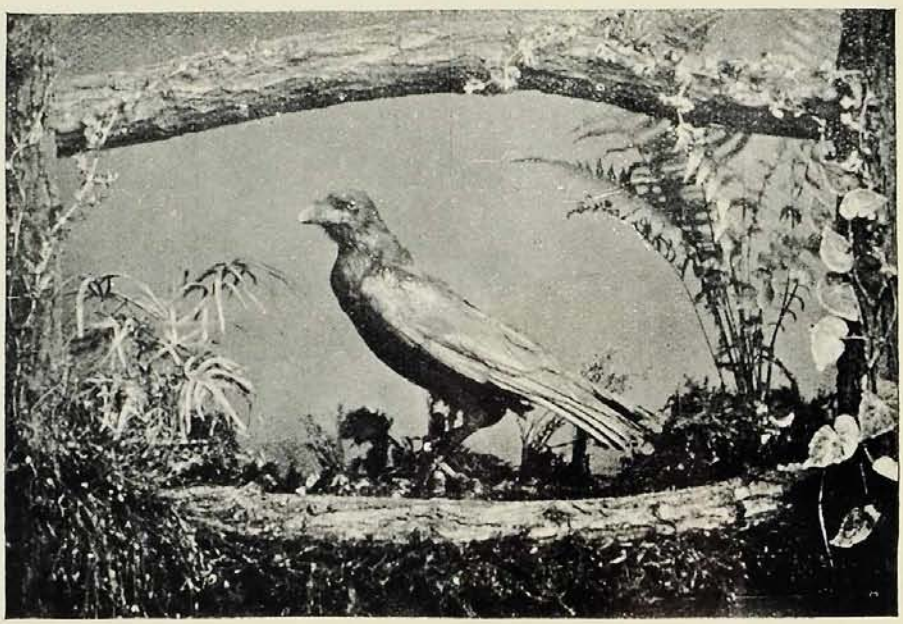
CHARLES DICKENS
in 1840, when he was writing "The Old Curiosity Shop."



1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE
MARYLEBONE ROAD,

Where Dickens lived 1839–51.

From a Sketch by Daniel Maclise.



"GRIP" THE RAVEN.

"Grip," one of the ravens Dickens kept whilst he lived at Devonshire Terrace, was the original of "Grip" in "Barnaby Rudge." After death it was stuffed, and when sold at the Dickens sale it realised £120.

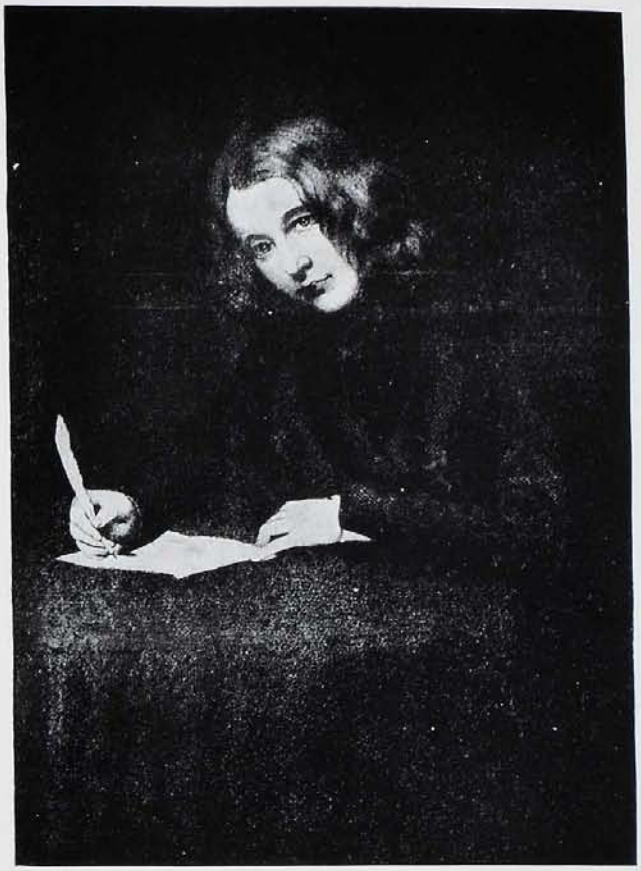
From "Barnaby Rudge."
(Waverley Book Co.)

THE LANDLORD OF THE MAYPOLE.
Drawn by Charles Pears.

"The name of him upon whom the spirit of prophecy thus descended was John Willet, a burly, large-headed man with a fat face which betokened profound obstinacy and slowness of apprehension, combined with a very strong reliance on his own merits."—*Barnaby Rudge.*

Drawn by Maclise, in 1842.
From Forster's "Life of Dickens." (Chapman & Hall.)

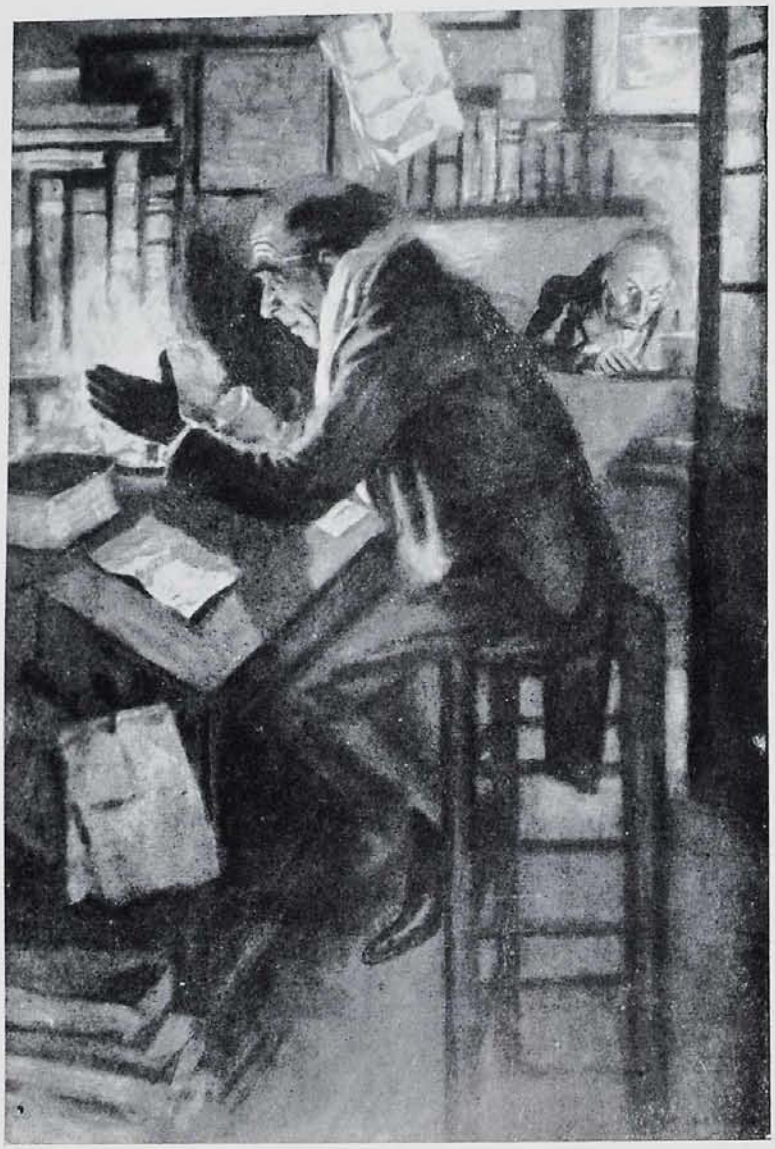
THE FOUR ELDER CHILDREN OF DICKENS—CHARLIE, MAMIE, KATIE, AND WALLY, WITH "GRIP" THE RAVEN.



CHARLES DICKENS
IN 1842.

From a painting made by Francis Alexander, in Boston, U.S.A.
From "Charles Dickens in America." (Chapman & Hall.)

"The artist's rooms were at No. 41, Tremont Row. . . . The doorway and stairs leading to the painter's studio were thronged with ladies and gentlemen eagerly awaiting his [Dickens's] appearance. . . . The crowd waited till the sitting was over, and saw him back again to the Tremont; and this was repeated every morning while he was sitting for his picture."
From "Charles Dickens in America," by W. Glyde Wilkins.



From "A Christmas Carol."
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

BOB CRATCHIT AT HIS DESK.
"The clerk put on his white comforter and tried to warm himself at the candle."
From a drawing in colour by A. C. Michael.

SCROOGE AND BOB CRATCHIT.

" We will discuss your affairs . . . over a Christmas bowl of smoking Bishop, Bob ! "

Drawn by John Leech.
From " A Christmas Carol." (Chapman & Hall.)

TINY TIM.
By A. C. Michael.

From one of A. C. Michael's colour illustrations to " A Christmas Carol." (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Drawn by Daniel Maclise, R.A.
From Forster's "Life of Dickens."
Chapman & Hall.)

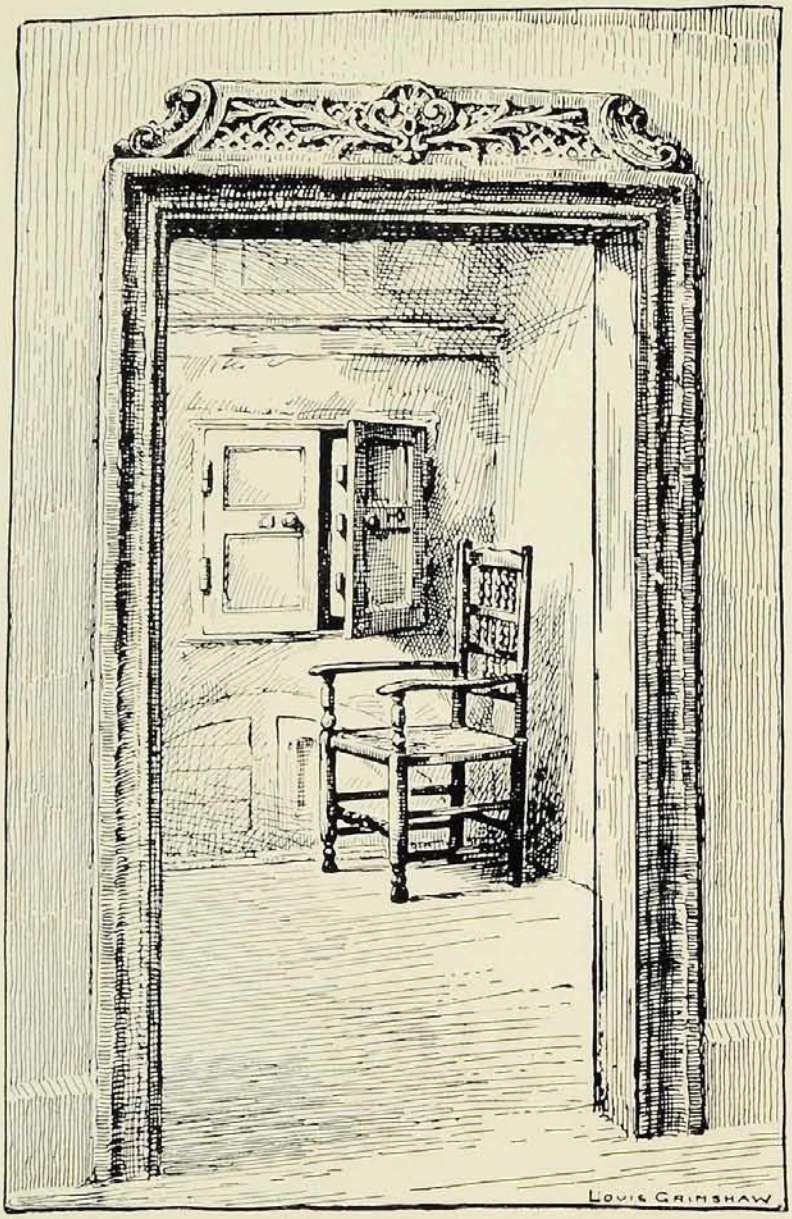
CHARLES DICKENS, HIS WIFE AND HER SISTER. 1843.

The original of this pencil drawing, which was executed a few years after Dickens's marriage, is now in the South Kensington Museum. It was engraved by C. H. Jeens and dated in error 1842. "Never did a touch so light carry with it more truth of observation," wrote Forster. "The likenesses of all are excellent. Nothing ever done of Dickens himself has conveyed more vividly his look and bearing at this yet youthful time."

CHARLES DICKENS (1844).
From a miniature by Miss Margaret Gilles.
From Forster's "Life of Dickens."
(Chapman & Hall.)

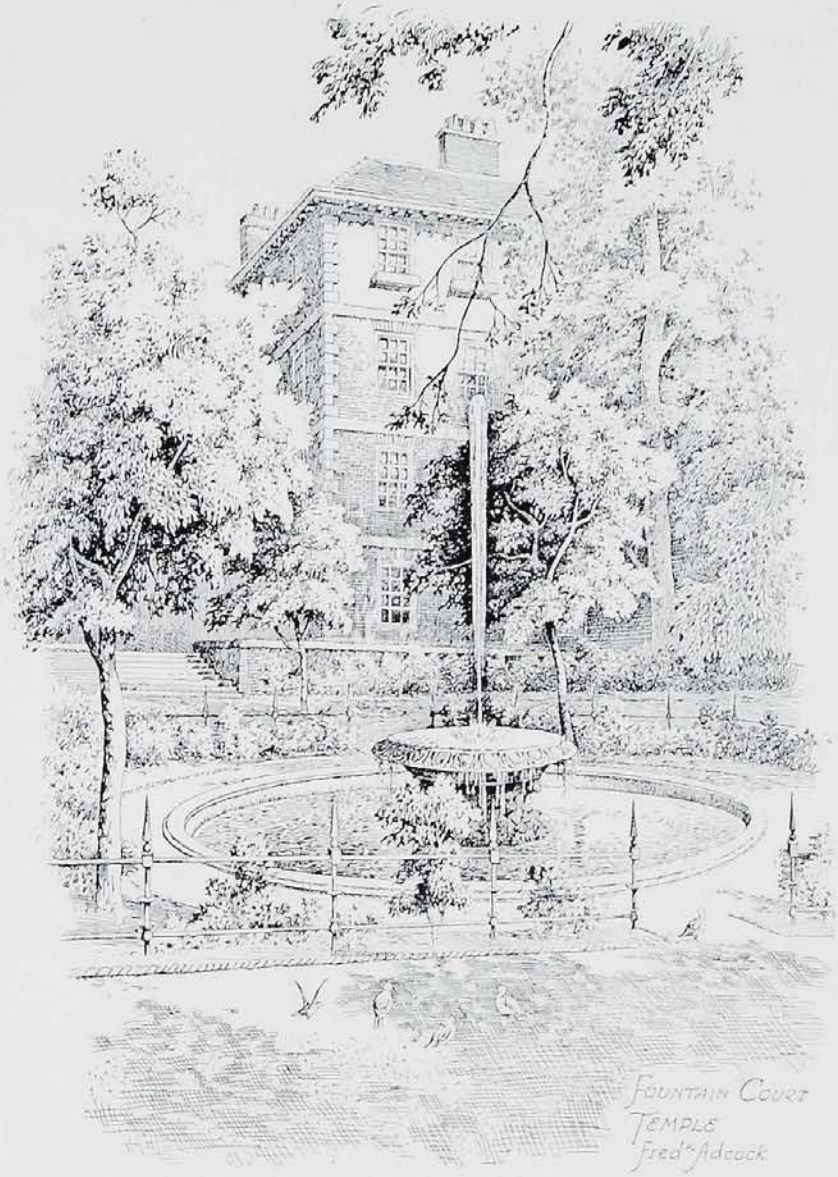
MRS. GAMP AND BETSY PRIG.
Drawn by Phiz.
From "Martin Chuzzlewit."
(Chapman & Hall.)

The interesting miniature by Miss Margaret Gilles has mysteriously disappeared, and is probably buried in some private collection. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1844.



Drawn by Louis Grimshaw. CHEERYBLE HOUSE, MANCHESTER.

Manchester has many interesting associations with Dickens, and one of the most famous was the warehouse of Messrs. William and Daniel Grant, merchants, the originals of the Cheeryble Brothers of "Nicholas Nickleby." This has now been pulled down. Mr. Grimshaw's sketch shows the finely carved door lintels and, within the room, the quaint armchair that was used by Tim Linkinwater standing beside the old safe built into the wall. Our reproduction is from the drawing in the possession of Mr. R. J. Broughton, of Crumpsall, Manchester. Portraits and a record of the Brothers Grant are given in "The Dickens Originals" by Edwin Pugh (Foulis).



From "The Booklover's London," by
A. St. John Adcock.
Illustrated by Fredk. Adcock (Methuen).

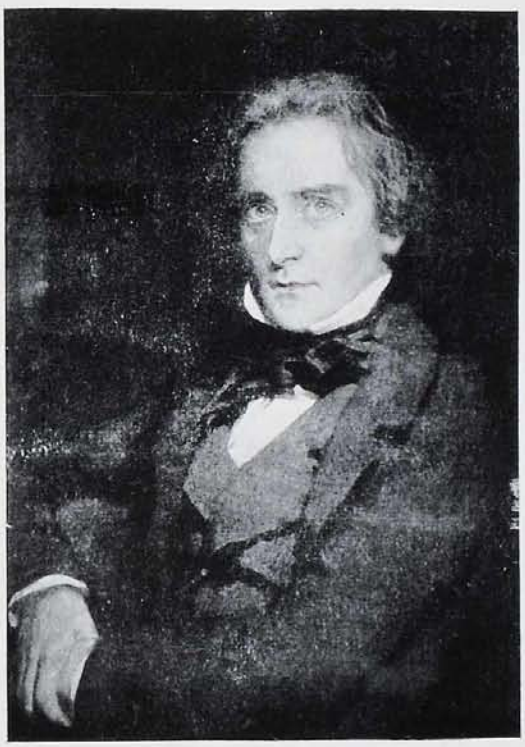
FOUNTAIN COURT, TEMPLE.
THE MEETING PLACE OF TOM PINCH AND HIS SISTER (*Martin Chuzzlewit*).

Drawn by Charles Green, R.I.
From " The Chimes."
(A. & F. Pears.)

TROTTY VECK AND SIR JOSEPH BOWLEY.
" From Alderman Cute, Sir Joseph."
" Is this all? Have you nothing else, porter?"
enquired Sir Joseph.

THOMAS HOOD (1799-1845).

ALBERT SMITH (1816-1860).



DOUGLAS JERROLD (1803-1857).

MARK LEMON (1809-1870).

The portrait of Hood is from the painting by an unknown artist in the National Portrait Gallery; and of Albert Smith from a photograph by Mayall. Hood was one of Dickens's circle in the earlier years of his fame; and Albert Smith, author of "The Adventures of Mr. Ledbury," "Christopher Tadpole," etc., was in his day one of the most successful of Dickens's imitators.

The portrait of Mark Lemon is from an old photograph kindly lent by his daughter, Mrs. Alice Martin; that of Jerrold is from the portrait by Sir Daniel Macree in the National Portrait Gallery. Both were among Dickens's most intimate friends, and associated with him as actors in his theatrical productions.

Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian*.

DICKENS.

From a Drawing from life by Charles Martin in 1844.

From an Engraving by C. H. Jeens.
After the original sketch by Daniel Maclise, R.A.
Now in South Kensington Museum.

DICKENS READING "THE CHIMES," TO HIS FRIENDS AT 58, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, ON THE 2nd DECEMBER, 1844.

Writing of this pencil drawing by Maclise, Forster says: "It will tell the reader all he can wish to know. He will see of whom the party consisted - and may be assured (with allowance for a touch of caricature to which I may claim to be considered myself as the chief and very marked victim) that in the grave attention of Carlyle, the eager interest of Stanfield and Maclise, the keen look of poor Laman Blanchard, Fox's rapt solemnity, Jerrold's skyward gaze, and the tears of Harness and Dyce, the characteristic points of the scene are sufficiently rendered."

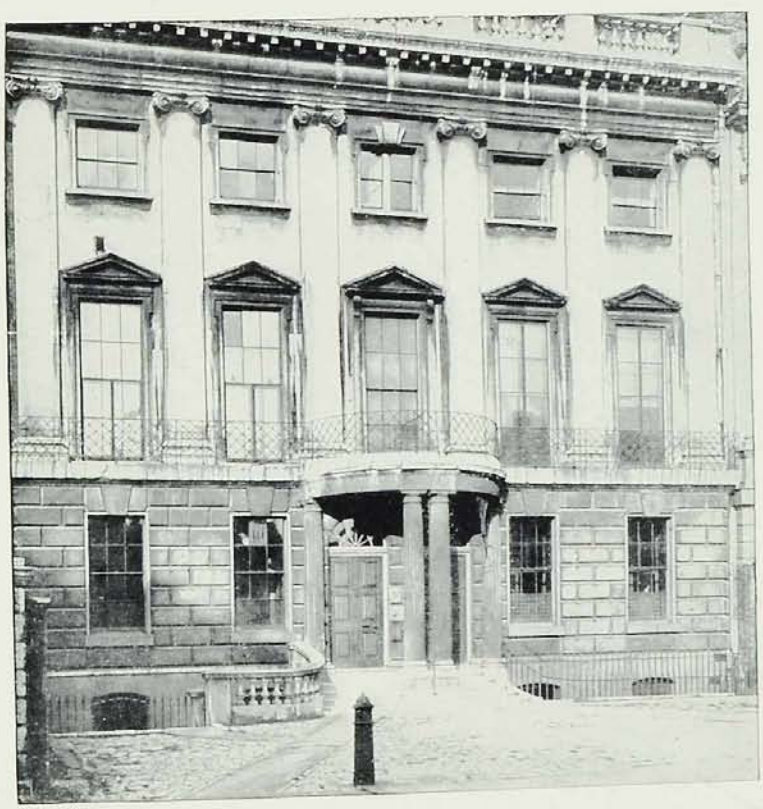
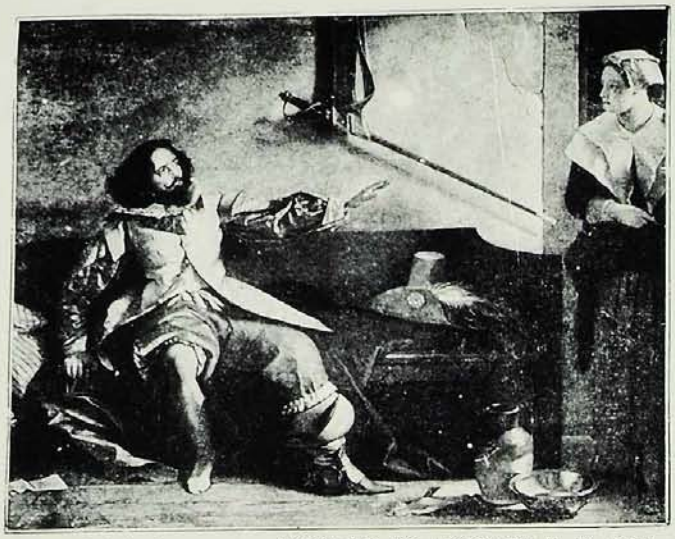


Photo by T. W. Tyrrell.

58, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, WHERE JOHN FORSTER LIVED.



From a Painting by C. R. Leslie, R.A.

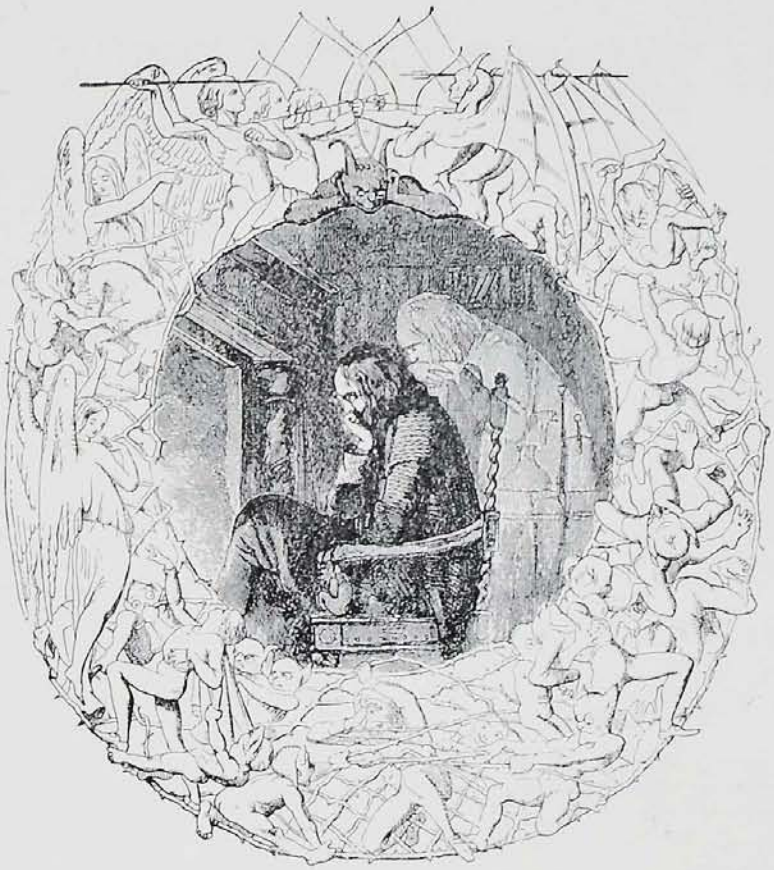
DICKENS AS "BOBADIL" IN BEN JONSON'S "EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR."

CLARKSON STANFIELD, R.A.

FRANK STONE, A.R.A.

Dickens played Bobadil in "Every Man in His Humour" at the Royalty Theatre on the 21st September, 1845. Others in the caste were Mark Lemon, as Bainworm; John Forster, as Kitely; George Cattermole, as Wellbred; Douglas Jerrold, as Master Stephen; Frank Stone, as Justice Clement; and John Leech, as Master Mathew.

Frank Stone was one of the illustrators of "The Haunted Man," and did extra illustrations for "Nicholas Nickleby" and "Martin Chuzzlewit." Stanfield was one of Dickens's closest friends. He contributed illustrations to all the Christmas Books except "A Christmas Carol," and painted scenes for some of the plays that Dickens and his amateur company produced.



Drawn by Sir John Tenniel.
From "The Haunted Man." (Chapman & Hall.)

HAUNTED.

Drawn by Harry Furniss.
From 'Dombey and Son." (Educational Book Company.)

THE RETURN OF SOL GILLS.

"The Captain's cards dropped out of his hand . . . He recovered himself with a great gasp, struck the table a tremendous blow and cried in a stentorian roar, 'Sol Gills, ahoy!'"

From a painting by Augustus Egg, R.A

MISS GEORGINA HOGARTH.
ABOUT 1850.

Georgina Hogarth was a younger sister of Mrs. Charles Dickens.
There is a good account of Augustus Egg, the artist, in Mr. Teignmouth Shore's "Charles Dickens and his Friends" (Cassell).

CHARLES DICKENS
IN 1851.

From an etching after a daguerrotype by Mayall.

The first practitioner of daguerrotype portraiture in England was Mr. John Mayall, Senr., who left America in 1845 and established himself in Regent Street, London. During a period of several years Dickens sat from time to time to Mr. Mayall, this, the first of these portraits, being taken while he was writing "David Copperfield."

From an engraving by Hablot K. Browne (Phiz). PAUL DOMBEY.

Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co.

"Awaking suddenly, he listened, started up, and sat listening.

"Florence asked him what he thought he heard.

"'I want to know what it says,' he answered, looking steadily in her face. 'The sea, Floy, what is it that it keeps on saying?'

"She told him that it was only the noise of the rolling waves.

"'Yes, yes,' he said. 'But I know that they are always saying something. Always the same thing. What place is over there?' He rose up looking eagerly at the horizon.

"She told him that there was another country opposite, but he said he didn't mean that; he meant farther away—farther away!

"Very often afterwards in the midst of their talk, he would break off to try to understand what it was the waves were always saying; and would rise up on his couch to look toward that invisible region far away."—*Dombey and Son*

From " Rambles in Dickens Land," by R. Allbutt.
Illustrated by Helen M. James (Chapman & Hall).

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE.

After leaving Devonshire Terrace, Dickens lived for nearly nine years, dating from November, 1851, at Tavistock House, now demolished. During this period he wrote " Bleak House," " Hard Times," part of " Little Dorrit," and " A Tale of Two Cities."

Drawn by Phiz.
From "David Copperfield."
(Chapman & Hall.)

DAVID TAKES TEA WITH MRS. HEEP AND URIAH.

"I had begun to wish myself well out of the visit to Uriah and Mrs. Heep, when Mr. Micawber walked in, exclaiming, 'Copperfield! Is it possible!'"

IN MR. WICKFIELD'S OFFICE.

"Oh, thank you, Master Copperfield," said Uriah Heep, "for that remark! It is so true! 'umble as I am, I know it is so true!"

Drawn by Fred Barnard.
From "David Copperfield."
(Chapman & Hall.)

From "David Copperfield."
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

MRS. MICAWBER AND FAMILY.
From a Painting by Frank Reynolds, R.I.

". . . Mrs. Micawber, a thin and jaded lady, not at all young, who was sitting in the parlour with a baby at her breast. This baby was one of twins; and I may remark here that I hardly ever, in all my experience of the family, saw both the twins detached from Mrs. Micawber at the same time. . . . There were two other children: Master Micawber, aged about four, and Miss Micawber, aged about three."—*David Copperfield.*

"From "David Copperfield."
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

MR. MICAWBER.
From a Painting by Frank Reynolds, R.I.

"I went in, and found there a stoutish, middle-aged person, in a brown surtout and black tights and shoes. . . . His clothes were shabby, but he had an imposing shirt-collar on. He carried a jaunty sort of a stick with a large pair of rusty tassels to it, and a quizzing glass hung outside his coat."—*David Copperfield.*

"INEXHAUSTIBLE DIRECTIONS ABOUT THEIR PARCELS."
By C. E. Brock.

From "The Cricket on the Hearth."
With illustrations in colour by C. E. Brock.
(Dent.)

DICKENS . . . . . .

DICKENS'S BEST STORY . . . .

DICKENS AND LONDON . . . .

TO CHARLES DICKENS: . . . .

CHARLES DICKENS: SOME PERSONAL
RECOLLECTIONS AND OPINIONS .

DICKENS IN CAMP . . . . . .

DICKENS RETURNS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

DICKENS'S BEST STORY*

By William De Morgan

AMONG judgments which, passing current for want of a contradiction, may come to be accounted criticism's last word, should be placed, if I am not greatly mistaken, a popular decision that the following story ["Our Mutual Friend"] can only claim a low place among Dickens's works. I have derived my impression that this opinion exists more from current conversation than from any absolute unanimity of literary criticisms. Nevertheless, I cannot remember that I have ever read one whose writer assigned to "Our Mutual Friend" the place I am myself inclined to give it.

It is probably impossible to scale any writer's works with accuracy. But intermittent attempts are made in this direction, more frequent as the immortality of the works in question becomes more obvious. It is only with the most ignoble effort of this sort that we are concerned at present—human disparagement, on the alert to find which item should be placed at the bottom of each author's list. I am satisfied that—whether by bias of convention or sincerity of conviction—a general referendum would leave those who think as I do about this book in a very small minority. Yet I am tempted to use the opportunity this preface gives, to enter a protest on its behalf, with implication of a less insistent one on behalf of "Little Dorrit"; which is, as I understand, its competitor for the lowest place in public estimation.

Look at the matter with me from my point of view, now that you have read or re-read the book. For of course you always read the preface last. Who does not—if he reads it at all?

The strength of a fiction lies in its construction, character, pathos, and humour. Say that a work stands supreme in all these, and what is left for us to add to it? At any rate, let us account these the main essentials until a fifth claims consideration. We need not quarrel about which of the four predominates in Dickens; though, if votes were cast, probably the second and fourth would score highest. What we have to do is to determine in which of these particulars

*Preface to The Waverley Book Company's edition of "Our Mutual Friend," illustrated with colour plate frontispiece by Fred Barnard, and black and white drawings by Charles Pears. Reprinted by permission.

the present novel fails to bear comparison with his earlier works. Its successor, "Edwin Drood," was placed *hors de concours* when one of the greatest misfortunes of modern literature hid its plot from us for ever.

In respect of construction, what is there in this book to justify the placing of "Nicholas Nickleby," "Martin Chuzzlewit," or "Dombey and Son" above it? In these three books the element of plot constitutes so small a part of the fascination of the work, that only a recent reader would venture to say off-hand in what the plot of each consists. He will at once recall, as tenants of his memory for ever, Mrs. Nickleby, in her own way unsurpassed and unsurpassable; Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Prig, supreme in theirs; Mr. Toots and Captain Cuttle, the Chicken and the Charitable Grinder. Less readily perhaps—for humour is remembered when pathos is forgotten—the actual story of Smike, apt to be obscured by the Squeers family and Mr. Crummles's company of players; the pathetic, however comically told, story of Charity Pecksniff's cruel disappointment, and her flippant pretty sister's disastrous success; the unmixed pathos of little Paul Dombey's death, and the grisly conception of the Skewton and Marwood duplicates, each a parent and child. But he will find even the crudest resumption of the plot of any of these three books no easy task. It may be that I am imputing too freely to others an opinion that belongs only to myself, when I say that any moderately careful reader of "Our Mutual Friend" will retain a fairly clear recollection of its highly dramatic plot.

I do not, however, wish to claim too much on this score; only to ask for the concession of a middle place. Yet even that must rank the work high, in respect of its literary structure. No reasonable verdict could place it on a level, in this respect, with "Bleak House," "Great Expectations," or "David Copperfield." In the first two of these the actual evolution, the continuous purpose, of the story, remains as a recollection, inseparable from its characters; in the last the consummate force and simplicity of the history of a lifetime not crowded with exciting incident, but from the very simplicity of its method capturing and retaining the reader's attention as even the most dramatic plots often fail to do, place the constructive power shown in the work on the very highest pinnacle of literary effort. Many may be inclined to rank "Barnaby Rudge" and the "Tale of Two Cities" as challenging comparison with these three. But

the works are so different in every respect that the parallel becomes impossible.

To which of the remainder of Dickens's works then are we to assign constructive power, as a story, that will place it definitely above "Our Mutual Friend." Surely not to "Pickwick," a miscellany interwoven with fragmentary tales, teeming with irresistible humour, a treasury of material for a thousand farces—but certainly not a story. Surely not to "Oliver Twist," in which the mechanisms inevitable for the placing of the characters on the stage—meaning rather Rose Maylie, or Mr. Grimwig, or the very improbable Monk, than Mr. Bumble or Mrs. Corney—are so transparently pegs on which to hang the repulsive Fagin; the vivid group of thief-aspirants, each with a self to himself; the touching figure of Nancy, who would have been a woman but for what men had made her; the dark figure and the tragic end of Bill Sikes. Possibly—though I admit that I write with hesitation—to the "Old Curiosity Shop." To waver, however, between this last and "Our Mutual Friend" as to which merits the higher place, is to assign a position to the more recent work above what I suppose to represent the popular verdict.

Now as to character—or, if so long a word is inevitable—characterisation. As no criterion exists of the precise intensity of individuality in a character—no characterometer, as it were—the only gauge of how much is contained in any volume must be its relative number of distinct individualities. This work contains a total of nearly fifty characters, three-fourths of which, at the least, are entirely without resemblance to any previous creation of the writer's.* Those who are able to detect Mr. Guppy in Mr. George Sampson, Mrs. Nickleby in Mrs. Wilfer, Cleopatra Skewton in Lady Tippins, and Bill Sikes in Rogue Riderhood—all identifications within my own experience—will very soon run riot, and find out that the Doll's Dressmaker and her parent resemble Little

* Mr. Boffin; Mrs. Boffin; Miss Abbey Potterson; Captain Joey; Bob Glibbery; Mr. Venus; Young Blight; Rev. Frank Milvey and wife; Mr. George Sampson; Mr. Alfred Lammle; Mrs. Alfred Lammle; her aunt (Medusa); Miss Podsnap; Mrs. Higden; Sloppy; Bradley Headstone; Miss Peecher; the Doll's Dressmaker and her drunken parent; Fledgeby; Riah; Gaffer Hexam; Lizzie; Riderhood; Veneering; Mrs. Veneering; Twemlow; Boots; Brewer; Podsnap and Mrs. Podsnap; Lady Tippins; Mortimer Lightwood; Eugene Wrayburn; Charley Hexam; Job Potterson; Jacob Kibble; Mr. Reginald Wilfer; Mrs. Wilfer; Bella Wilfer; Lavinia Wilfer; John Rokesmith; Silas Wegg; Pleasant Riderhood.

Nell and hers. I admit that this last comparison is constructed at random, but the marvellous insight of these critics may not be at fault, for all that. It detects resemblances that escape my coarser vision. To me, a comparison between Mrs. Billickin and Mrs. Bardell would be scarcely more absurd.

Surely such a record of multiplicity of character as the one I have indicated places the work among those of its author, in this respect, on a level with his greatest achievements; or, lest we should claim too much, suppose we say on the next shelf below them.

In attempting to weigh out due measure to this book's deserts in respect of pathos, I feel I am on delicate ground. It is always more difficult to appraise—or to praise—what calls for a tear than what provokes a laugh; and too many novel-readers, nowadays, can only be kept awake on the same terms as Polonius. The loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind is ready as soon as Momus claims his due. His hint is all-sufficient. Only, note this: the reader who sneers at the Orphan and Mrs. Higden as "sentimental" may have just wound up a complaint against Paul Dombey and Florence to the same effect, or added to his reputation for plain straightforward common sense by a denunciation of Little Nell. If you encourage him, he will, like enough, take a flying shot at Agnes Wickfield. So let his judgments go for what they are worth, and consider simply whether we ourselves are really prepared with an answer to the question: Do the pathetic or sentimental—hateful word!—passages of this book entitle it to a high place or a low one?

I myself am content to leave the question open, merely protesting against the placing of certain analogous passages of its predecessors above them. As, for instance, the love-making of Harry and Rose Maylie in "Oliver Twist," of the hero and Mary Graham in "Martin Chuzzlewit," even of Alan Woodcourt and Esther Summerson in "Bleak House," above the very singular and original courtship of Mr. Boffin's secretary. As to that of Lizzie and Eugene Wrayburn, it is a flower that scarcely blows until half the bones in Mr. Wrayburn's body are broken, and he is speechless from concussion of the brain. It is sorely handicapped too by the higher sensibilities of the couple, their discrimination between the ennobling passion that leads to the altar, and the degrading impulses of our lower nature that ignore it. It may not bear comparison with the best of Dickens's love-stories,

but it is so subordinate a passage in the book—the insane love-fever of the unhappy schoolmaster far surpassing it in interest—that it can hardly be held responsible for the relatively languid admiration in which, if I have not misled myself, even warm admirers of its author hold it. Whether I am right or wrong I do not know, but it is with no wavering confidence that I place the scene in which Bradley Headstone discloses his fatal passion for Lizzie above every analogous scene known to me in fiction. It certainly has no parallel in Dickens's other works.

One word about the character utilised for the resolution of this discord—the Jew Riah. This rather improbable personage, with his singular bias towards Jacobean English, has often been supposed to be a sort of *amende honorable* for Fagin, to soothe the susceptibilities of an offended Israel. Speaking in entire ignorance of what Charles Dickens may have said to friends still living, and, no doubt, of much that has been written on the subject, my belief is clear that Riah was not intended for anything of the kind. If he points any moral, it is that what may be called Shylockery should come to an end. In Dickens's day every Jew was still held by many persons to be at heart Shylock or Isaac of York, although the application of the rack and thumbscrew were no longer resorted to to exclude a dangerously clever race from competition in other employments. Nor do I for one moment suppose that Dickens was under the spell of an almost extinct *Judenhasse*, and that Fagin was chosen, *because* he was a Jew, to fill out the part of villain. The choice was simply made because Dickens had seen what every one may see who chooses to use his eyes, that throughout the underworld of London the Jew is very apt to become a leader. This is not because he is necessarily cleverer than his surroundings—I *have* met stupid Jews—but because he doesn't drink. Bill Sikes and Toby Crackit, Charley Bates and Noah Claypole were God-made men, just as much as Fagin; but beer-soaked men, gin-soaked men, as their fathers were, before them, through a long perspective of generations. Riah is merely another type of lower-class Jew, founded probably on some East End example who, mixing Yiddish with his English, gave the great author a scriptural impression which stayed by him, and coloured the portrait.

But even if construction, character, and pathos were disallowed to this novel by a unanimous world—if its plot were damned as the worst of Dickens's plots, its characters

as weak resuscitations of bygone types, its pathetic passages as sentimental and—whatever the word means—mawkish; if the whole Press united to make a diametrically contrary opinion an impertinence to the holder's fellow-men, he might still, if my convictions on the subject are worth a straw, rest his claims for the work on the fourth dimension I have imputed to Fiction. I am not forgetting the author's long record of irresistible humour. I am keeping it in mind that Sam Weller told the tale of the man who ate the crumpets and killed himself on principle: that his father's thought upon the mystery of Death was a speculation as to what the undertakers would do without it: that Mrs. Gamp, could she have afforded it, would have laid out all her fellow-creatures for nothing, such was the love she bore them; that she produced in the room she entered a feeling as though a passing fairy had hiccoughed, and had previously been to a wine-vaults. I am not forgetting—it is impossible to forget—a hundred things like this. But even with the memory of them upon me, and the consciousness that exaggeration would do no service to the memory I seek to exalt, I do not shrink from saying that "Our Mutual Friend," in respect of its humour, is in no respect inferior to any work of Charles Dickens, and that for its redundant wealth of that quality it might almost claim to stand highest. There is laughter even in its grisliest scenes, even in the one where Riderhood and the Schoolmaster are drowned. And this scene is certainly one of the most tragic in modern fiction.

CHARLES DICKENS AND LONDON

By O. Sack

I

ALTHOUGH born in Portsmouth Charles Dickens may be said to have been essentially a Londoner. His father brought him to the city when he was but two years of age, and for a very brief period they lived at 10, Norfolk Street (now Cleveland Street) by the side of the Middlesex Hospital, when an appointment in Chatham took the family there. In 1823 they again returned to London, and took up their residence at 16, Bayham Street, Camden Town. From this time onward until Charles Dickens acquired Gad's Hill Place, in Kent, in 1860, he resided in London, leaving it only for either holiday purposes or in search of new environment and change in writing his books.

That he loved London is but half truth. London with all its alluring associations of men, places and things was to him a sheer fascination. It became and remained a part of his very existence. He would walk about its streets for hours as a relief from work, always "seeing many little things, and some great things, which because they interest me," he says, in the preface to the "Uncommercial Traveller," "I think may interest others." And when away from it he pined and longed for it, as for instance when he was in Genoa working on his Christmas book, "The Chimes." Writing to a friend he says, "I seem as if I had plucked myself out of my proper soil when I left Devonshire Terrace; and could take root no more until I return to it. . . . Did I tell you how many fountains we have here? No matter. If they played Nectar, they would not please me half so well as the West Middlesex water-works at Devonshire Terrace." He craved for the London streets, and so missed the long night-walks before beginning anything, that he seemed, as he said, dumbfounded without them. "Put me down at Waterloo Bridge at eight o'clock in the evening, with leave to roam about as long as I like, and I would come home, as you know, panting to go on. I am sadly strange as it is, and can't settle."

Many such outbursts of desire for his beloved London came from him when away from it; its streets were as a lodestone to him. He knew London as perhaps no other person knew it, and there is scarcely a story, long or short, written by him, that does not exhibit his knowledge with loving accuracy. Indeed his novels are great prose epics of London, mirroring its life and manners in characters and scenes.

And so London of his day has come to be known as Dickens's London, with houses, streets and places made memorable by his facile pen as Dickensian landmarks.

The houses he lived in himself and in which his masterpieces were conceived and written have the first interest.

10, Norfolk Street, where his family lived from 1814–16, and 16, Bayham Street, Camden Town, the first London abode which has any vital association with the novelist's early life, have been referred to. The latter was a small house of the cottage type, and not, as Forster described it, "a small mean tenement." It was demolished a few months back, but it played so touching a part in the boyhood of Dickens that one laments its loss. The lad occupied a small garret in the house, and no doubt it is that one described in "David Copperfield" as the room occupied by its hero when lodging with the Micawbers. "My room," says little David, "was at the top of the house at the back—a close chamber, stencilled all over with an ornament which my young imagination represented as a blue muffin, and very scantily furnished." The description fitted it admirably when I visited it prior to its demolition, except so far as the "blue muffins" were concerned, the absence of which a witty member of the party accounted for, by suggesting that Time had had them for tea long long ago.

From here Dickens began to acquire his knowledge of London and its types, and in this very room he no doubt pondered over those first real beginnings of authorship which he thought "so clever" but which he was too nervous to show anyone. When later he conceived that wonderful "Christmas Carol" this very house must have been in his mind, for it exactly tallied with the home of the Cratchits, even to the outhouse in the back garden where the pudding was boiled in the copper on that famous Christmas morning. Bob, it will be remembered, lived in Camden Town, and it is curious, too, to notice that, with few exceptions, Dickens's own residences until he finally deserted London for his favourite

Kent, were within a short radius of this particular spot.

From Bayham Street the family took rooms in a larger house at 4, Gower Street, North, likewise demolished, where the novelist's mother made that courageous effort to start a school as a solution to the falling family fortunes. But notwithstanding the fact that little Charles, as he has told us, "left at a great many doors a great many circulars, nobody ever came to the school . . . nor do I recollect that anybody ever proposed to come, or that the least preparation was made to receive anybody." This failure necessitated another removal and the family went to live with Mrs. Roylance at 37, Little College Street, still in Camden Town. Things went from bad to worse, and shortly after, the novelist's father succumbed to the rigour of the law and removed to the Debtor's Prison in the Borough.

During this period little Charles, then at work in the blacking warehouse in Hungerford Market, lodged in a house in Lant Street, Borough, to be near his parents. It was in Lant Street that Bob Sawyer lived, and its dismal aspect was humorously pictured by the novelist in narrating the story of the famous party Bob gave to his friends. Released from the Marshalsea prison, John Dickens and family returned to Mrs. Roylance in Little College Street, thence, in 1825, removed to 13, Johnson Street, Somers Town, N.W. Here they remained for five years, and the fortune of the family having improved, Charles was taken from his uncongenial work and sent again to school—the Wellington House Academy in the Hampstead Road—which school he so minutely described in "Our School" many years after. The Johnson Street house exists to-day and bears a County Council tablet announcing the fact that it was once the residence of Charles Dickens.

The next few years of the novelist's life do not receive very minute attention of his biographer, John Forster, but recent researches reveal the fact that after leaving Johnson Street, his father lodged in a house in the Polygon, Somers Town, during 1829, and then took lodgings in Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy Square. The exact house in this street has not been traced, but the private publication in America of the correspondence between Dickens and Maria Beadnell and of his letters to his friend Kolle, prove that he lived there from 1830 to 1833, for many of the letters are dated from Fitzroy Street, each, however, devoid of a number. These were the

days when he was a lawyer's clerk, and incidentally a young lover. But that is another story.

In 1833 his family moved to 18, Bentinck Street, Cavendish Square, again as lodgers, and there is a significant interest attached to the house, for during its occupancy Charles Dickens entered the House of Commons as a reporter, and first blossomed out as an author. It is also evident that at this time Charles Dickens left the family hearth and took lodgings for himself, for it is on record that he resided for a period in Cecil Street, and probably also in Buckingham Street, Strand. The description of David Copperfield's chambers, under the care of Mrs. Crupp, in the latter street, may possibly be recollections of his own in either or both of these streets. He had by this time determined on a literary career, and anticipating success he took more commodious chambers in Furnival's Inn, Holborn, in 1835, where he wrote most of his "Sketches by Boz" and "Pickwick Papers." It was whilst here that he became engaged to Miss Catherine Hogarth, and rented lodgings at 11, Selwood Terrace, Fulham, for a few weeks, in order that the marriage might take place at St. Luke's Church, Chelsea. The honeymoon was spent at Chalk, a village in Kent, and the couple returned to Furnival's Inn, where they remained until 1837. In that year 48, Doughty Street, Mecklenburgh Square, was rented, where it may be said the novelist and his wife started their first home. Here he completed "The Pickwick Papers," wrote "Oliver Twist" and "Nicholas Nickleby."

In 1839 he moved to a larger house at 1, Devonshire Terrace, and remained there until 1851, during which period were written "The Old Curiosity Shop," "Barnaby Rudge," "Martin Chuzzlewit," "Dombey and Son," "David Copperfield," "A Christmas Carol," "The Cricket on the Hearth," and "The Haunted Man." From here he made brief changes for holiday and other reasons, staying on different occasions at 4, Ailsa Park Villas, Twickenham, 1838; Wylde's Farm, Hampstead, 1839; and Elm Cottage, Petersham, 1839; at Cobley's Farm, Finchley, 1843; 9, Osnaburgh Terrace, Euston Road, 1844; and 1, Chester Place, Regent's Park, 1847. In 1851 he moved to his new residence Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, remaining there until 1860, when Gad's Hill Place, which he so admired in his early days, and so desired for a residence, became vacant. He at once purchased it and lived there until his death.

At Tavistock House were wholly or partly written "Bleak

House," "Hard Times," "Little Dorrit," "A Tale of Two Cities," and "Great Expectations," and here, too, many of the famous amateur theatrical performances in which he took so keen a delight were enacted.

At Gad's Hill the rest of the novelist's work was conceived, and the last pages of "Edwin Drood" written.

It is not in the scope of this article to deal with his residences outside of London.

As we have suggested he frequently left his home for a short period for change of environment to finish certain scenes in books or to create new ideas, and during his tenure of Gad's Hill he would take a house for the London season, bringing his work with him. These houses naturally have an interest for the reason that certain portions of his books were written in them although they cannot be rightly called his homes.

They are as follows: 5, Hanover Terrace, N.W., 1861; 16, Hyde Park Gate, W., 1862; 57, Gloucester Place, W., 1864; 16, Somers Place, W., 1865; 6, Southwick Place W., 1866; 5, Hyde Park Place, W., 1870.

This latter was his last London residence. He came there in January for his last readings at St. James's Hall and remained until the 30th May, when he returned to Gad's Hill. It was at this address the greater part of "Edwin Drood" was written and where he read the parts as they were finished to his friends. The actual last page was penned in the châlet in the garden of Gad's Hill.

II

G. A. Sala, himself an authority on London, once described himself as encountering Dickens in the oddest of places and most inclement weather: in Ratcliffe Highway, on Haverstock Hill, on Camberwell Green, in Gray's Inn Lane, in the Wandsworth Road, at Hammersmith Broadway, in Norton Folgate, and at Kensal New Town. "A hansom," he said, "whirled you by the Bell and Horns at Brompton, and there he was, striding, as with seven league boots, seemingly in the direction of North End, Fulham. The Metropolitan Railway sent you forth at Lisson Grove, and you met him steadily plodding towards the Yorkshire Stingo. He was to be met rapidly skirting the grim brick wall of the prison in Coldbath Fields, or trudging along the Seven Sisters Road at Holloway, or bearing, under a steady press of sail, underneath Highgate

Archway, or pursuing the even tenor of his way down the Vauxhall Bridge Road."

This is probably no exaggeration of what really happened, and throughout all his books we find the fruit of these pleasurable exertions. I suppose there is no part of London, or of what were its suburbs in his time, that is not associated in some way with his books. Houses, streets, hotels, effigies, pumps, monuments, have become familiar to us through that association which has added glory to existences that otherwise would never have been noticed at all. In this way it may be said that Dickens discovered London for the Londoner, and has made him acquainted with its streets quite as much as he has made him acquainted with persons who walk them.

If we start from any point in the metropolis we immediately come in contact with a Dickensian landmark. The City itself has many. The Guildhall where the Bardell and Pickwick case was tried; Bevis Marks, the home of Sampson Brass, which immediately conjures up the picture of the Marchioness and Dick Swiveller and also reminds us that the "Red Lion Inn" patronised by the said Richard, was on the opposite side of the way, so that having found the inn the position of Sampson Brass's home can be fixed. We can stroll into St. Mary Axe and see the kind of house that Riah lived in as manager of Pubsey & Co., with an elaborately-laid-out garden on the roof which so attracted the Doll's Dressmaker. We can take a view of the Little Wooden Midshipman still existing at Messrs. Norrie & Wilson's in the Minories, whose shop in Leadenhall Street had been the original of old Sol. Gill's, and make a special excursion to Aldgate Pump as Mr. Toots did. If time and inclination served, a visit might be made to the scene of the Brick Lane Branch of the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association in Brick Lane, and to the original of Titbull's almshouses, both down Whitechapel way. Having taken lunch at "The George and Vulture" in George Yard, Lombard Street, where Mr. Pickwick and Sam were "suspended" after the former's *contretemps* with Mrs. Bardell, or at the Albion Hotel in Aldersgate Street, where the dinner to celebrate the publication of "Nicholas Nickleby" was given, we would naturally stroll on to Goswell Street (now Goswell Road) where Mr. Pickwick lodged, and contemplate its situation much as Mr. Pickwick did himself when he threw up his bedroom window on that memorable morning when he and his friends started on their journey. Not far away is the City Road, changed of course

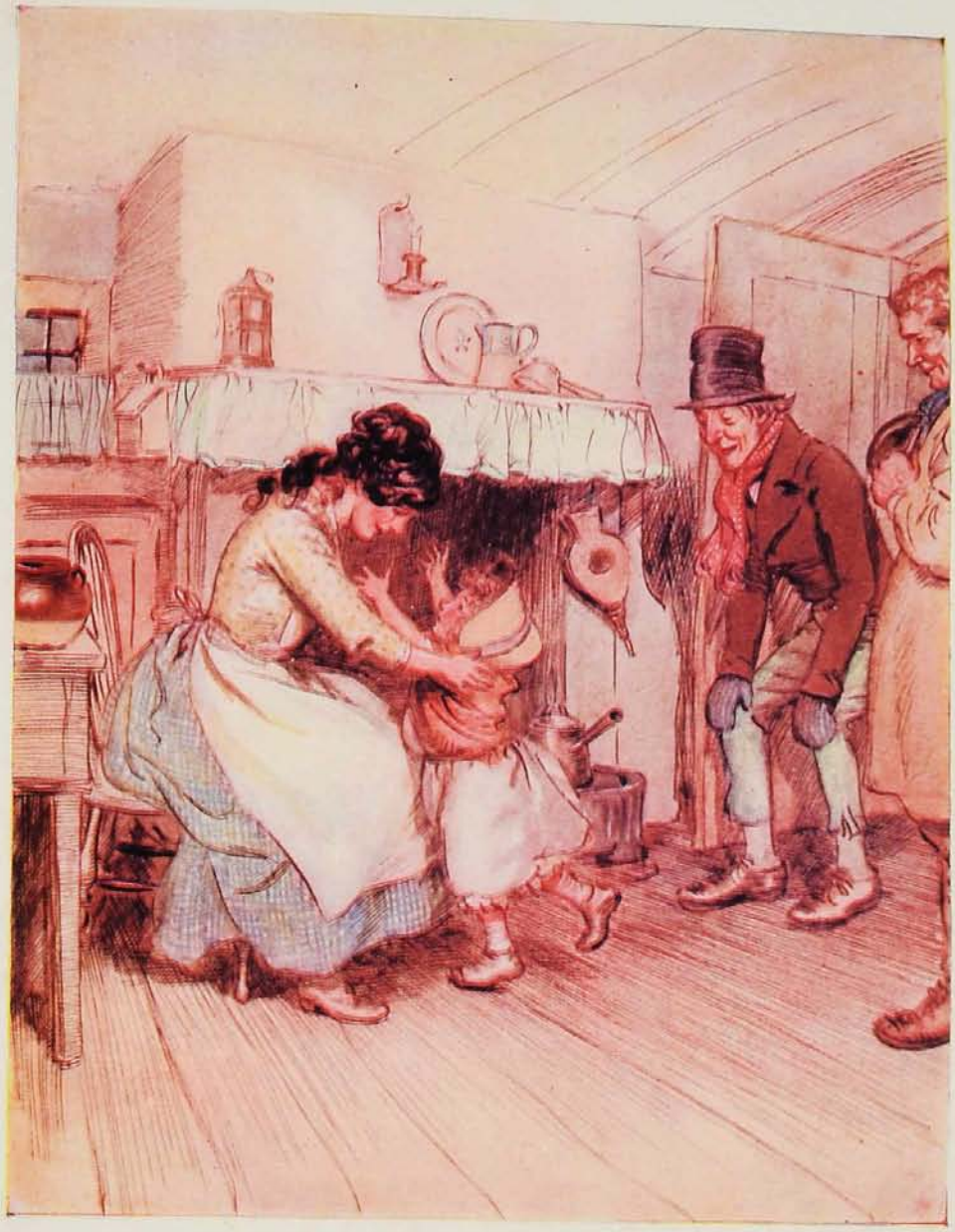
in atmosphere from the time when Mr. Micawber lived in Windsor Terrace there. Yet we shall find a pleasure in peeping at it. Retracing our steps towards Holborn, passing through Little Britain, where Mr. Jagger's offices once were, and having special thought for Mr. Wemmick, into Smithfield, not " the shameful place . . . all asmear with filth and fat and blood and foam " as Pip found it, we come out facing Newgate Prison. The fact that this is not the Newgate Prison of Dickens's day or of the Gordon Rioters' time matters not. It was on the very spot and very like it in general appearances, and the sight of it will bring to mind the riotous scenes of " Barnaby Rudge " and remind us that Wemmick escorted Pip through its interior and what a depressing scene he found there.

Turning down Snow Hill there will still be found a " Saracen's Head," no longer a Hotel, but occupied by an enthusiastic Dickensian manufacturer who has preserved the Nickleby associations with it by decorating its exterior with a statue of Dickens and scenes from Nickleby carved in stone on the building. This was not *the* " Saracen's Head " where Mr. Squeers and his pupils foregathered, although the present building stands on part of the old coach yard ; but its name and associations inspire the same feelings as the original would have done.

Wandering round about this district, we should come to " that open square in Clerkenwell which is yet called by some strange perversion of terms 'The Green,'" associated with Oliver Twist, Charlie Bates, the Artful Dodger and Mr. Brownlow ; to No. 54, Hatton Garden, which was the Police Court presided over by Mr. Fang, the Magistrate, before whom Oliver Twist was brought. Bleeding Heart Yard still exists, although nothing like Mr. and Mrs. Plornish's residence could be found there.

Wandering along Farringdon Street visions of many associations with Pickwick would crown our thoughts—the old Farringdon Market, the Fleet Prison, standing on the site of which is the Memorial Hall where many Dickens celebrations have taken place. Behind is La Belle Sauvage Yard, the one time coaching yard of a famous Inn where Tony Weller as coachman ended and started many a journey. On Ludgate Hill is still the London Tavern where Arthur Clennam stayed on a certain occasion, little altered in appearance from that time.

Wending our way over Blackfriars Bridge, which as Dickens has told us was his way home from the blacking warehouse,



From "The Chimes."
Illustrated in colour by Hugh Thomson, R.I.
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

"THE LITTLE VISITOR RAN INTO HER ARMS."
By Hugh Thomson, R.I.

we naturally would go " down that turning which has Rowland Hill's Chapel on one side and the likeness of a golden dog licking a golden pot over a shop door on the other " (both of which landmarks still exist although the former is no longer a chapel) ; but we would look in vain for the boot-lace shop, the hatters, or the show van with " the fat pig, the wild Indian and the little lady," all of which so fascinated him in those days. However, the drab atmosphere will recall all the feelings which these recollections of the novelist brought back to him. We might unconsciously look about as we pass Southwark Bridge (the " Iron " Bridge of " Little Dorrit "), for the house that the boy, in his attempt to conceal his home from Bob Fagin, bade him adieu at, making believe that he lived there. And by easy stages we find ourselves in Lant Street, the very street where a back attic was taken for him. " The little window " he remembered " had a pleasant prospect of a timber-yard ; and when I took possession of my new abode, I thought it was a paradise."

This neighbourhood, with streets named after Quilp, Little Dorrit and Arthur Clennam is a veritable piece of real Dickensland, having its numerous associations with " Little Dorrit," " The Old Curiosity Shop," " Oliver Twist," " The Pickwick Papers." Almost opposite Lant Street is St. George's Church, where Little Dorrit was christened, where she slept in the vestry on one occasion, and where she was eventually married ; the site of the Marshalsea Prison of the same book ; the public gardens, locally known as Little Dorrit's Play Ground, with the remaining walls of the prison as a background on which is a printed notice informing the world of the fact that the Marshalsea Prison was immortalized by Charles Dickens in " Little Dorrit " ; and at one time John Chivery's shop could be found in Union Road.

The " White Hart Inn," in the Boro', where Sam Weller came from, is of course demolished. But a visit to the " George Inn " will convey to the pilgrim the best idea obtainable in reality of what it was like. And one can still see the steps of London Bridge where Nancy and Mr. Brownlow had that momentous interview. The enthusiast may wander round the Monument with a view of getting the real atmosphere of Mrs. Todger's boarding-house, or try to identify Daniel Quilp's home on Tower Hill.

But there are other places in London to visit less conjectural. The Temple will revive many memories. Pip and his friend Pocket had chambers in Garden Court, to which

Magwitch came one night and revealed himself as Pip's unknown benefactor. In Pump Court, Tom Pinch was installed as librarian, and Fountain Court is famous as the spot where Ruth Pinch met her lover. Paper Buildings was where Sir John Chester had chambers, as did Mr. Stryver, K.C., whom Sydney Carton served as " Jackal." Just outside the Temple is Essex Street, where Pip found a lodging for his friend Magwitch, and going down it on to the Thames Embankment, through Charing Cross Gardens, we pass the bottom of Buckingham Street where Mrs. Crupp's house once stood, and reach Charing Cross Station, built on the site of old Hungerford Market, where the blacking factory stood, at which Dickens was the drudge. Opposite the station is the Golden Cross Hotel, whose name reminds us of the stirring incident between Mr. Pickwick and the cabman, although the original hotel stood where Nelson's Column now stands. Within a small radius of here Dickens associations and memories throng upon the pilgrim. Down Parliament Street is the " Red Lion," where young David Copperfield gave his " magnificent order " for a glass of the " genuine stunning," an actual incident of Dickens's own life ; there is St. Martin's Church on whose steps old Peggotty met David Copperfield that stormy night ; Chandos Street, Covent Garden, to which was removed the blacking shop in whose window Dickens sat pasting labels on the pots ; Maiden Lane, where he patronised the coffee shop ; Covent Garden Market, where he wandered about as a lad, and resorted later to get materials for his books ; Hummum's Hotel, where Pip slept on a certain notable night, and Tavistock Hotel, where Dickens himself stayed ; Broad Court in Drury Lane, where Miss Snevellicci lived, and Tom-All-Alones used to be not far away. Across the Strand there is Osborne's Adelphi Hotel, where Mr. Wardle and his friend stayed after Mr. Pickwick's release from prison, and partook of supper ; the Adelphi Arches through which the lad Dickens was fond of wandering, and many other places which the reader of the early chapters of Forster's " Life of Dickens " will recall. Along the Strand we come to Norfolk Street, where Mrs. Lirriper had her lodgings, on the corner of which street stands the house occupied by Messrs. Chapman & Hall at the time " The Pickwick Papers " were originally published, and from whose stall Dickens had previously purchased the magazine containing his first published story. Across the road is St. Dunstan's Church, the church of Trotty Veck's encounter with the Bells.

The old Inns of Court all figure more or less in Dickens's books or his life. Clifford's Inn, behind St. Dunstan's Church, has its most prominent reference in " The Pickwick Papers " as the scene of a gruesome tale told by the old man in the " Magpie and Stump " ; Lincoln's Inn Hall, where the case of Jarndyce *v* Jarndyce " dragged its slow length along " ; " Barnard's Inn," where Pip and his friend Pocket lived before removing into the Temple, and a terrible place according to Pip, where " dry rot, and wet rot, and all the silent rots that rot in neglected roof and cellar—rot of rat, and mouse, and bug, and coaching stables near at hand besides —addressed themselves faintly to my sense of smell, and moaned ' Try Barnard's Mixture ' " ; Sergeant's Inn, where Mr. Pickwick obtained his *habeas corpus* for getting into the Fleet ; Symond's Inn, now no longer existing, " a little pale, wall-eyed, woe-begone Inn, like a large dustbin of two compartments and a sifter " ; " Staple Inn," where Mr. Grewgious occupied a set of chambers behind the portal with those mystic letters " P.J.T." ; " Furnival's Inn," where the novelist himself lived and wrote " Pickwick," upon whose site stands the Prudential Assurance building with the sacred Dickensian spot marked by a bust of the novelist ; " Gray's Inn " where Traddles lived, and before his time Mr. Perker.

Indeed the whole environment of these legal Inns is crowded with Dickensian nooks and corners. There is Took's Court (the original of Cook's Court), Chancery Lane, where Snagsby's stationers' shop was ; John Forster's house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the original of Mr. Tulkinghorn's ; New Square and Raymond's Buildings associated with Dickens's own legal education, as well as with creations in his books ; " Thavie's Inn " in Holborn, where we are reminded of Mrs. Jellyby and Peepy with his head between the area railings. Going westward along Holborn, with visions of Bill Sikes and Oliver tramping to Chertsey on the burglary expedition, we think of the Gordon Rioters sacking the distillery—a distillery is still there on the site of the old one—of the " Black Bull " where Sairy Gamp nursed Mr. Lewsome, and Kingsgate Street, where she lodged over Pol Sweedlepipe's barber's shop, both buildings, by the way, now demolished ; passing Southampton Street, where Miss Twinkleton and Rosa lodged with Mrs. Billickin, on to Newman Street, Oxford Street, the scene of Mr. Turveydrop's dancing academy, through Golden Square, past Ralph Nickleby's house, not forgetting Dr. Manette's residence

in Carlisle Street, off Soho. And so by easy stages we could reach the more aristocratic West End, and think of Silas Wegg with his wooden leg and stall, watching a certain house in Wimpole Street, where Mr. and Mrs. Boffin resided. We might find Mr. Dombey's house, dreadfully genteel, in the region between Portland Place and Bryanston Square, Tite Barnacle's in Mews Street, Grosvenor Square, Mrs. Wititterly's in Cadogan Place, where Kate Nickleby acted as companion, 'which is in Sloane Street but not of it" for the people of Cadogan Place "look down upon Sloane Street and think Brompton Road low."

As a matter of fact, we could wander in all directions, North, South, East, West, as far afield as Jack Straw's Castle for a "red hot chop"; as Camberwell, in company with Wemmick to his castle; as Bow, in search of Mrs. Nickleby's cottage and the house of the "gentleman next door"; as Richmond, in search of the "House by the Green," where Pip drove Estella, and find many more landmarks and associations on the way. But space forbids, and enough has been said to indicate that London to-day is still Dickens's London. And in spite of the fact that the flight of time and the picks of housebreakers have swept much away, there are scores of Dickensian landmarks yet remaining to keep the novelist's memory green in the city he loved best and that plays so large a part in all his writings.

TO CHARLES DICKENS

By Leigh Hunt

AS when a friend (himself in music's list)
Stands by some rare, full-handed organist,
And glorying as he sees the master roll
The surging sweets through all their depths of soul,
Cannot, encouraged by his smile, forbear
With his own hand to join them here and there,
And so, if little, yet add something more
To the sounds volume and the golden roar :
So I, dear friend, Charles Dickens, though thy hand
Needs but itself, to charm from land to land,
Make bold to join in summoning men's ears
To this thy new-found music of our spheres,
In hopes that by thy *Household Words* and thee
The world may haste to days of harmony.

1860.

CHARLES DICKENS

SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS AND OPINIONS

THAT in our days Dickens meets with some depreciation is no sign that his vogue is on the wane. He has always had his depreciators. Even in the first great days of his abounding popularity there were some who stood apart and were superior to his charm. Emerson said, in his Journals, that Dickens could not write dialogue and had no insight into character, and that "'Oliver Twist' begins and ends without a poetic ray, and so perishes in the reading." But he thought better of some of the later books. The *Quarterly* was cold to "Pickwick"; the *Saturday* wrote contemptuously of "A Tale of Two Cities" when it first appeared, and in general if you compare what was written of the work of Dickens when he was living with what is written of it now you are brought to a conclusion that the appreciation of him is growing rather than diminishing.

By way of putting this to the test, we sent an application to a selection of representative authors, artists, and men and women eminent in English public life, and asked them to favour us with a note of: (1) Any personal recollection they had of or connected with Dickens; (2) whether their life or work owed anything to his influence; (3) their personal opinion of the value of his novels; whether they considered his humour appealed as strongly to readers of our time as of his own, and which they would rank as the greatest of his books. They responded in the following terms:

THOMAS HARDY

and the influence of Dickens:

I did not know Dickens, though when a young man in London I heard him read from his books in the Hanover Square Rooms.

But as I was thinking more of verse than of prose at that time, I do not know that my literary efforts owed much to his influence. No doubt they owed something unconsciously, since everybody's did in those days.

Your other questions I cannot answer.

THOMAS HARDY.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

thinks all Dickens's later works magnificent :

My works are all over Dickens; and nothing but the stupendous illiteracy of modern criticism could have missed this glaring feature of my methods—especially my continual exploitation of Dickens's demonstration that it is possible to combine a mirrorlike exactness of character drawing with the wildest extravagances of humorous expression and grotesque situation. I have actually transferred characters of Dickens to my plays—Jaggers in Great Expectations, to You Never Can Tell, for example—with complete success. Lomax in Major Barbara is technically a piece of pure Dickens. It is not too much to say that Dickens could not only draw a character more accurately than any of the novelists of the nineteenth century, but could do it without ceasing for a single sentence to be not merely impossible but outrageous in his unrestrained fantasy and fertility of imagination. No combination of phonography and cinematography could reproduce Micawber, Mrs. Sparsit, and Silas Wegg from contemporary reality as vividly as Dickens; yet their monstrous and side-splitting verbal antics never for a moment come within a mile of any possible human utterance. That is what I call mastery: knowing exactly how to be unerringly true and serious whilst entertaining your reader with every trick, freak, and sally that imagination and humour can conceive at their freest and wildest.

Dickens was one of the greatest writers that ever lived: an astounding man, considering the barbarous ignorance of his period, which left him as untouched by Art and Philosophy as a cave man. Compared to Goethe, he is almost a savage. Yet he is, by pure force of genius, one of the great writers of the world. His greatest and deepest contemporaries, Carlyle and Ruskin, William Morris and Tolstoy, knew this

perfectly well. All his detractors were, and are, second-raters at best.

There is no " greatest book " of Dickens : all his books form one great life-work : a Bible, in fact. But of course the tremendous series of exposures of our English civilization which began with Hard Times in 1854, and ended with Our Mutual Friend, throw his earlier works, entertaining as they are, into the shade. Little Dorrit is the work of a prophet—and no minor prophet : it is, in some respects, the climax of his work. Great Expectations is equally wonderful as a study of our individual struggles. But all are magnificent.

G. BERNARD SHAW.

SIR FRANCIS BURNAND

pictures Dickens as he saw him :

I saw Charles Dickens several times. *Vidi tantum.* I remember his coming into the stalls at the " Lyceum " to see Fechter, who at that time was performing in some melodrama. Dickens was not in evening dress, but wore a black velvet coat, white waistcoat, and a brilliant red tie. He did not stay for the last act. I heard him read the trial scene from " Pickwick " at St. James's Hall, and was greatly disappointed by his rendering of his own inimitable humour.

While my " Happy Thoughts " were appearing in Punch, I was introduced to Edmund Yates at the house of Montagu Williams, and I have never forgotten how immensely pleased I was when Yates informed me that Charles Dickens had told him how greatly he appreciated this work of mine.

I suppose that in some way or other my work has been influenced by the writings of Charles Dickens.

I do not think that his humour appeals to so many at this time as it did ; but it appeals as forcibly—and, speaking for myself, it appeals more forcibly than ever it did. His mere sentiment does not appeal to me : it seems theatrical. His strongest situations are melodramatically arranged, as for " a curtain."

I think I should select as my own special favourites " Pickwick," " David Copperfield," and " Oliver Twist." But his " characters " in *all* his books, without exception, are every one of them my constant friends and most amusing and interesting companions.

F. C. BURNAND.

F. ANSTEY

in praise of Dickens :

I think it very probable that, as I have been a constant reader of Dickens from the time I was ten years old, both my life and work have been influenced by him, though it is naturally difficult for me to say to what extent, or in what degree.

I consider that the combined humour and humanity of his novels give them the highest conceivable value. Judging from the fact that his works are as widely read as ever, if not more widely, I should say that his humour appealed at least as strongly to readers of our day, as of his own.

I rank " David Copperfield " as his greatest book. " Great Expectations " a very close second, and " A Tale of Two Cities " third.

F. ANSTEY.

MISS M. E. BRADDON

and the influence of Dickens :

I regret that my time is so closely occupied that I cannot possibly enter upon a theme upon which I could say much, namely, the influence of Dickens on my thoughts and work. I think it is impossible for anybody to have lived in the Mid-Victorian age and not to have been influenced by that most powerful and remarkable writer. But I can say further that his books were a considerable factor in the happiness of my younger years.

MARY MAXWELL.
(M. E. BRADDON.)

J. ASHBY-STERRY

tells of his meetings with Dickens :

As a youth I can remember it was a great delight to me to meet Dickens in the street and I used frequently to encounter him in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, which was his

quickest way from the office of *All the Year Round* to Charing Cross Railway Station. Sometimes, after staring hard at him, I would bolt down one of the alleys into the Strand and, something like Trabbs' Boy, turn up in another direction and meet him again. The last time I saw him—save at some of the final readings at St. James's Hall—was on the West Pier at Brighton. It was a miserable day, blowing hard and raining, and I thought I had the whole place to myself. But on walking round the head of the pier, behind the curved glass shelter, I beheld the author of "Pickwick!" He had his coat collar turned up and he was looking bronzed and hearty. Quite heedless of rain and flying spray he peered through the mist and gazed upon the huge billows rolling in. He seemed like a sturdy pilot who was steering the pier through a very difficult bit of navigation. I passed slowly, very slowly, by him, raised my hat and went away heartily congratulating myself on my good fortune.

The influence of Dickens on the writers of his day was something extraordinary. It has never been sufficiently admitted what a wonderful school for young authors was *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. He not only had a wonderful eye for talent, but he knew exactly how to employ that talent in the right direction, and how to make the very best of the writers on his staff. It is difficult to understand why a list has never been made of those who first appeared in print in the aforesaid publications. Such a list would comprise those who eventually became some of the most brilliant writers of their time. Why is it we have no journals nowadays like the two already named? Is it that we cannot get the writers, or that the readers are not forthcoming? It is more probable that the editor is not to be found.

It is very difficult to say which are one's favourites in the whole series of Dickens's novels. But if I might name three, I would say "David Copperfield," "Great Expectations," and "Dombey & Son." The last, independent of its merits, has a great claim on my affection, as it was the first work by Dickens that I ever read, when about nine years old. Walking down Leadenhall Street after reading the description of Sol Gill's establishment, I at once spotted the Wooden Midshipman, outside the original of the shop described in the story, and it was long afterwards that I found my surmise to be correct. A good many years subsequently when the shop was moved to the Minories and the house was demolished,

I wrote the history of the Wooden Midshipman and its associations in *All the Year Round* for Charles Dickens Junior. My juvenile explorations in Dickensland have been continued all my life, but the real spots alas ! are getting fewer and fewer and soon there will be none of them left.

J. ASHBY-STERRY.

PERCY FITZGERALD

looks backwards :

Some forty-four years have gone since Charles Dickens's death. It is singular that when we were celebrating his centenary (1912) and, looking round to see who was with us that knew him personally (no one had such troops of friends as he had—practically all the literary men of his day were friends of his as of course), we found only two or three remaining. There is no writer now, poet or novelist, who receives such general homage as he did. He was known by sight everywhere as he walked, and everybody was at his service. His name was a general passport. I remember going round with him on one of his Reading Tours, and when I was expressing my thanks for the great enjoyment he had given me, he broke out with his hearty exuberance : " No, no ! this is nothing—you must come with me to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and let us make the whole Leith tour together. The railway directors will give us a saloon, and we shall victual it with all good things and have a rare royal time of it." But an important domestic event in our family deprived me of this pleasant junketing.

Once indeed, I saw him subjected to an incivility at an Irish railway-station. The companies not only placed a saloon carriage at his service, but never charged him anything for carrying his rather heavy apparatus, gas-fittings, screens, etc., and this was mentioned to a rough, coarse station-master. " I don't care whether it's Dickens or anybody else. He must pay all the same, like other people."

But as we look round now the eye does not fall on these crowds of friends. All have disappeared ; only one or two now remain—and only one who was both a friend and a fellow-worker with him in literature — myself, in fact. It is a fortunate thing, however, that this survivor should have been on terms of closest intimacy with him and was bound up with the traditions and methods of his two journals. No one in fact was more closely

connected with those papers than myself or wrote so much for them. No one could tell so much of him. I had free entry to him at any hour. "Of course Mr. Dickens will see *you*," was the formula, and I often found him at lunch, when he might have excused himself instead of inviting me to sit down and join him. I may mention, without imputation of vanity, some little facts which will show the position I held. As a matter of course everything I offered was printed at once, or if the subject was not quite suitable, he would insist on paying for it. Again, it was surely a high privilege, in the case of a journal for which he himself, Lord Lytton, Wilkie Collins, and Mrs. Gaskell wrote novels, to find oneself commissioned to write a long three-volumed novel. One felt proud to be in such company, and I wrote no less than five such novels for him.

The adding to the other duties of his strenuous life, the editing of a highly-popular journal, entailed a constant weekly supervision and a never-ceasing drudgery upon Dickens for he discharged every duty in the most thorough and conscientious fashion—was indeed needlessly scrupulous, reading every article sent to him or commissioned by him, and correcting all the proofs. And the correcting was so profuse, as those who have seen it know so well, as often to amount to a re-writing: that is, he introduced so many fresh sentences, even adding a line here and a word there, with extraordinary deftness and skill. Not only this, but he would write explanatory letters and often apologetical ones giving his reasons, etc. He was indeed a wonderful being.

Not half enough has been said of Boz's native character which seemed inconsistent with the usual tradition of the successful author. He was *unspoiled* to an incredible degree, took no airs, had no "swelled head," was ever modest and unassuming. He was content with the second or third place when he should have had the first, wished rather to listen than to speak.

And then his never-failing good humour, and amiability! He was ever ready with a pleasant jest. It was a delightful thing to watch in that marvellously expressive face, as I often did, "the kindly engendure" of one of his lively conceits. He would "rally" a friend in the pleasantest, most waggish fashion, taking stock of some little failing or peculiarity, but with a delighful and airily light touch. He had often a sly jest at my ways, particularly on a certain uncertainty, owing to the embarrassment I felt when he pressed his

repeated hospitalities. I would note a peculiarly whimsical smile when this came about, as though he were saying to himself " Now he is going to hesitate." He might be standing there yonder, his hands deep in his pockets, a favourite pose of his, and looking downwards. I was before him. He was about to reply. First, the sparkling, ever-searching eyes began to rove about and twinkle ; some humorous quip was occurring to him. Then you saw it descending to his deeply-furrowed cheeks, where all the muscles, the very " cordage of his face " (as was said of, or by, Macklin) seemed to quiver, to relax and light up with internal enjoyment. Then it passed still farther downwards, stole under his rather grizzled moustaches, when the muscles round the mouth set to work in their turn ; and finally, thus heralded, came the quip itself in a burst of joyous laughter ! Delightful being ! He enjoyed the detection of any little inequalities. Indeed :

> " A merrier man
> Within the limits of becoming mirth,
> I never spent an hour's talk withal
> His eye begets occasion for his tongue ;
> For every object that the one doth catch,
> The other turns to a mirth-moving jest."

Here the Bard has assuredly drawn his portrait.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

RICHARD WHITEING :

A personal recollection and some opinions :

I did not know Dickens personally. I last saw him at the great dinner given to him some time in the mid-'Sixties at Freemasons Tavern. It was on the occasion of his departure for America for the second visit that was to make amends for " Martin Chuzzlewit " and " American Notes." There was a mighty gathering, but nearly every name I recall now is the name of a dead man. Bulwer was in the chair ; Maclise was of the company ; my neighbour at table was Henry Thompson the surgeon, then a rising man ; Sala was not far off. He seemed to resent the allusions to Dickens as the life and soul of *Household Words*, and muttered low, thunderous discontent, as who should say : " I am the real Simon Pure ! "

Willy, nilly, every writer of fiction who touched the

time of Dickens owes something to his influence. He swung us round into the sense of our real subject, the uncommemorated million, and our real patron, that million itself. He wrote for the average man ; and that man in his multiplex personality surged up to him in gratitude and admiration like a whole people acclaiming its chief. The democratic movement in literature had come to town.

I think Dickens is the greatest in his line the world has seen since Aristophanes, or, if you like, since Rabelais. Both necessarily lose a lot by the mere lapse of time, which mars the freshness and the felicity of their strokes—the all in all. At least, I judge so by the translations in which alone the Greek master is accessible to me. Dickens will lose, has already lost, by such wear and tear, but enough of other quality will remain for many generations to prove his mastery He was a veritable potent when he appeared, and they all saw at a glance what he was driving at. That ought to be enough to place him for ever.

"Martin Chuzzlewit" (if only for the sake of Mark Tapley) is, I think, the greatest book. Mark is a thing of imagination all compact. It is a whole philosophy of endurance and great endeavour — Epictetus, Marcus, The Bhagavad, and the Little Flowers of St. Francis—in a flash of idealistic caricature that carried to its highest point the frolic gaiety of heroism smiling in the face of death. All the others go mumchance through this ordeal ; this one takes it in a coranto. How Dickens came by it and to it I could never make out. Perhaps it was some Christmas present from the skies.

RICHARD WHITEING.

I. ZANGWILL

tells how he first read Dickens :

When I was nine or ten a schoolboy friend lent me a coverless book without a title-page which I kept hidden in my locker and read in school hours with all the surreptitious sweetness of stolen bliss. The stories it contained seemed to me infinitely more vivid than any I had ever read, not excluding even those of "The Boys of England." There was a particularly haunting passage about tripe. Years afterwards I discovered that the volume was by one Charles Dickens and was entitled "Christmas Books."

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

JEROME K. JEROME

thinks he once met Dickens :

I have the idea that, when a little lad, I met and talked with Dickens one evening in Victoria Park. I made use of the incident in " Paul Kelver."

I should doubt the possibility of any living reader not having been influenced in life and work by Dickens.

To myself his humour appeals as strongly now as when at first it broadened and sweetened my outlook on life. "David Copperfield" I have always considered his greatest book.

JEROME K. JEROME.

CECIL ALDIN

on illustrating Dickens :

I regret I have no personal recollection of Charles Dickens.

I never enjoyed anything so much as when I was illustrating " The Pickwick Papers."

An artist might illustrate Dickens all his life, and never repeat himself. Every page of his work suggests an illustration.

The humour of Dickens must appeal, in any age, to any one who has any sense of humour himself.

CECIL ALDIN.

ROBERT HICHENS

pays tribute :

I never saw Charles Dickens. I don't know that my work owes anything to that great man and unique genius. My life owes many hours of intense pleasure. I think his novels of immense value. I prefer " David Copperfield," as a whole, to the others. His humour seems to me undying. Can Mrs. Gamp, can Pecksniff, can Betsy Trotwood, Pickwick, Micawber, a hundred others die? I don't believe it. We pass, but they remain, to move new worlds into laughter. I not only admire Dickens's work. I love it.

ROBERT HICHENS.

G. S. STREET

and the humanising power of Dickens :

Since I read Dickens as a boy, I have very seldom even looked into him. There is a good deal of accident, I think, in one's re-reading of great authors : Thackeray, Sterne, Meredith, and some others I re-read constantly ; Dickens, never. I don't possess an edition of him. When I *do* take up one of his books I turn to passages or characters I remember and read again with pleasure and admiration, but not with the feeling of familiar attraction I get from the others.

I think, of " the value of his novels," that they have done much to make English people more humane and kindly : but that they have promoted such a vast amount of joy and laughter is enough for gratitude. There is a fashion in modes of humour, no doubt : but real humour is real humour for always, and if anyone cannot be amused by Dickens he must be humourless.

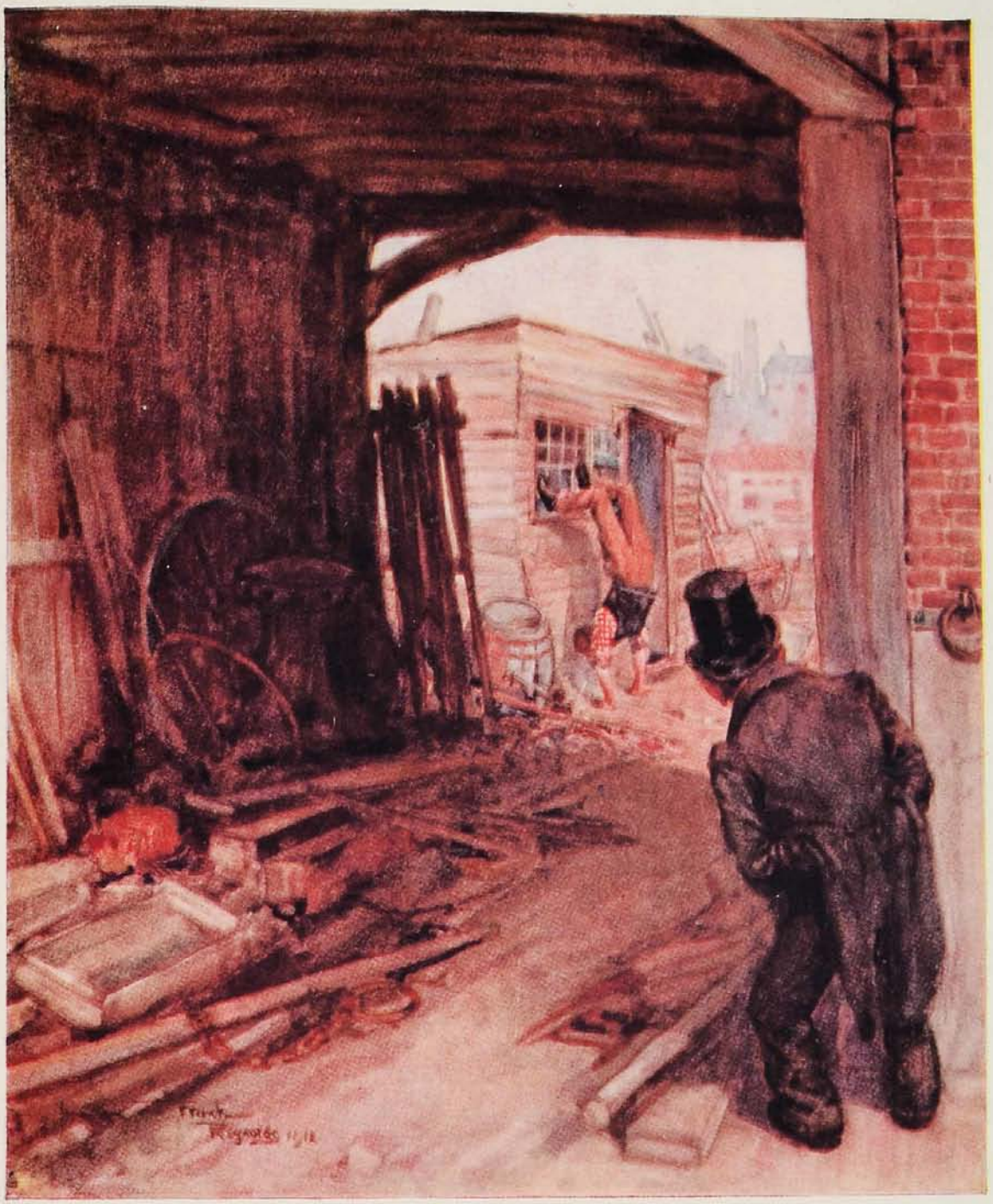
G. S. STREET.

JOHN HASSALL

translated " Pickwick " into German :

Personally, of course, I have no recollection of Charles Dickens, though my grandfather, the Rev. J. B. Owen, of Chelsea, used to meet him at dinners where all the guests used to hang on every word the great novelist uttered. My mother's impressions of Dickens's readings of his Carol, in some hall somewhere near t. Martin's Lane, is chiefly of the ready manner in which he moved the audience to hearty laughter or real tears. This to me in his books is the chief charm, the mixture of true humour and deep pathos, which is exactly what happens in everyday life. I have no preference for any one volume, but I am no longer keen on the delightful " Pickwick Papers," as when I was at school in Germany we had to translate it (about three-fourths of it) into German ! How the author would have wept if he could have understood the translations ! This taught me patience, endurance and resignation, and my possession of these qualities can be indirectly attributed to his influence.

JOHN HASSALL.



From "The Old Curiosity Shop."
Illustrated in colour by Frank Reynolds, R.I.
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

QUILP'S WHARF.
By Frank Reynolds, R.I.

LUCAS MALET

thinks him the greatest of all Novelists save Balzac

I am not conscious of any direct influence which he has had upon my life or work, save in so far as he has procured me an immense amount of enjoyment and taught me to understand many aspects of the English character.

In my opinion, Charles Dickens, although lacking in knowledge of certain sections of society—learned and aristocratic—is not only the greatest of English novelists, but probably the greatest of all novelists, save Balzac. He is the first, and, so far, remains immeasurably the finest, writer of fiction produced by modern democracy in England. This fact will, indeed must, secure to him lasting interest and influence. As "a writer with a purpose" he is never guilty of sinking the artist in the reformer to the injury of his drama—a merit which cannot be too highly extolled.

I have no means of judging whether his humour appeals to readers of our day as strongly as to those of his own. But, I venture to assert, that those to whom his humour does not appeal must be rather hopelessly deficient in that most reconciling sense.

Among so many masterpieces, I hesitate to pronounce as to the greatest. Personally, "David Copperfield," "Nicholas Nickleby," and "The Tale of Two Cities" appeal to me most.

MARY ST. LEGER HARRISON.
(LUCAS MALET.)

BEATRICE HARRADEN

prefers "Oliver Twist" and the "Tale of Two Cities":

I love, and have always loved Dickens's books. I suppose "David Copperfield" is his greatest, but my favourites are "Oliver Twist" and "The Tale of Two Cities."

BEATRICE HARRADEN.

FRANK REYNOLDS

on Dickens's humour:

I think that any feeling I may have for character and character drawing is very largely due to reading Dickens as a boy. With regard to his humour, he certainly amuses

me, but then I've grown up with him—as it were—and this no doubt makes a difference. People who find him laborious and out of date appear to forget that he is still the source of a good deal of modern humour. Of all his books I prefer "Pickwick," though the early part of "Copperfield" strikes me as his finest work.

FRANK REYNOLDS.

ARTHUR MORRISON

finds all Dickens's works delightful :

I fear it is quite impossible to give my opinion of the value of the novels of Charles Dickens in any such space as I have time to fill now. Whether or not his humour appeals as strongly to readers of this day as to those of his own, depends on the readers. If it does not, I am sorry for them and for their loss ; but I see no reason to suppose any such sudden national decadence. Nor can I say which I consider his greatest book ; for it is a peculiar property of his books to seem to me but one long and very delightful work, as easy and unfettered in form and progress as any of its separate chapters.

ARTHUR MORRISON.

MARY E. MANN

remembers a Dickens reading :

(1) I was taken as a child to hear him read in order that for all my life mine might be the honour and glory of having seen Charles Dickens. I remember that I was bored through the trial scene from Pickwick, and recall that my father —a Dickens devotee—grumbled that "the man did not realise his own conception of Buzfuz." I remember, too, waking up to delighted recognition when Dickens, in the person of little Bob Cratchit, carried Tiny Tim on his shoulder across the stage. It is evidence perhaps of the vividness of this representation that, now so many years are passed, I have to call my reason to confute the illusion that the immortal child in the flesh was not in his creator's arms.

(2) Certainly not my work. For I have always held that Dickens is inimitable and that his imitators are and should be accursed.

(3) That they are invaluable. That I cannot imagine what my own life, especially my youth, would have been without the companionship of Mrs. Nickleby, of darling Paul Dombey (loved and wept over, in spite of my better judgment) of Toots, and the Marchioness, and little Pip, of Fanny Squeers and the Dorrit family. His humour does not appeal to the present age. Hardly any school boys or girls read Dickens for choice. Booky youths and maidens speak of him as a negligible acquaintance, they no longer hail him as one supremely loved. The general reader, escaped in some inexplicable way from his thraldom, pronounces him vulgar, and does not perceive that he is divine. The men and women and children, rich and poor, great and lowly, cultured and uncultured, whose idol Charles Dickens was, were emphatically not of this generation.

MARY E. MANN.

W. J. LOCKE

on the superior person and the greatness of Dickens :

(1) For a writer to "gauge the influence that another" writer has had on his work is an exceedingly difficult matter, unless he boldly and avowedly imitates his hero, or unless it is a question of mere tricks of style ; and for one who holds that colour in all forms of art should be clear and not muddy to say what he owes to such a crystal clear colourist as Dickens is more difficult still. I can, however, safely state that I have never been conscious of Dickens in any of my work, whereas I have often had to "shoo" away the tricksy ghost of Sterne or (dangerous and delectable phantom !) the will-o'-the-wisp spirit of Anatole France. That, generally, Dickens has had a profound influence on my literary life there can be no doubt. But then so have Shakespeare, the Bible and Rabelais and other immortals whom I have chosen as intimate deities.

(2) The mere fact of my putting Dickens among the immortals answers the first point. His humour, compounded of the divine elements of tears and laughter, ought to be eternal. Of course there will always be the superior person (generally very young) to whom Mr. Micawber, Sairey Gamp, and Mr. Pickwick make no appeal ; but, thank Heaven, those who wear the whole armour of culture are, after all, few in this world, and the simple-minded (and of such is the kingdom of the immortals) are many.

(3) I think "David Copperfield" is his greatest work—on account of the balance of its construction, the subtle playfulness of its humour and the restraint of its deep pathos.

W. J. Locke.

WILLIAM DE MORGAN

believes he owes Dickens everything :

(1) Unhappily I have no personal recollections. I wish it were otherwise.

(2) In my opinion I owe Charles Dickens everything that a pupil can owe to his master—to his head-master. Whether I have succeeded in rising above mere imitation is a point I leave to my readers. My own memory of Charles Dickens is simply one of unmixed gratitude and plenary ackowledgment of obligation.

(3) It is impossible to assign a value to any work without a standard of comparison. In the case of the two great novelists of last century, Dickens and Thackeray, there is no such unit among English writers, except Shakespeare. To make the comparison would be presumptuous, unless one gave to it the study of a lifetime. Humour always appeals most to its own age. Keeping this in view, I should say Dickens's humour showed an exceptional vitality. I meet people now and then who deny it, but have always found their own samples of humour, produced at my request, the reverse of exhilarating.

I think there can be no doubt which is his greatest book. But autobiographical parallel is such a powerful engine in fiction that it is scarcely fair to his other works to place them in competition with it. Conceive the difficulty of writing the "Tale of Two Cities," as against "David Copperfield."

Wm. De Morgan.

PERCY WHITE

describes a Dickens reading :

When I was a boy I heard him give one of his last readings, and I still vividly recall the impression he made on me. The reading was given in the Hall, afterwards known as Mellison's Skating Rink, which had just been built, and

was used then for "entertainments" for the first time. The scene he acted, rather than read, from "David Copperfield," dealt with the flight of Little Em'ly. What chiefly struck me was the enormous vitality—"magnetism" they now call it—of the man. He swept his audience away on the stream of his own emotions, thrilled them with every tone and suggestion his voice, words and brilliant eyes conveyed. The intense mental activity blazing in his face, his beautiful moving voice held the audience spellbound. It was a magnificent exhibition of a man's control of human feeling; "theatrical," perhaps, to some extent, judged by modern methods, yet unforgetable. The physical strain of those readings, however, was even to my boyish eyes tremendous, and I doubt not that the great novelist paid for those triumphs by a shortened life.

PERCY WHITE.

DICKENS IN CAMP

By Bret Harte

ABOVE the pines the moon was slowly drifting,
The river sang below ;
The dim Sierras, far beyond, uplifting
Their minarets of snow.

The roaring camp-fire, with rude humour, painted
The ruddy tints of health
On haggard face and form that drooped and fainted
In the fierce race for wealth.

Till one arose, and from his pack's scant treasure
A hoarded volume drew ;
The cards were dropped from hands of listless leisure
To hear the tale anew.

And then, while round them shadows gathered faster,
And as the firelight fell,
He read aloud the book wherein the Master
Had writ of " Little Nell."

Perhaps 'twas boyish fancy—for the reader
Was youngest of them all—
But, as he read from clustering pine and cedar
A silence seemed to fall.

The fir-trees, gathering closer in the shadows,
Listened in every spray,
While the whole camp with " Nell " on English meadows
Wandered, and lost their way.

And so in mountain solitudes—o'ertaken,
As by some spell divine—
Their cares drop from them like the needles shaken
From out the gusty pine.

Lost is that camp, and wasted all its fire ;
And he who wrought that spell ?
Ah, towering pine and stately Kentish spire,
Ye have one tale to tell !

Lost is that camp ! but let its fragrant story
Blend with the breath that thrills,
With hop-vines' incense all the pensive glory
That fills the Kentish hills.

And on that grave, where English oak and holly
And laurel wreaths entwine,
Deem it not all a too presumptious folly—
This spray of Western pine !

DICKENS RETURNS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

By T. Watts-Dunton

A ragged girl in Drury Lane was heard to exclaim, "Dickens dead? Then will Father Christmas die too?"—June 9, 1870.

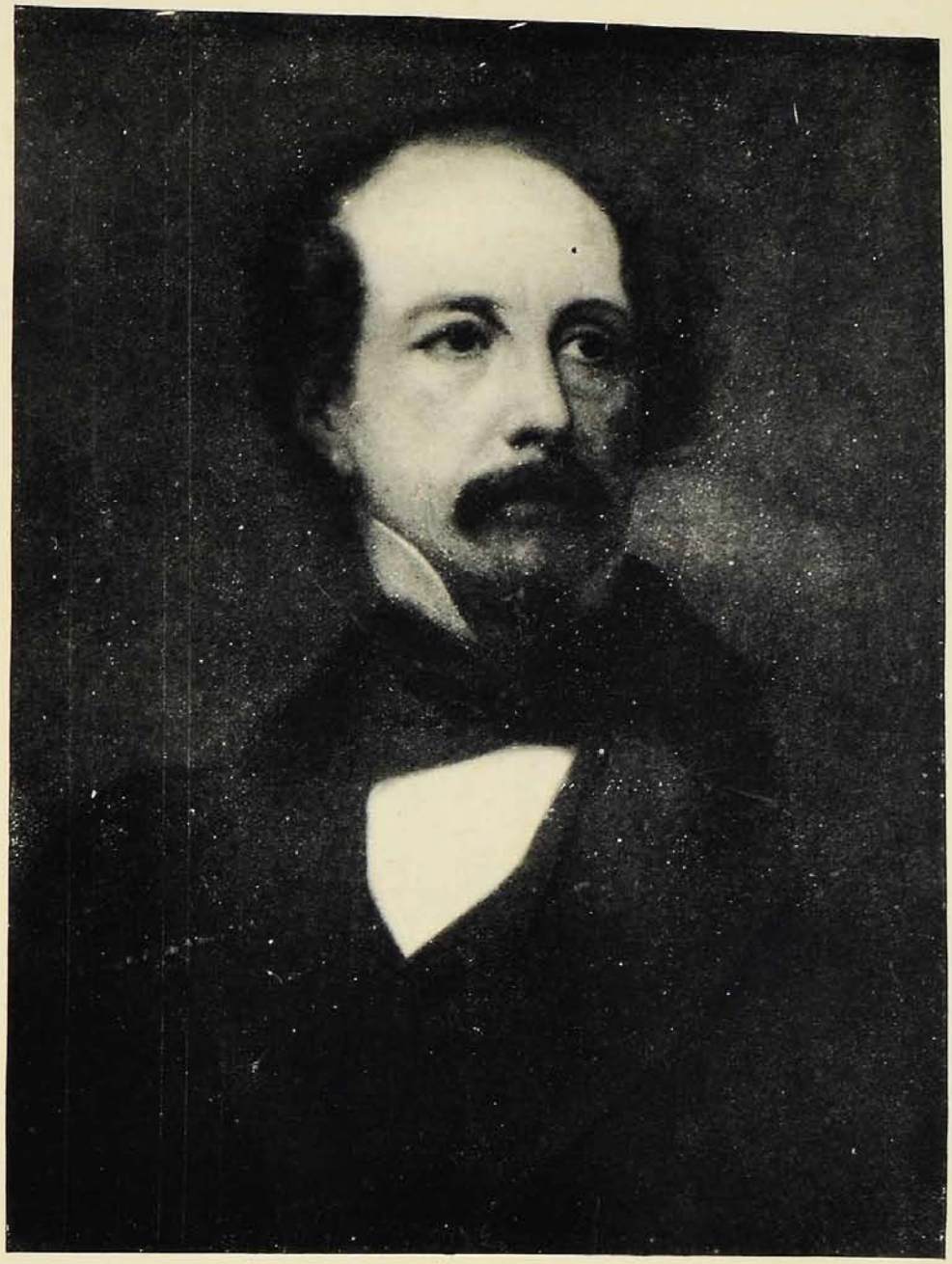
"DICKENS is dead!" Beneath that grievous cry
London seemed shivering in the summer heat;
Strangers took up the tale like friends that meet:
Dickens is dead! said they, and hurried by;
Street children stopped their games—they knew not why,
But some new night seemed darkening down the street.
A girl in rags, staying her way-worn feet,
Cried, "Dickens dead? Will Father Christmas die?"

City he loved, take courage on thy way!
He loves thee still, in all thy joys and fears.
Though he whose smile made bright thine eyes of grey—
Though he whose voice, uttering thy burthened years,
Made laughters bubble through thy sea of tears—
Is gone, Dickens returns on Christmas Day!

Reprinted, by permission, from "The Coming of Love." By T. Watts-Dunton. (John Lane.)

From "Phiz and Dickens.'
By Edgar Browne.
(Nisbet.)

ALICE.
By Hablot K. Browne.
(Phiz.)



From the Painting by Ary Scheffer, in the National Portrait Gallery.

CHARLES DICKENS IN 1855.

Dickens himself considered Scheffer's portrait "a fine, spirited head, painted at his [Scheffer's] very best and with a very easy and natural appearance in it. But it does not look to me at all like, nor does it strike me that if I saw it in a gallery, I should suppose myself to be the original. . . . As a work of art I see in it spirit combined with perfect ease, and yet I don't see myself."

Drawn by Harry Furniss.

THE DEATH OF MR. TULKINGHORN.

From "Bleak House."
(Educational Book Co.)

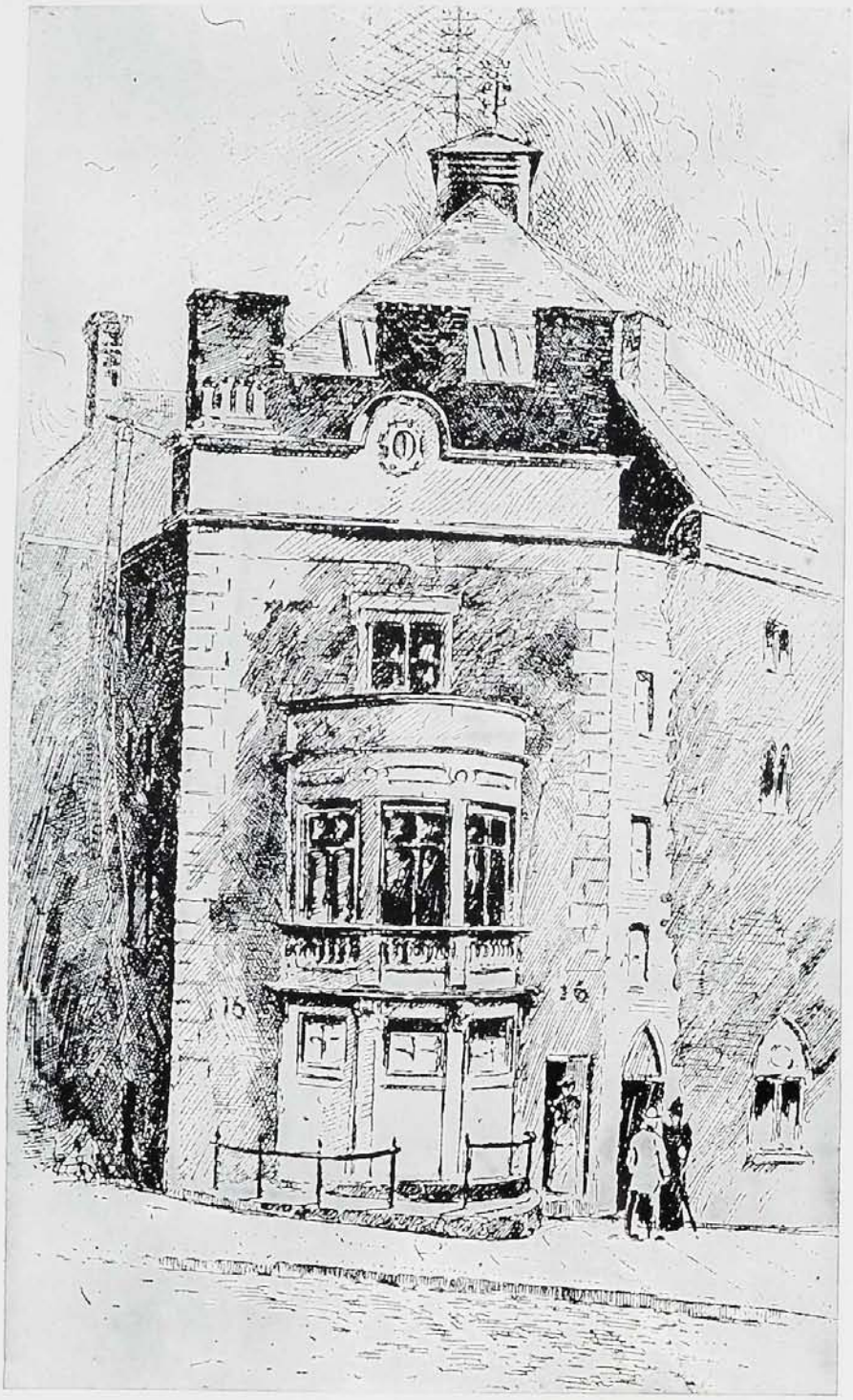
Photo by Walter Dexter.

THE HOUSE OF THE SIX POOR TRAVELLERS AT ROCHESTER.

This house was the scene of Dickens's short story, "The Seven Poor Travellers," which appeared in the Christmas Number of *Household Words* for 1854. He describes it as "a clean white house of a staid and venerable air, with a quaint old door (an arched door), choice, little, long, low lattice windows, and a roof of three gables." The inscription over the doorway runs:

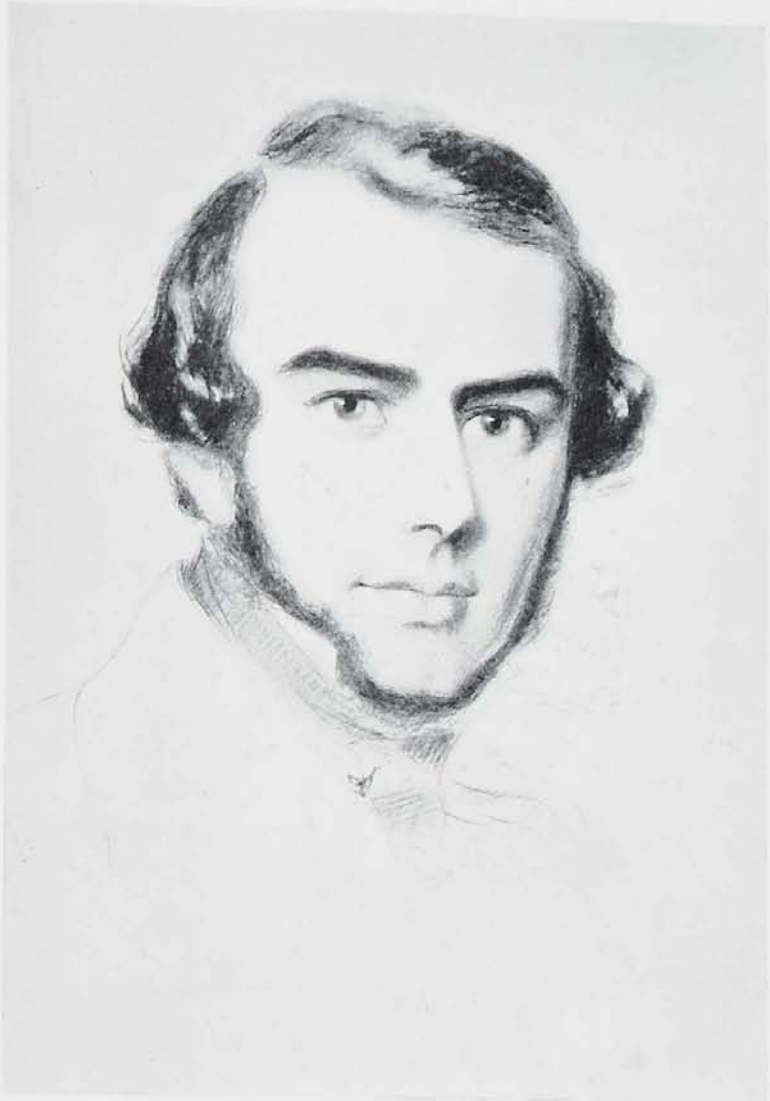
RICHARD WATTS, Esq.,
BY HIS WILL DATED 22 AUGUST, 1579,
FOUNDED THIS CHARITY
FOR SIX POOR TRAVELLERS
WHO NOT BEING ROGUES OR PROCTORS
MAY RECEIVE GRATIS, FOR ONE NIGHT,
LODGING, ENTERTAINMENT,
AND FOUR-PENCE EACH.

Photo by Fradelle & Young.



From "Memories of Charles Dickens."
By Percy Fitzgerald. (Arrowsmith.)

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS" OFFICE,
16, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND



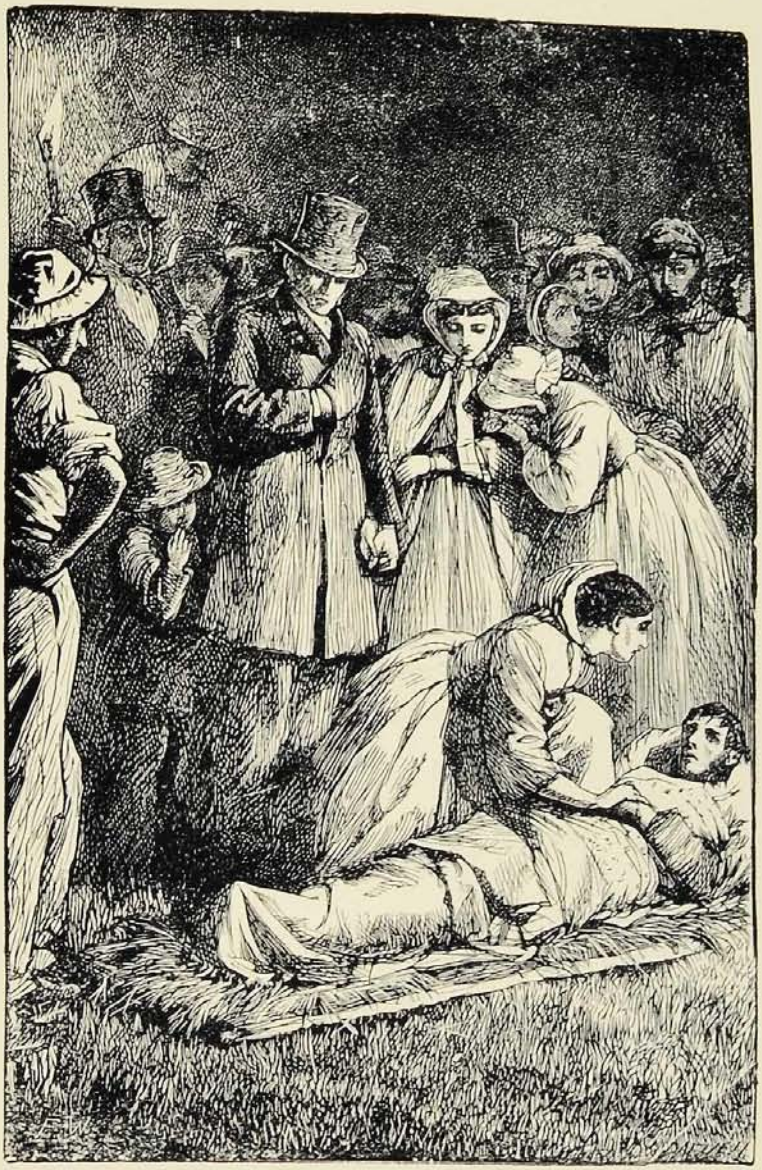
From Forster's "Life of Dickens."
(Chapman & Hall.)

W. H. WILLS.
From a drawing in the possession of the Proprietors of "Punch."

Wills was an original member of the staff of *Punch*. He was a sub-editor of the *Daily News* when Dickens edited it in 1846, and became sub-editor of *Household Words*, which Dickens founded and edited from 1850 till 1858; thereafter he continued as sub-editor of *All the Year Round* which Dickens started that year in succession to *Household Words*.

Drawn by H. French.
From "Hard Times." (Chapman & Hall.)

"HE DREW UP A PLACARD OFFERING TWENTY POUNDS REWARD FOR STEPHEN BLACKPOOL."



Drawn by Fred Walker.
From "Hard Times." (Chapman & Hall.)

STEPHEN BLACKPOOL RECOVERED FROM THE OLD HELL SHAFT.

MR. DORRIT FEELS JEALOUS.
Drawn by Marcus Stone, R.A.

Frontispiece to the first cheap edition of "Little Dorrit." (Chapman & Hall.)

From a drawing by Baugniet.

CHARLES DICKENS.
1858.

MARIA BEADNELL.

From "The Dickens Originals," by Edwin Pugh (Foulis).

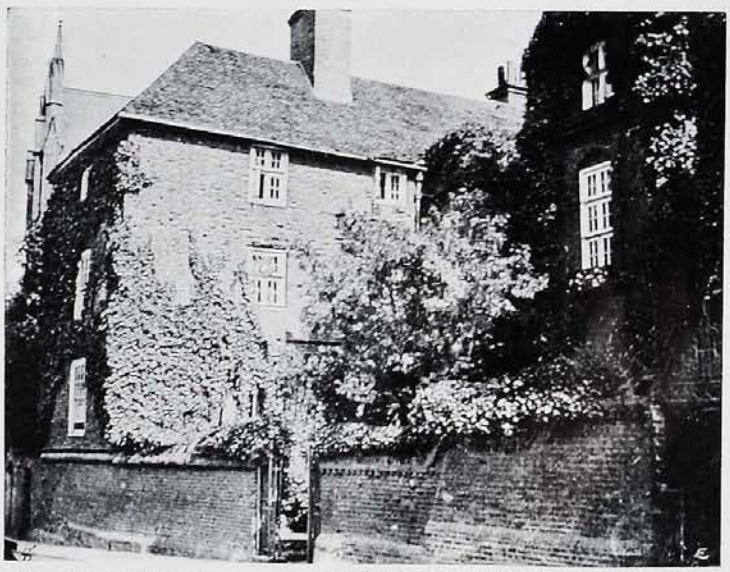


Photo by Walter Dexter.

RESTORATION HOUSE, ROCHESTER.

Maria Beadnell was in turn the original of Dora, in "David Copperfield," and of Mrs. Flora Finching, in "Little Dorrit." The story of Dickens's early love of her, and his later disillusionment is told in "The True Story of Dora Copperfield" on page 26.

Restoration House is the "Satis House" of "Great Expectations," in which Miss Havisham lived, and it must not be confused with the actual Satis House at Rochester, from which Dickens took the name only.

From "Great Expectations."
(Waverley Book Co.)

UNCLE PUMBLECHOOK.
Drawn by Charles Pears.

"Uncle Pumblechook was a well-to-do corn chandler; a large, hard-breathing, middle-aged, slow man, with a mouth like a fish, dull, staring eyes, and sandy hair."—*Great Expectations.*

From a painting by Augustus Egg, R.A.

W. P. FRITH, R.A.

After the Painting by W. P. Frith, R.A., in the Forster Collection at the South Kensington Museum.

CHARLES DICKENS
IN 1859.

Dickens wrote of this picture in a letter from Tavistock House, May 31st, 1859: "It has received every conceivable pains at Frith's hands and ought, on his account, to be good. It is a little too much (to my thinking) as if my next door neighbour were my deadly foe, uninsured, and had just received tidings of his house being afire; otherwise very good."

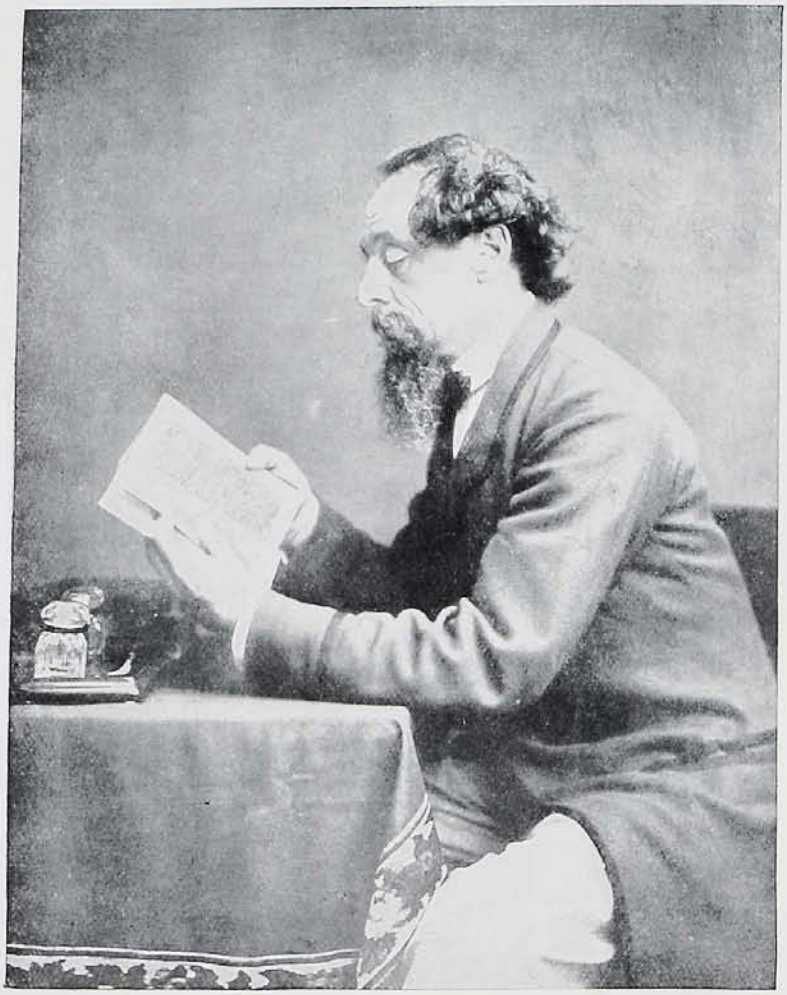


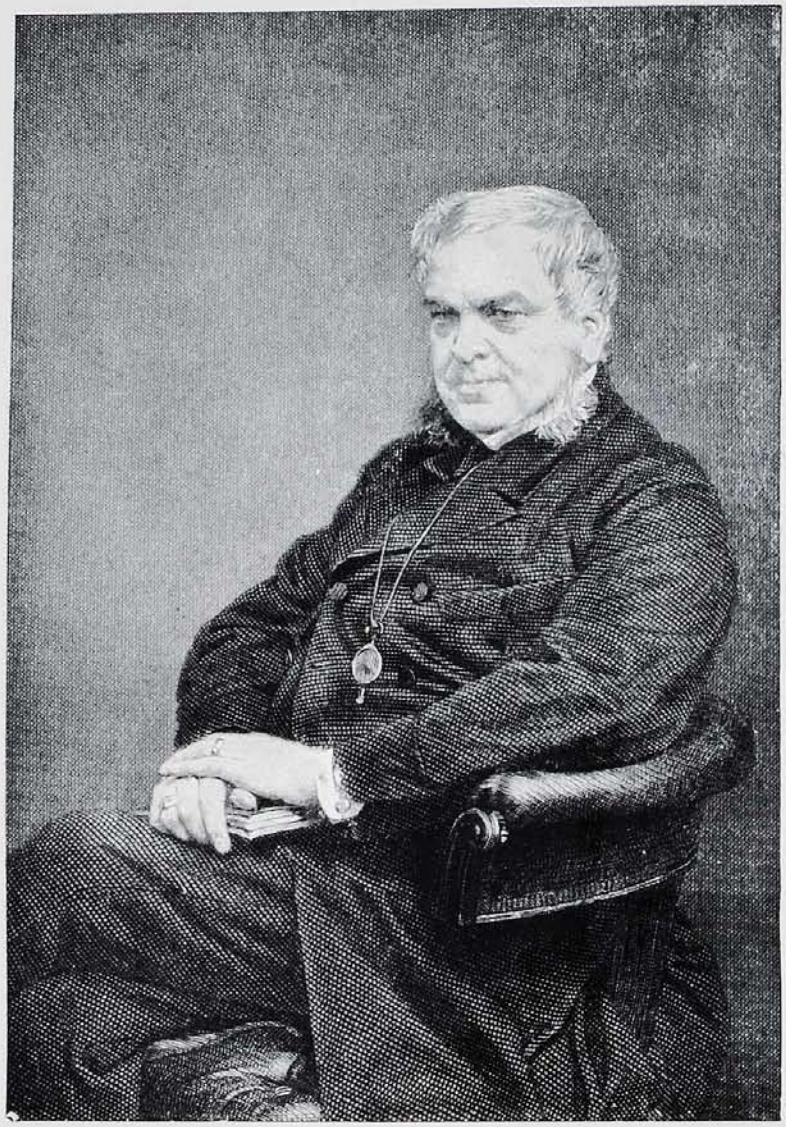
Photo by J. & C. Watkins.

CHARLES DICKENS
1859.

DICKENS IN 1859.

From an engraving after a photograph by J. & C. Watkins.

Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian*.



From the engraving by C. H. Jeens. JOHN FORSTER.

John Forster was Dickens's most intimate friend and adviser. He wrote the standard "Life of Charles Dickens" (Chapman & Hall), and, amongst other books, the best "Life of Goldsmith" that has yet been written. "He always struck you," says Mr Richard Renton, in his "John Forster and his Friendships" (Chapman & Hall), "even on first acquaintance, as one who had his more secret thoughts and imaginings well under control. Reserved sometimes to the point of rudeness, he never wore his heart on his sleeve. It was this habitual austerity of manner that largely contributed to restrain presumption in others."

WILKIE COLLINS.

From the painting by Millais in the National Portrait Gallery.

Wilkie Collins was on the staff of *Household Words*, to which he contributed "The Dead Secret" as a serial. His "No Name" and "The Moonstone" ran serially in *All the Year Round*. He collaborated with Dickens in writing "No Thoroughfare," and other of the famous Christmas stories that appeared in both papers. There are some interesting references to Collins in Mr. R. C. Lehmann's admirable volume, "Charles Dickens as Editor" (Smith, Elder).

Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian*.

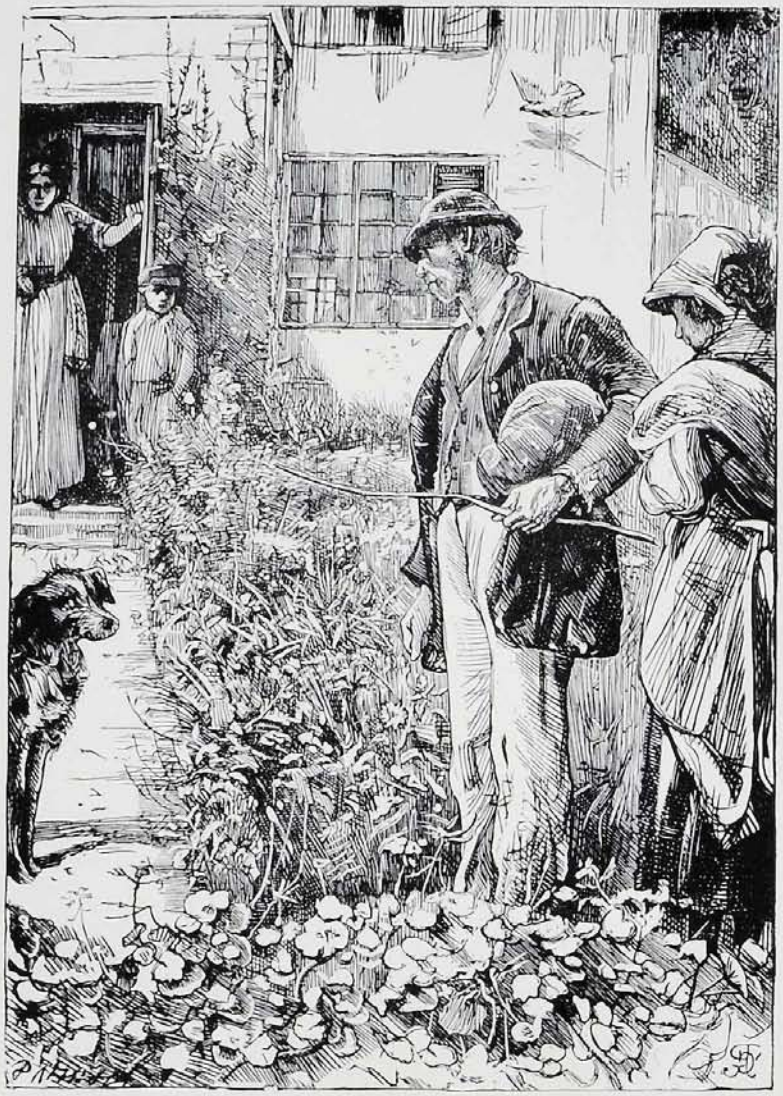
CHARLES DICKENS, 1859-60.

A photograph of an unfinished painting by R. W. Buss, the portrait being copied from a photograph of Dickens by J. & C. Watkins.

Photo by Fradelle & Young.

CHARLES DICKENS GIVING A READING. 1861.

Dickens gave his public Readings successively, with brief intervals, at four periods, viz: 1858–9, 1861–3, 1866–7, and 1868–70. He wrote of them: "I must say that the intelligence and warmth of the audience are an immense sustainment, and one that always sets me up. Sometimes, before I go down to read (especially when it is in the day) I am so oppressed by having to do it that I feel perfectly unequal to the task. But the people lift me out of this directly, and I find that I have quite forgotten everything but them and the book in a quarter of an hour."

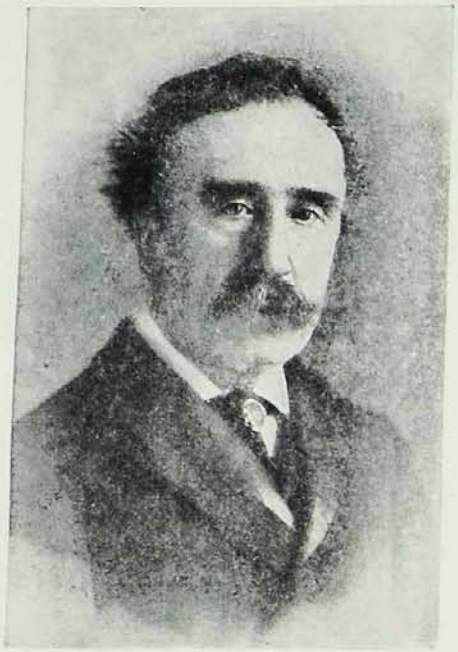


From "The Uncommercial Traveller."
(Chapman & Hall.)

"THIS IS A SWEET SPOT AIN'T IT?
A LOVELLY SPOT."
Drawn by G. J. Pinwell.

From an engraving of a photo by John Watkins.

CHARLES DICKENS
IN 1861.



MR. PERCY FITZGERALD.

Drawn by M. Stein from a photograph taken about 1858.

CHARLES READE.

Mr. Fitzgerald is now the only surviving member of the staffs of Dickens's *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. To the latter Charles Reade contributed his famous novel "Hard Cash," as a serial.

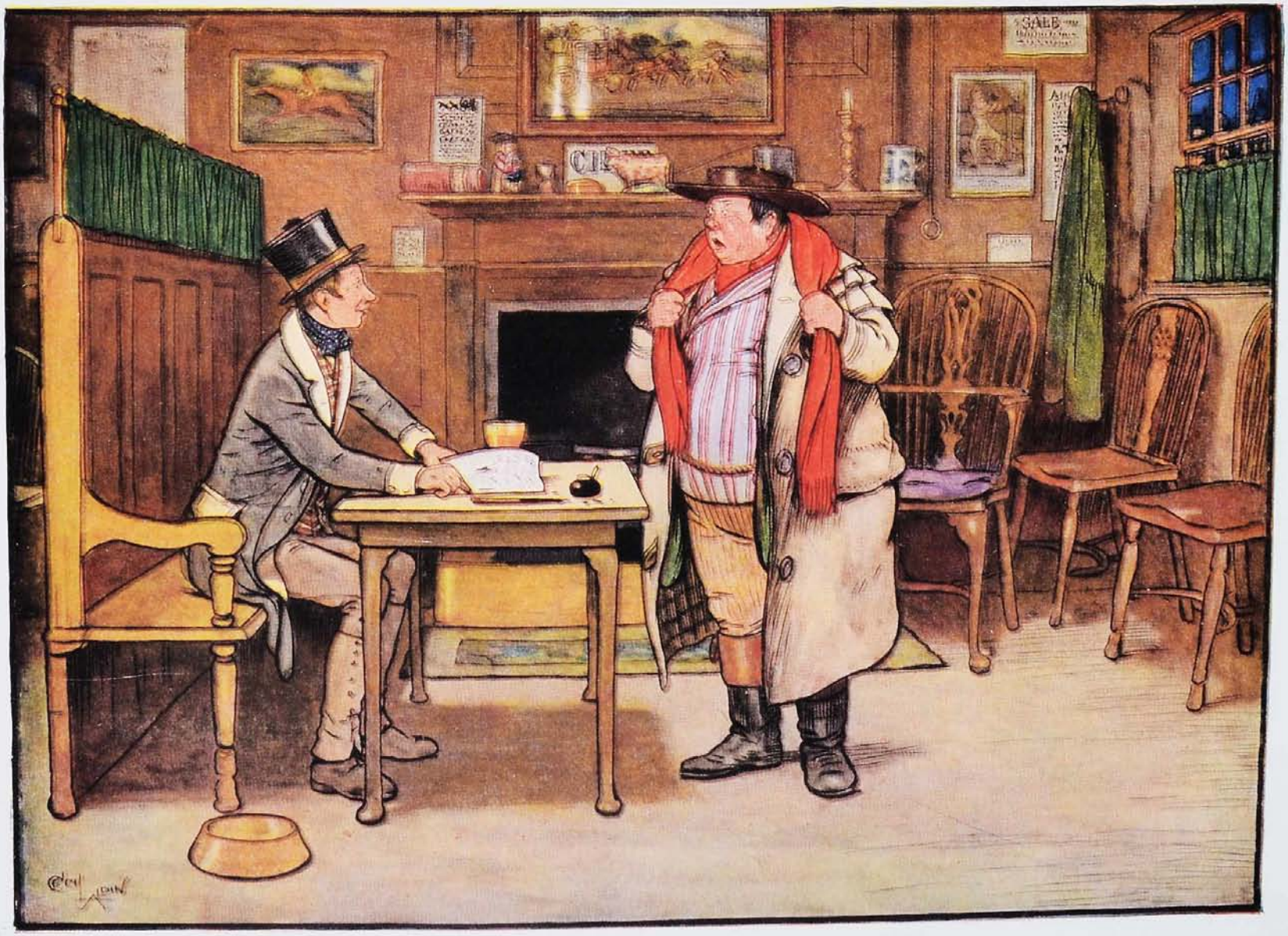
From a hitherto unpublished photograph.
From "Memories of Charles Dickens."
By Percy Fitzgerald. (Arrowsmith.)

CHARLES DICKENS
(AGED ABOUT 50).

Photo by F. W. Burford.
From "Oliver Twist." (W. Collins & Sons.)

"YOU HAVE A FRIEND IN ME, NANCE."

Sir H. Beerbohm Tree as Fagin, and Miss Constance Collier as Nancy. One of sixteen pictures illustrating this edition of "Oliver Twist" from photographs of characters in the play produced by Sir Herbert Tree and his company at Her Majesty's Theatre.



From "The Pickwick Papers."
Illustrated in colour by Cecil Aldin.
(Chapman & Hall.)

THE TWO WELLERS.
By Cecil Aldin.

Photo by Mason.

CHARLES DICKENS AT
THE AGE OF 50.

From a photograph taken about the time he was illustrating "Our Mutual Friend."

MARCUS STONE, R.A.

Marcus Stone was the son of Frank Stone, A.R.A., one of Dickens's earlier illustrators.

DICKENS
IN 1864.

SILAS WEGG.
Drawn by Harry Furniss.
From "Our Mutual Friend."
(Educational Book Co.).

CHARLES DICKENS AT GADS HILL.
From a photo by Mason & Co.
Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian.*

Photo by Mason.

CHARLES DICKENS
IN 1864.

"Our Mutual Friend" appeared 1864–5.

FAGIN.

BARNABY RUDGE.

BILL SIKES.

From "An Actor's Story." By Bransby Williams. (Chapman & Hall.)

Mr. Bransby Williams, the famous Dickens actor, in three of his impersonations of Dickens characters.

LITTLE NELL'S GRANDFATHER.

URIAH HEEP.

MR. MICAWBER.

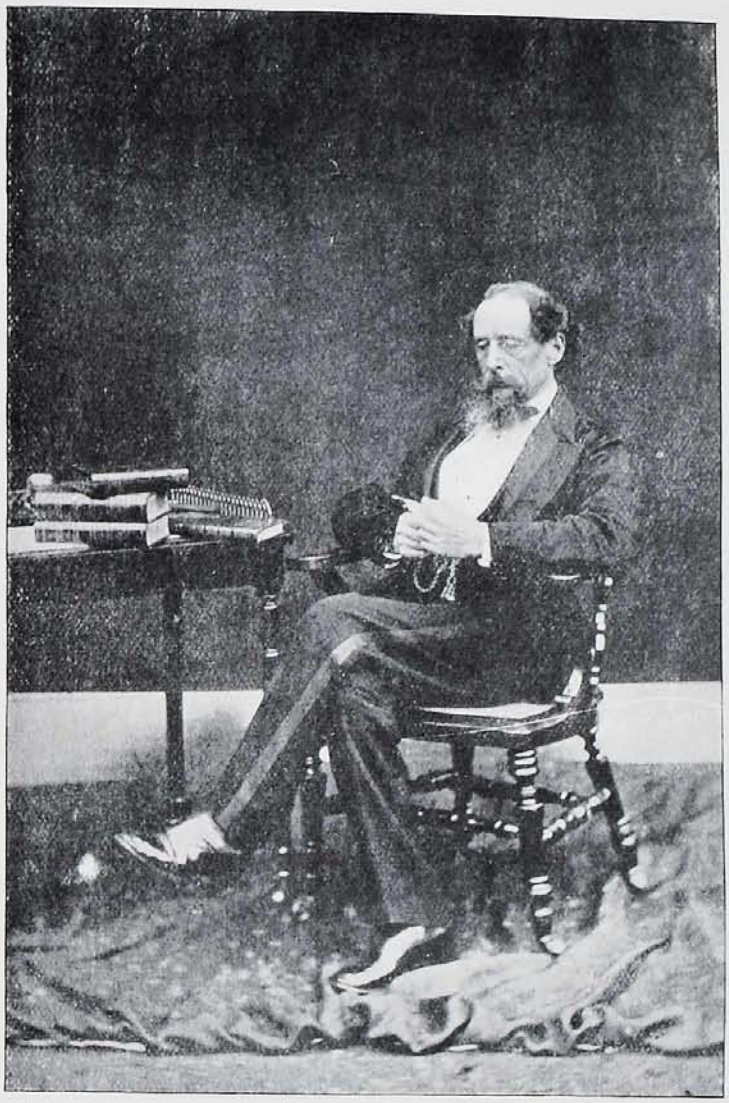
From "An Actor's Story." By Bransby Williams. (Chapman & Hall.)

Mr. Bransby Williams, the famous Dickens actor, in three of his impersonations of Dickens characters.

Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian*.
Photo by Mason & Co.

A GROUP ON THE LAWN AT GAD'S HILL PLACE, 1866.

The group consists of Dickens, Miss Hogarth, Miss Dickens, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Collins, Charles Dickens, Junr., Wilkie Collins, Fechter, and Hamilton Hunn. At Gad's Hill Place, his last residence, Dickens wrote "The Uncommerical Traveller," "Great Expectations," "Our Mutual Friend," and "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." Forster relates how, in his boyish days, Dickens passed this house coming from Chatham with his father, and resolved that if ever possible it should be his own.



Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian*.
Photo by Mason & Co.

CHARLES DICKENS
IN 1866.

Photo by Mason.

DICKENS
IN 1867.

Lent by the Editor of
The Dickensian.

DICKENS IN HIS STUDY, AT GAD'S HILL.

"Among his additions and alterations [at Gad's Hill Place] was a new drawing-room built out from the smaller existing one, both being thrown together ultimately; two good bedrooms built on a third floor at the back; and such re-arrangement of the ground floor as, besides its handsome drawing-room, and its dining-room, which he hung with pictures, transformed its bedroom into a study which he lined with books and sometimes wrote in."—Forster's "Life of Dickens." (Chapman & Hall.)

Photo by Ben Gurney, New York.

CHARLES DICKENS,
1868

MRS. CHARLES DICKENS
(DICKENS'S WIFE).

Mrs. Dickens died in 1879.

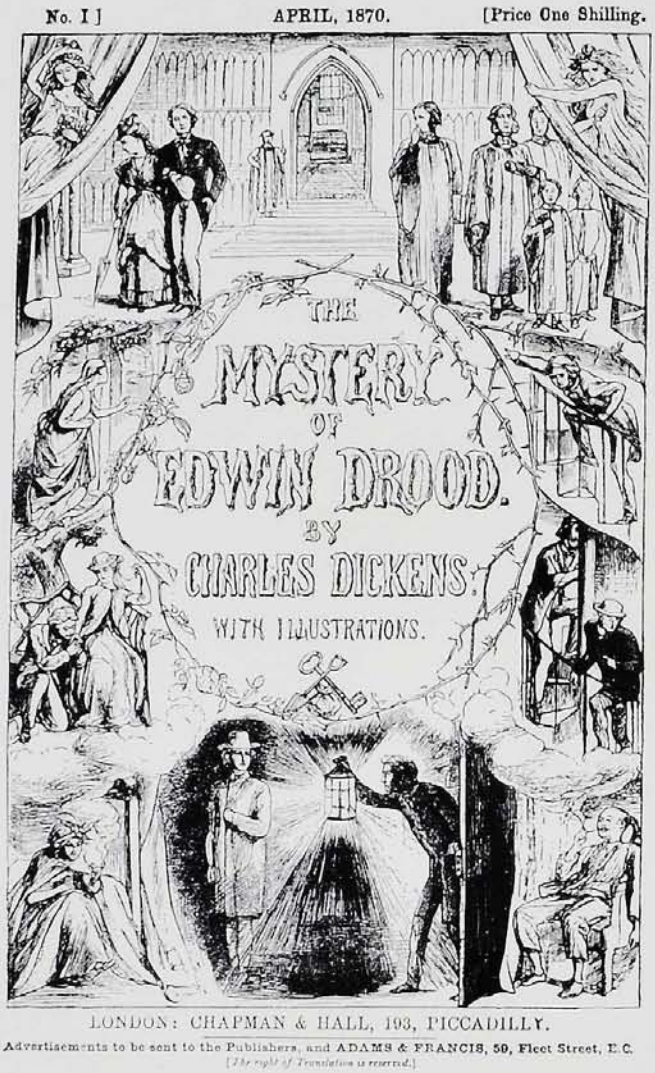
Photo by Ben Gurney, New York.
From Forster's "Life of Dickens." (Chapman & Hall.)

CHARLES DICKENS.
1868.

Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian*.

DICKENS.
A French Caricature.

A caricature by André Gill, published in the French paper *Eclipse*, June 14th, 1868, showing Dickens going from London to Paris to give his readings. The portrait is adapted from a photograph by J. & C. Watkins.



Drawn by Charles Allston Collins.
Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian.*

REDUCED FACSIMILE OF THE WRAPPER DESIGN FOR THE MONTHLY PARTS OF "EDWIN DROOD."

C. A. Collins was a brother of Wilkie Collins.

From Forster's "Life of Dickens."
(Chapman & Hall.)

SIR LUKE FILDES, R.A.
An early portrait.

Sir Luke Fildes was the illustrator of "Edwin Drood." C. A. Collins drew the wrapper design only.

Photo by Walter Dexter. THE GATEHOUSE, ROCHESTER.

From "A Week's Tramp." THE CRYPT, ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL.
By permission of Messrs. Chapman & Hall.

In "Edwin Drood," Dickens describes the Old Gatehouse at Rochester, facing Pump Lane, as "an old stone gatehouse crossing the Close, with an arched thoroughfare passing beneath it." Here lived the verger, Tope, and Edwin's uncle, John Jasper, lodged with him. The crypt of Rochester Cathedral plays an important part in the Drood mystery. It was here that Jasper went on his memorable night ramble under the guidance of Durdles.

Photo by Walter Dexter. MINOR CANON CORNER, ROCHESTER.

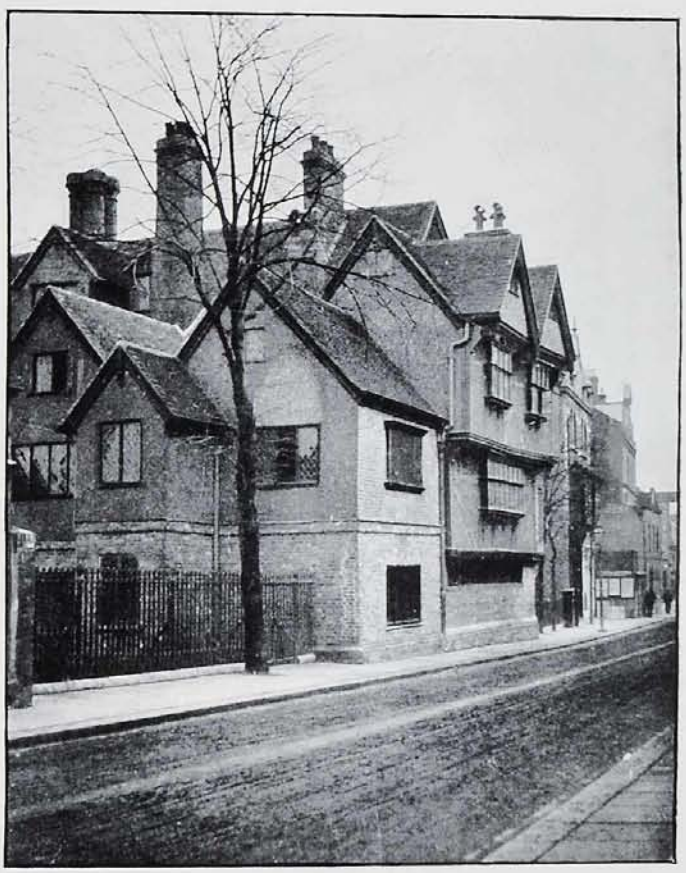


Photo by Walter Dexter. THE NUN'S HOUSE, ROCHESTER.

The Rev. Septimus Crisparkle ("Edwin Drood") lived in Minor Canon Corner, "a quiet place in the shadow of the Cathedral," and Rosa Bud, who was engaged to Edwin, went to school at the Nun's House, "a venerable brick building," with a "trim gate enclosing its old courtyard."

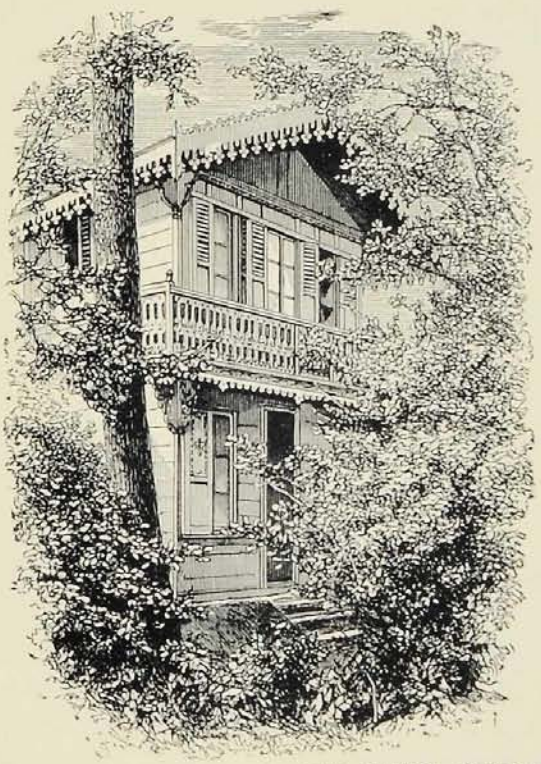
CHARLES DICKENS PRESIDING AT THE NEWSVENDORS' DINNER, APRIL 5, 1870, TWO MONTHS BEFORE HIS DEATH.

"Like Falstaff, but with a modification almost as large as himself, I shall try rather to be the cause of speaking in others than to speak myself to-night."—"Dickens's Speeches." (Chatto & Windus.)

5, HYDE PARK PLACE.

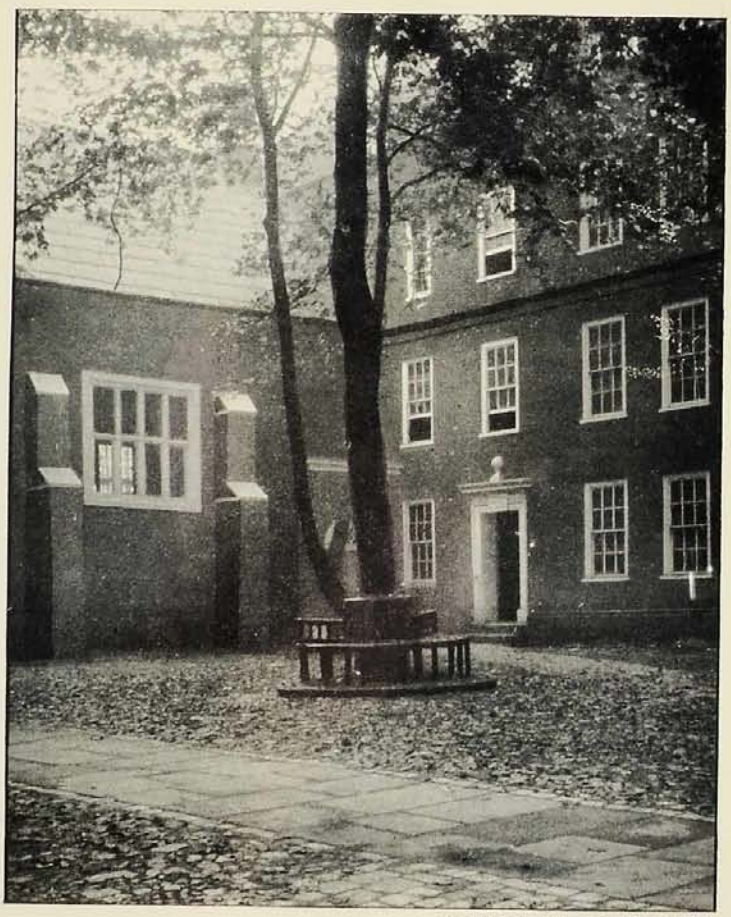
Photo by T. W. Tyrrell.

Dickens stayed here in 1870, whilst he was writing "Edwin Drood."



THE CHALET, GAD'S HILL.

"On the 8th June he passed all the day writing in the Chalet. He came over for luncheon and, much against his usual custom returned to his desk." He was taken ill that evening, and died the next day, June 9th, 1870.—Forster's "Life of Dickens." (Chapman & Hall.)

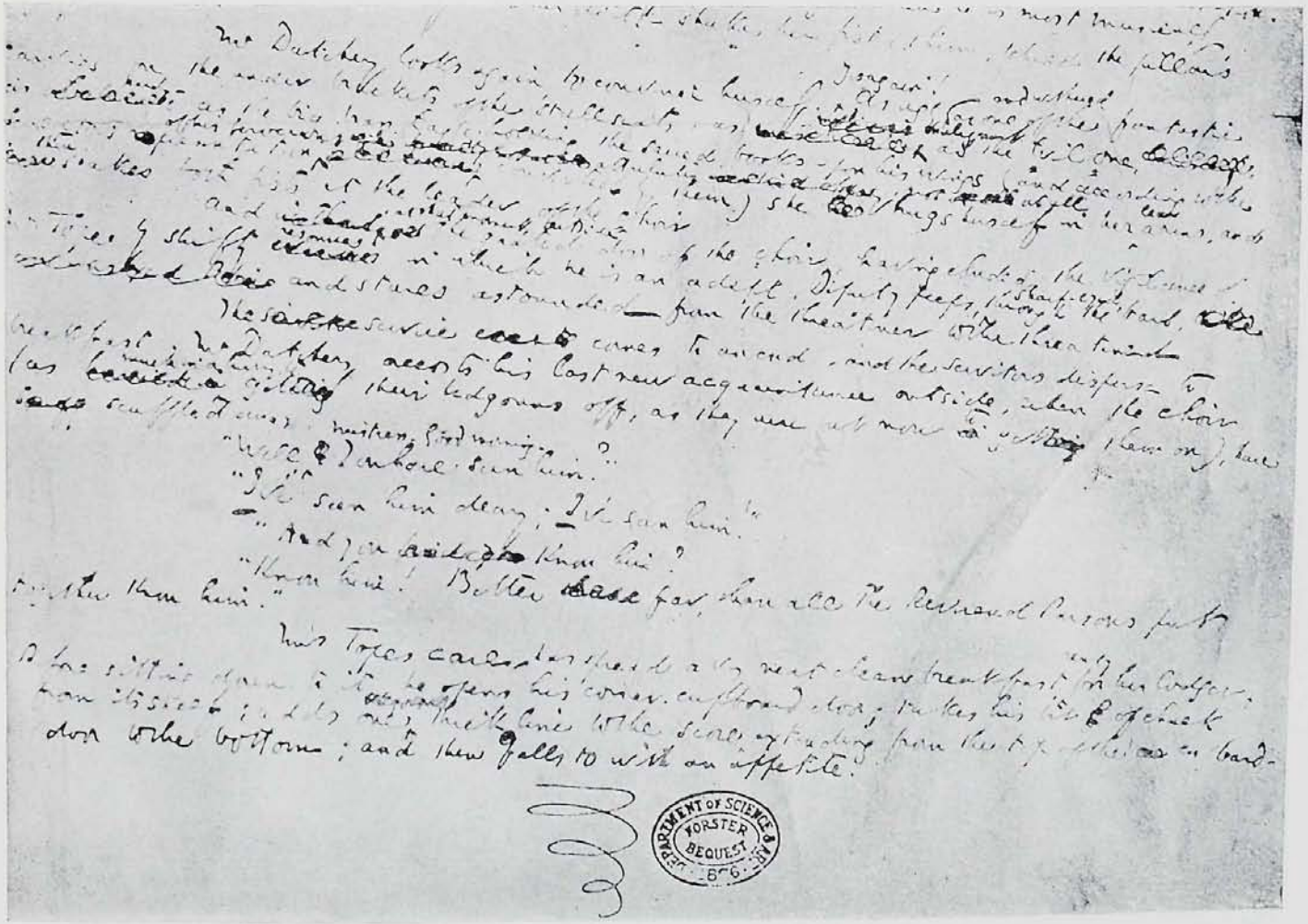


Photos by Walter Dexter.

OLD HOUSES IN HOLBORN, WITH THE ENTRANCE TO STAPLE INN.

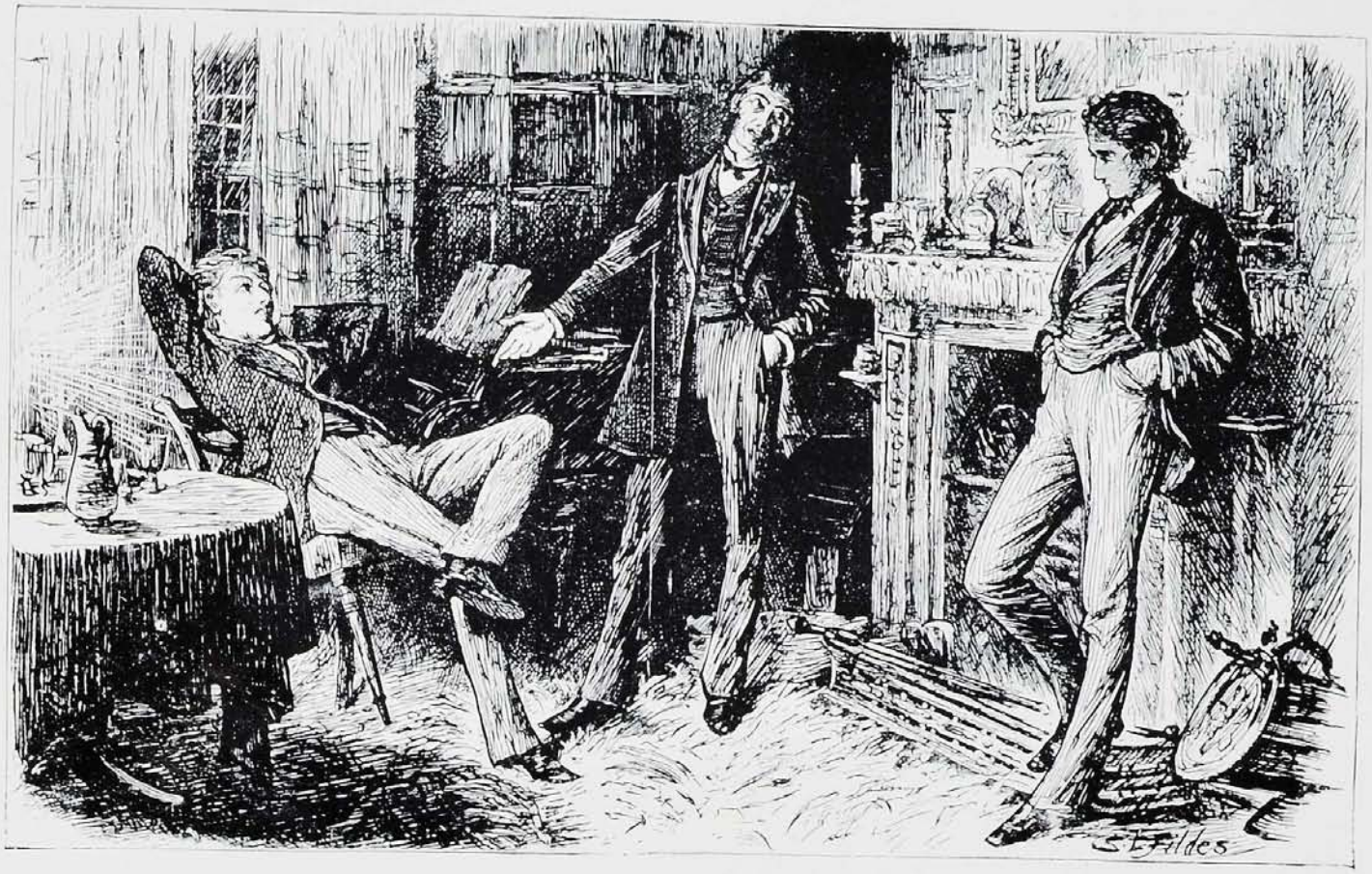
CORNER OF STAPLE INN.

In Staple Inn, "where the sparrows play at country," lived Mr. Grewgious ("Edwin Drood"), in a house still standing, whose "ugly portal" has over it "the mysterious inscription P.J.T., 1747."



REDUCED FACSIMILE OF THE LAST PAGE OF "EDWIN DROOD."

Writing of this facsimile in his "Life of Dickens," Forster says: "The reader will observe with a painful interest . . . its evidence of minute labour at this fast-closing hour of time with him."



From "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." (Chapman & Hall.)

ON DANGEROUS GROUND.
Drawn by Sir Luke Fildes, R.A.

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From "The Mystery of Edwin Drood."
(Chapman & Hall.)

"MR. GREWGIOUS EXPERIENCES A NEW SENSATION."
Drawn by Sir Luke Fildes, R.A.

THE CARVED WOODEN FIGURE
OF MR. SAPSEA'S FATHER.

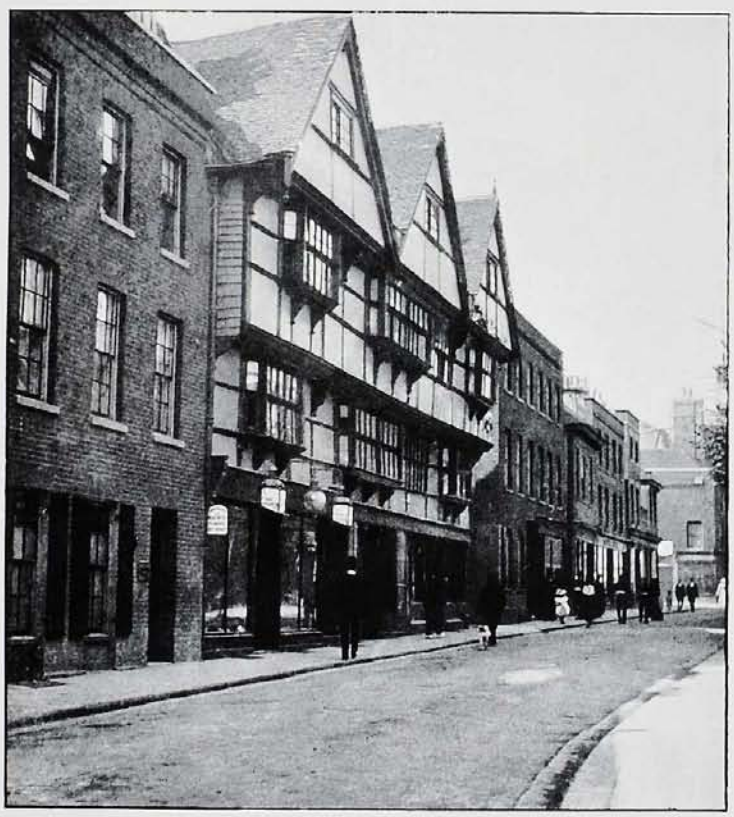
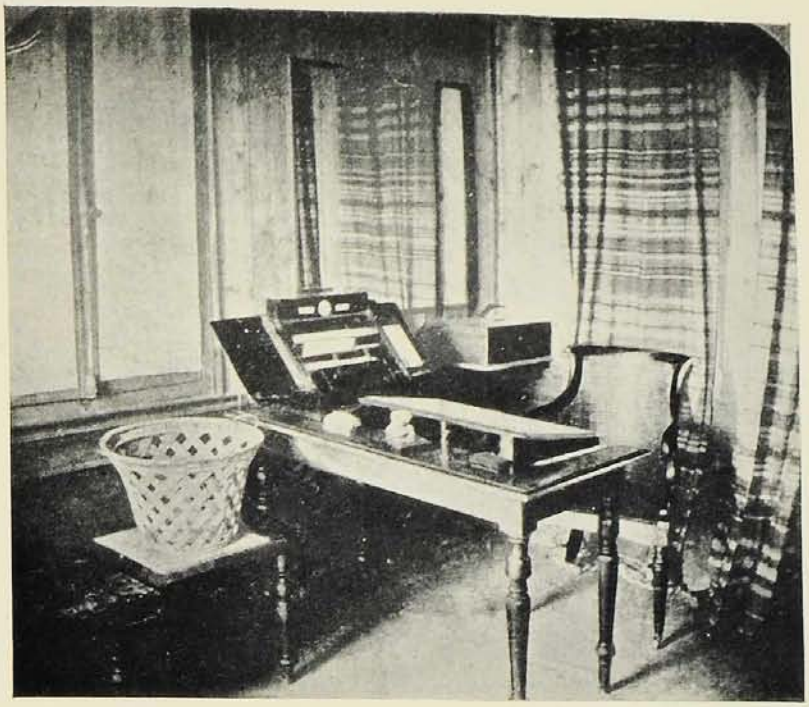


Photo by Walter Dexter.

MR. SAPSEA'S HOUSE,
HIGH STREET, ROCHESTER.

Mr. Sapsea, the preposterously pompous auctioneer, ("Edwin Drood"), lived in High Street, Rochester, and in a pulpit over his doorway was a wooden effigy "about half life-size, representing Mr. Sapsea's father, in a curly wig and toga, in the act of selling."



THE ROOM IN THE CHALET IN
WHICH DICKENS WROTE HIS BOOKS.
From a photograph taken the day after his death.

Lent by the Editor of *The Dickensian.*

The Chalet now stands in the private grounds of Lord Darnley's Park at Cobham, Kent.

Photo by Vandyke.

MISS MARY ANGELA DICKENS.

A grand-daughter of Charles Dickens, and author of several successful novels, the latest of which, "The Debtor," was published by Messrs. Hutchinson in 1912.

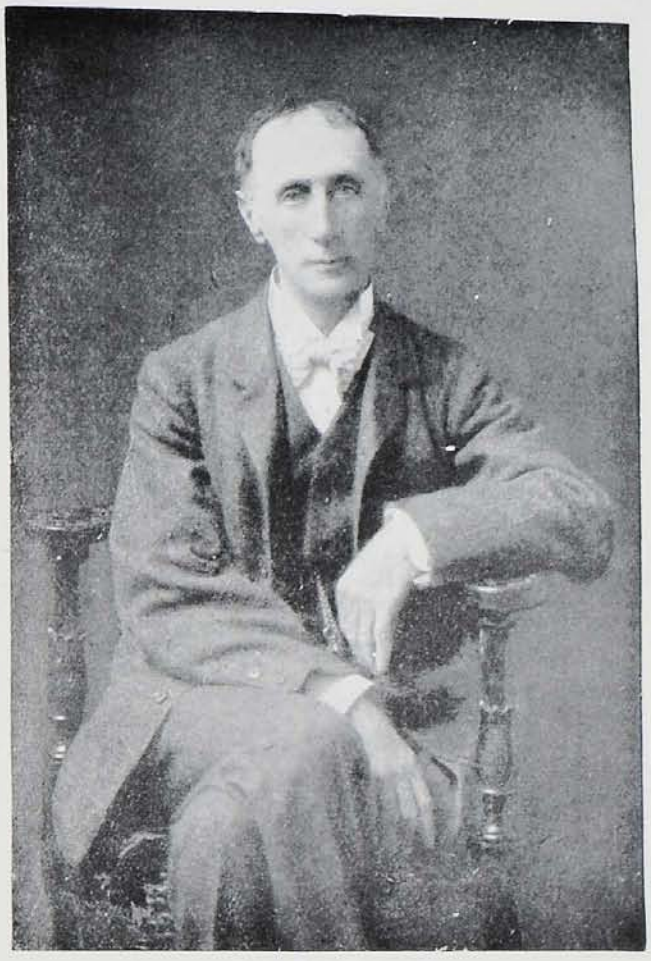


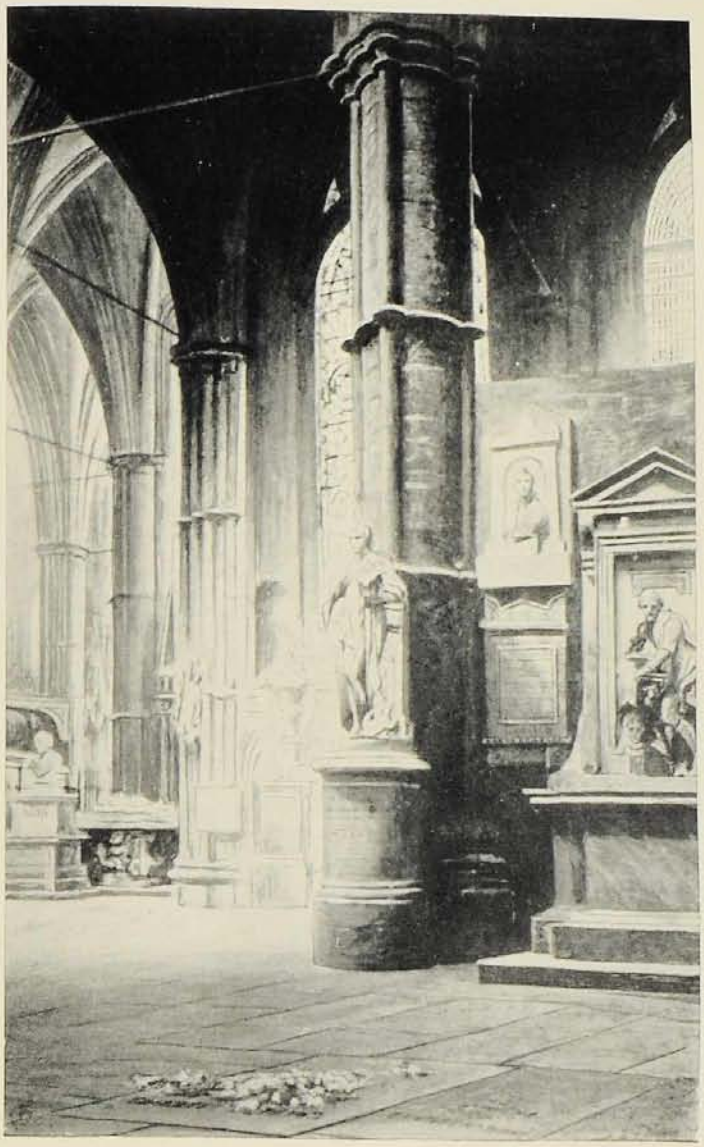
Photo by Violette Colton.

MR. HENRY FIELDING DICKENS, K.C.

Youngest and only surviving son of Charles Dickens.

A Statue Group by Frank Edwin Elwell, in Frank Park, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

CHARLES DICKENS AND LITTLE NELL.



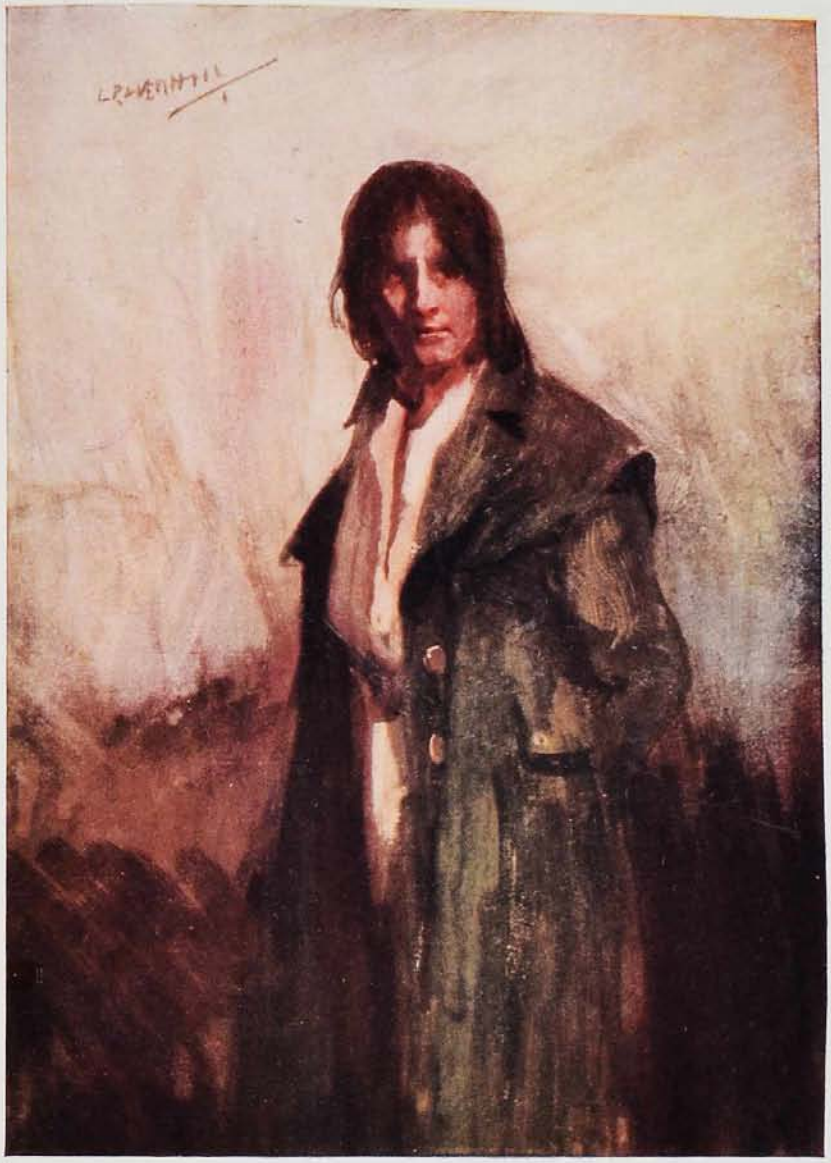
* *From a Water-colour Drawing by Sir Luke Fildes, R.A.*
Reproduced by permission.

THE GRAVE OF DICKENS
IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Dickens died on the 9th June, 1870. Five days later he was buried in Westminster Abbey with, according to Forster, only such ceremonial as would strictly obey all injunctions of privacy. The solemnity lost nothing by its simplicity. "All day long," wrote Dean Stanley, "two days after the funeral, there was a constant pressure to the spot, and many flowers were strewn upon it by unknown hands, many tears shed by unknown eyes." On the stone are inscribed these words:

CHARLES DICKENS,

BORN FEBRUARY THE SEVENTH, 1812. DIED JUNE THE NINTH, 1870.



From "A Day with Charles Dickens."
Illustrated in colour by L. Raven Hill.
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

SYDNEY CARTON ON THE SCAFFOLD. ("A Tale of Two Cities.")
By L. Raven Hill.

THE CENTENARY OF DICKENS . .

THE GREATNESS OF CHARLES DICKENS

CHARLES DICKENS AND REFORM . .

DICKENS AND MR. CHESTERTON . .

NOTES . . . . . .

THE CENTENARY OF DICKENS

By William Watson

Lines read by the author at the Dickens Centenary celebration at the Carnegie Hall, New York.

WHEN Nature first designed,
In her all-procreant mind,
The man whom here to-night we are met to honour—
When first the idea of Dickens flashed upon her—
" Where, where," she said, " in all my populous Earth,
Shall this prodigious child be brought to birth ?
Where shall he have his earliest wondering look
Into my magic book ?
Shall he be born where life runs like a brook,
Far from the sound and shock of mighty deeds,
Among soft English meads ?
Or shall he first my pictured volume scan
Where London lifts its hot and fevered brow,
For cooling night to fan ?
Nay, nay," she said ; " I have a happier plan !
For where, at Portsmouth, on the embattled tides,
The ships of war step out with thundering prow,
And shake their stormy sides—
In yonder place of arms, whose gaunt sea wall
Flings to the clouds the far-heard bugle-call,
He shall be born amid the drums and guns,
He shall be born among my fighting sons,
Perhaps the greatest warrior of them all."

So there, where frown the forts and battle-gear,
And all the proud sea babbles Nelson's name,
Into the world this later hero came,
He, too, a man that knew all moods but fear,
He, too, a fighter ! Yet not his the strife
That leaves dark scars on the fair face of life.
He did not fight to rend the world apart,
He fought to make it one in mind and heart,
Building a broad and noble bridge to span
The icy chasm that sunders man from man.
Wherever Wrong had fixed its bastions deep,
There did his fierce yet gay assault surprise
Some fortress girt with lucre or with lies ;
There his light battery stormed some ponderous keep ;
There charged he up the steep ;
A knight on whom no palsying torpor fell,
Keen to the last to break a lance with Hell.
And still undimmed his conquering weapons shine ;
On his bright sword no spot of rust appears ;
And still, across the years,
His soul goes forth to battle, and in the face,
Of whatsoe're is false, or cruel or base,
He hurls his gage, and leaps among the spears,
Being armed with pity and love, and scorn divine,
Immortal laughter, and immortal tears.

Reprinted, by permission, from " The Muse in Exile." By William Watson. (Herbert Jenkins.)

THE GREATNESS OF CHARLES DICKENS*

By Algernon Charles Swinburne

IT is only when such names as Shakespeare's or Hugo's rise and remain as the supreme witnesses of what was highest in any particular country at any particular time that there can be no question among any but irrational and impudent men as to the supremacy of their greatest. England, under the reign of Dickens, had other great names to boast of which may well be allowed to challenge the sovereignty of his genius. But as there certainly was no Shakespeare and no Hugo to rival and eclipse his glory, he will probably and naturally always be accepted and acclaimed as the greatest Englishman of his generation. His first work or attempts at work gave little more promise of such a future than if he had been a Coleridge or a Shelley. No one could have foreseen what all may now foresee in the "Sketches by Boz"—not only a quick and keen-eyed observer, "a chiel amang us takin' notes" more notable than Captain Grose's, but a great creative genius. Nor could any one have foreseen it in the early chapters of "Pickwick"—which, at their best, do better the sort of thing which had been done fairly well before. Sam Weller and Charles Dickens came to life together, immortal and twin-born. In "Oliver Twist" the quality of a great tragic and comic poet or dramatist in prose fiction was for the first time combined with the already famous qualities of a great humorist and a born master in the arts of narrative and dialogue.

The first novel of a great novelist has an interest for all readers above the level of the dullard or the sluggard which cannot be impaired by their possible preference for his very ripest and most perfect work. Something of this interest may have been felt by the lovers of Pickwick when they found that the great humorist who had already entranced and enraptured the whole English-speaking or English-reading world was beginning to try his hand as the writer of a regular story—a dramatic fiction or poem, such as all

* Selections from "Charles Dickens," by Algernon Charles Swinburne. With Preface and Illustrative Notes by Theodore Watts-Dunton. (Chatto & Windus.) By permission of Mr. Watts-Dunton.

true creative work in the form of narrative must be. And now that we can judge of the result by so exacting a test as that of comparison with the crowning masterpieces of his genius at its full—with "David Copperfield" or with "Great Expectations"—we cannot but admit that this result was not merely a success, but a triumph. The bitter and burning pathos of occasional passages in the "Pickwick Papers" had already shown how thoroughly and how deeply the genius as well as the character of Dickens was imbued and possessed by the noble passion of indignant pity; and in "Oliver Twist" there are touches here and there of the hand which was to give us such masterpieces of terrible tenderness and manful truth as we recognise and remember for ever in the figures of Abel Magwitch and Betty Higden. There is the same fire of sympathy, the same ardour of emotion, not yet so thoroughly trained into perfect service. . . .

It is interesting to remark how many of the minor figures in this early work must remind the appreciative reader of others more fully and happily developed in later and riper books. The excellent if slightly conventional Mr. Brownlow is a first rough sketch or study for the perfect and life-like portrait of Mr. Jarndyce: the featureless and flaccid virtue of Rose Maylie takes form and life and colour in the noble simplicity and the selfless devotion of Agnes Wickfield and Esther Summerson. . . .

No mortal man or woman, no human boy or girl, can resist the fascination of Mr. and Mrs. Quilp, of Mr. and Miss Brass, of Mr. Swiveller and his Marchioness; but even the charm of Mrs. Jarley and her surroundings, the magic which enthrals us in the presence of a Codlin and a Short, cannot mesmerise or hypnotise us into belief that the story of "The Old Curiosity Shop" is in any way a good story. But this is the first book in which the background or setting is often as impressive as the figures which can hardly be detached from it in our remembered impression of the whole design. From Quilp's Wharf to Plashwater Weir Mill Lock, the river belongs to Dickens by right of conquest or creation. The part it plays in more than a few of his books is indivisible from the parts played in them by human actors beside it or upon it. Of such actors in this book, the most famous as an example of her creator's power as a master of pathetic tragedy would thoroughly deserve her fame if she were but a thought more human and more credible. "The child" has

never a touch of childhood about her; she is an impeccable and invariable portent of devotion, without a moment's lapse into the humanity of frailty in temper or in conduct. Dickens might as well have fitted her with a pair of wings at once. A woman might possibly be as patient, as resourceful, as indefatigable in well-doing and as faultless in perception of the right thing to do; it would be difficult to make her deeply interesting, but she might be made more or less of an actual creature. But a child whom nothing can ever irritate, whom nothing can even baffle, whom nothing can ever misguide, whom nothing can ever delude, and whom nothing can ever dismay, is a monster as inhuman as a baby with two heads. . . .

"David Copperfield," from the first chapter to the last, is unmistakable by any eye above the level and beyond the insight of a beetle's as one of the masterpieces to which time can only add a new charm and an unimaginable value. The narrative is as coherent and harmonious as that of "Tom Jones"; and to say this is to try it by the very highest and apparently the most unattainable standard. But I must venture to reaffirm my conviction that even the glorious masterpiece of Fielding's radiant and beneficent genius, if in some points superior, is by no means superior in all. Tom is a far completer and more living type of gallant boyhood and generous young manhood than David; but even the lustre of Partridge is pallid and lunar beside the noontide glory of Micawber. Blifil is a more poisonously plausible villain than Uriah: Sophia Western remains unequalled except by her sister heroine Amelia as a perfectly credible and adorable type of young English womanhood, naturally "like one of Shakespeare's women," socially as fine and true a lady as Congreve's Millamant or Angelica. But even so large-minded and liberal a genius as Fielding's could never have conceived any figure like Miss Trotwood's, any group like that of the Peggotty's. As easily could it have imagined and realised the magnificent setting of the story, with its homely foreground of street or wayside and its background of tragic sea. . . .

Of the two shorter novels which would suffice to preserve for ever the fame of Dickens, some readers will as probably always prefer "Hard Times" as others will prefer "A Tale of Two Cities." The later of these is doubtless the most ingeniously and dramatically invented and constructed of all the master's works; the earlier seems to me the greater in

moral and pathetic and humorous effect. The martyr workman, beautiful as is the study of his character and terrible as is the record of his tragedy, is almost too spotless a sufferer and a saint; the lifelong lapidation of this unluckier Stephen is somewhat too consistent and insistent and persistent for any record but that of a martyrology; but the obdurate and histrionic affectation which animates the brutality and stimulates the selfishness of Mr. Bounderby is only too lamentably truer and nearer to the unlovely side of life. . . .

As a social satirist Dickens is usually considered to have shown himself at his weakest; the curious and seemingly incorrigible ignorance which imagined that the proper title of Sir John Smith's wife was Lady John Smith, and that the same noble peer could be known to his friends and parasites alternately as Lord Jones and Lord James Jones, may naturally make us regret the absence from their society of our old Parisian friend Sir Brown, Esquire; but though such singular designations as these were never rectified or removed from the text of "Nicholas Nickleby," and though a Lady Kew was as far outside the range of his genius as a Madame Marneffe, his satire of social pretension and pretence was by no means always "a swordstroke in the water" or a flourish in the air. Mrs. Sparsit is as typical and immortal as any figure of Molière's; and the fact that Mr. Sparsit was a Powler is one which can never be forgotten.

There is no surer way of testing the greatness of a really great writer than by consideration of his work at its weakest and comparison of that comparative weakness with the strength of lesser men at their strongest and their best. . . . Among the mature works of Dickens and of Thackeray, I suppose most readers would agree in the opinion that the least satisfactory, if considered as representative of the authors' incomparable powers, are "Little Dorrit" and "The Virginians"; yet no one above the intellectual level of an Ibsenite or a Zolaist will doubt or will deny that there is enough merit in either of these books for the stable foundation of an enduring fame. . . .

Among the highest landmarks of success ever reared for immortality by the triumphant genius of Dickens, the story of "Great Expectations" must for ever stand eminent beside that of "David Copperfield." These are his great twin masterpieces. Great as they are, there is nothing in them greater than the very best things in some of his other books: there is certainly no person preferable and there is possibly

no person comparable to Samuel Weller or to Sarah Gamp. Of the two childish and boyish autobiographers, David is the better little fellow though not the more lifelike little friend; but of all first chapters is there any comparable for impression and for fusion of humour and terror and pity and fancy and truth to that which confronts the child with the convict on the marshes in the twilight? And the story is incomparably the finer story of the two; there can be none superior, if there be any equal to it, in the whole range of English fiction. And except in "Vanity Fair" and "The Newcombes," if even they may claim exception, there can surely be found no equal or nearly equal number of living and everliving figures. The tragedy and the comedy, the realism and the dreamery of life, are fused or mingled together with little less than Shakespearean strength and skill of hand. To have created Abel Magwitch is to be a god indeed among the creators of deathless men. Pumblechook is actually better and droller and truer to imaginative life than Pecksniff: Joe Gargery is worthy to have been praised and loved at once by Fielding and by Sterne: Mr. Jaggers and his clients, Mr. Wemmick and his parent and his bride, are such figures as Shakespeare, when dropping out of poetry, might have created, if his lot had been cast in a later century. Can as much be said for the creatures of any other man or god? . . .

His last long story, "Our Mutual Friend," superior as it is in harmony and animation to "Little Dorrit" or "Dombey and Son," belongs to the same class of piebald or rather skewbald fiction. As in the first great prose work of the one greater and far greater genius then working in the world the cathedral of Notre Dame is the one prevailing and dominating presence, the supreme and silent witness of life and action and passion and death, so in this last of its writer's completed novels the real protagonist—for the part it plays is rather active than passive—is the river. Of a play attributed on the obviously worthless authority of all who knew or who could have known anything about the matter to William Shakespeare, but now ascribed on the joint authority of Bedlam and Hanwell to the joint authorship of Francis Bacon and John Fletcher, assisted by the fraternal collaboration of their fellow-poets Sir Walter Raleigh and King James I., it was very unjustly said by Dr. Johnson that "the genius of the author comes in and goes out with Queen Katherine." Of this book it might more justly be said that

the genius of the author ebbs and flows with the disappearance and the reappearance of the Thames.

That unfragrant and insanitary waif of its rottenest refuse, the incomparable Rogue Riderhood, must always hold a chosen place among the choicest villains of our selectest acquaintance. When the genius of his immortal creator said "Let there be Riderhood," and there was Riderhood, a figure of coequal immortality rose reeking and skulking into sight.

CHARLES DICKENS AND REFORM

By B. W. Matz

I

WHEN Charles Dickens was on one of his reading tours in this country in 1858, he was stopped by a lady, on one occasion, in the street, who said to him, "Mr. Dickens, will you let me touch the hand that has filled my house with many friends?" a personal greeting which greatly affected him, and which, he told his friend John Forster, in a letter, brought him very near what he sometimes dreamed might be his fame.

That was an inspired sentiment of the lady, whose face the novelist had never seen before, and, speaking in general terms, Dickens's fame to-day rests primarily on his genius for creating real, living characters, the majority of whom are, forty years after his death, personages as familiar to all races of the world as are the notable names in history, while the story of their individual careers may be said to be far better known by the general public. They have, in fact, become part of history; their sayings and doings, and all that is associated with their careers, are treasured and followed with as much, if not more, sincerity and concern than obtains in the case of many a great warrior or statesman; whilst the names of many of them have become generic terms indicating different phases of life and character. The man

in the street who has never read his Dickens is so accustomed to seeing his characters quoted and referred to that he is almost as conversant with their prominent peculiarities as he who knows the story of their lives by heart.

So that if the novelist's fame rested upon nothing else than this happy circumstance of having filled many homes with many friends, it would be such a fame as he himself desired, and that most writers would be content and proud to boast. But it has perhaps even a surer foundation in so much as he strove in all his books to set right what was wrong with the world, as well as to amuse and entertain those who lived in it, and to leave it better than he found it. That he accomplished his aim need not be insisted upon here. It is common knowledge, and he is admitted to be alike the most popular novelist of this or any generation, and one of our greatest social reformers. It is in the light of this latter claim that we propose to speak of him here.

Nowadays, when social reforms are in the air, so to speak, and are being brought about by collective national forces, it is easy to forget how, in the past, one man advocated more or less single-handed what is the chief work of England's Ministers at the present time. Not that Dickens's attempts at reform bore no immediate fruit ; they did, as everybody knows. But in his day Parliament did not take so much heed as it does now of the importance of the claims and needs of social reform. And Dickens's forcible voice often had to ring out alone in the cause of his less fortunate fellow-creatures.

Let us consider awhile then what he set himself to accomplish for humanity by his writings, apart from the entertainment, the solace, the joy, the hours and days of pleasure and comfort which his works imparted and continue to impart to his readers.

Dickens, from the commencement of his literary career, showed his instinct for social reform. He saw that the machinery of our social administration was sadly in want of repair, if it did not require renovating altogether. Nearly every one of his books gives striking evidence of this ; he was the advocate of all those who suffered for the wrong of the world, and by holding up that wrong for all to see, by ridiculing some of its consequences, by showing some of its evils (at times enveloped in his matchless humour, at others irradiated by his rare pathos), he exhibited the undoubted iniquities in such a manner that there was nothing left to say in their defence.

He did not talk, and preach, and rant about these evils with the hyperbole of the agitator. He drew pictures of the state of affairs they involved, created real characters—evil characters at times—set in an environment typical both of the class affected and the class affecting. There the reader saw for himself, nay, lived through it all himself. And as every phase of the community read his books, those who were able and willing to mend matters helped to bring about the change, perhaps unconscious that the result was foreshadowed by Dickens all the time. And throughout all such scenes vice was never made attractive, nor was the language of his bad characters insidious or harmful. Therefore in Dickens's descriptions of evils and things that are bad there is no encouragement for the reader to think that sin is anything to glory in, or that the pleasure of a wrong makes up for its criminality. He placed no halo around sin as so many modern novelists have done. If a thing was wrong, it was not made to appear a joy, nor glossed over with the excuses of the devil's advocate.

II

Let us look for a moment at the various abuses and ills of his time for the remedying of which Dickens made his novels the vehicle.

The intolerable Poor Law administration in " Oliver Twist," now known as " Bumbledom " ; the fallacy and impotency of imprisonment for debt in " Pickwick Papers," in " David Copperfield," and in " Little Dorrit " ; the inquity of Yorkshire schools and the cruel treatment of children attending them in " Nicholas Nickleby " ; the immorality of gambling in " The Old Curiosity Shop " ; slavery and the copyright laws in " American Notes " ; the perilous system of ignorant and venal nursing as typified in Mrs. Gamp, and wild-cat company promoting in " Martin Chuzzlewit " ; the disregard of the human spirit towards the poor and the industrial population generally, and of the helpfulness of the true Christian doctrines, in life and work, in his " Christmas Stories " ; the system of education obtaining in private schools in " David Copperfield " and in other books ; the law's fantastic delays in " Bleak House " ; education, again, the relations between workman and master, and the laws

of marriage and divorce in " Hard Times " ; the Government officials, their system of " How not to do it," for which " the circumlocution office " stood, and the principles of red tape in " Little Dorrit " ; the Poor Laws and the workhouse, again, in " Our Mutual Friend."

The student of Dickens will readily remember others, as for instance, unjust sentences, imprisonment and ill-treatment of children ; the want of a tolerable system of public education ; the want of sufficient and sanitary dwellings for the poor ; unclean and dishonest elections ; abuses of law and lawyers ; religious intolerance, cant, hypocrisy, and pretence—a truly lengthy yet incomplete catalogue. The student of political and social life of to-day will be able as readily to say how many of these crying evils have been cleaned off the slate of our administration, and how many are now in the process of being eliminated. And although it may not be true to assert that all these reforms have been brought about by Dickens, it is nevertheless a fact that he did more than any one else to cause them to be brought about.

It has been said that a novelist cannot be taken seriously as a reformer ; that he cannot be considered as wholly sincere, since he is able to introduce into his novels any situation that fits the scheme and environment of the plot he is weaving for the sake of his story ; and that he need not, and often does not, advocate himself the views he puts into the mouths of his characters. That may be so, for it is often seen that in another novel a writer has caused his characters to utter the very opposite views and to preach upon the directly opposite side. But, at any rate, this was not so with Dickens. He believed all he wrote. He was consistent in all he did or said as a friend of the downcast and poor ; as a foe to shams and hypocrisy ; as the children's advocate from both a social and educational point of view. These attributes were a part of the man himself and had characterised him long before he thought of systematically trying " to turn fiction to the good account of showing the preventible wretchedness and misery in which the mass of the people dwell," as he said in one of his *Household Words* articles.

III

It is known then what Dickens did by his novels to draw attention to the necessity of reform in various directions,

and how many of these reforms were brought about by his strenuous pen through the medium of these novels. It is also known by his speeches and published letters how keenly he had these things at heart.

But further evidence is now extant that he used his pen vigorously towards the same end in anonymous contributions to *Household Words* and other periodicals, the greater part of which have now become available for the student. In them is revealed the fact that he saw farther ahead than most men of his day, and felt more keenly and wrote more fearlessly about the evils of his time than others, more keenly even than he allowed himself to do in his novels.

Take the question of prison reform, or education, or the housing of the poor, and the proper care and welfare of children, all prominent questions to-day. These questions presented themselves to Dickens in just the same strenuous fashion years ago, and he gave utterance to sentiments and facts regarding them that might have been uttered only within the last few years.

Education was, perhaps, the subject which Dickens had most at heart. The education of the masses he looked upon as the panacea for most of the ills which beset life. As far back as 1847, in an article on London crime, he showed how the worst evils were due to ignorance ; and " in the face of such prodigious facts," he says, " sects and denominations of Christians quarrel with each other and leave the prisons full up and ever filling with people who begin to be educated within the prison walls." The moral of it all is the necessity of education for these would-be criminals, education in the common knowledge of the world, and in the elementary difference between right and wrong. " The comfortable conviction," he goes on, " that a parrot acquaintance with the Church Catechism and the commandments is enough shoe-leather for poor pilgrims by the Slough of Despond, sufficient armour against the Giants Slay-Good and Despair, and a sort of Parliamentary train for third-class passengers to the Beautiful Gate of the City, must be pulled up by the roots, or its growth will overshadow the land. . . . Schools of industry, where the simple knowledge learned from books is made pointedly useful, and immediately applicable to the duties and business of life, directly conducive to order, cleanliness, punctuality, and economy, where the sublime lessons of the New Testament are made the superstructure to be reared, enduringly, on such foundations, schools on such

principles, deep as the lowest depths of society, and leaving none of its dregs untouched, are the only means of removing the scandal and the danger that besets us in the nineteenth century of our Lord."

In a later article we get this significant sentence, which might have been written but a few months ago: "Do I, who have been deafened by a whirlwind of sound and fury consequent on a demand for secular education, see any education through the opening years for those who need it most?" and in yet another article he offers this equally poignant exhortation: "Dearly beloved brethren . . . do you know that between Gorham controversies, Pusey controversies, and Newman controversies, and twenty other controversies, a certain large class of minds in the community is gradually being driven out of all religion? Would it be well, do you think, to come out of the controversies for a little while and be simply Apostolic thus low down?"

Indeed in all his articles touching the question of social reform contained in the volume * I am quoting from, the necessity of proper education is the fundamental point to which he returns.

It is common knowledge how much sympathy and love Dickens showed for children, and particularly for the children of the poorer classes. He was the children's advocate in his novels, and in his journalistic work there will be found many earnest and vigorous articles on the subject, much upon the lines of the legislation which has recently taken place, showing how in unison his views then were with those which inspired the recent "Children's Charter," as it has been called.

Dickens further appreciated that at the bottom of all depravity was the want of better housing accommodation. And he used his pen to effect some reform in this respect also. At the time of the cholera outbreak in 1854, he addressed a striking article "To Working Men," in which he called upon them to assert themselves and combine and demand the improvement of the towns in which they live. It is the duty of the people to firmly insist, "above all things, in their and their children's right to every means of life and health that Providence has afforded for all, and firmly refuse to allow their name to be taken in vain for any purpose, by any party, until their homes are purified and the amplest means of

* "Miscellaneous Papers." 3s. 6d. (Chapman & Hall.)

cleanliness and decency are secured to them." He considered it the most momentous of all earthly questions that he was urging, and although it is not necessary to urge it now in such language as he adopted throughout the article, it only shows how the instinct for reform and the power to emphasise its need was glowing in the heart of Dickens throughout his life. How happy he would have been in the development of the present scheme of town planning!

Our prisons were a sort of nightmare to him. Keep men and children out of the prisons at all costs, he would say, from the contamination of the prison atmosphere. It is not enough to teach them, especially the children, that it is a place to avoid; we must also teach them how to avoid it. He advocated the abolition of capital punishment, and although he was not successful in bringing about an alteration in a law concerning the efficacy of which there are so many opinions, he was nevertheless instrumental, by a vigorous letter to the *Times* which started the agitation, in doing away with its extreme penalty being performed in public.

It is not possible in the space at my command to touch upon the many questions which Dickens discusses in these journalistic pieces of his. The reader who is interested will find that Dickens deals with numerous abuses of his time, many of which have already been reformed, whilst others still require and are getting attention to-day. But it is well, in considering what Dickens accomplished in this respect, to realise that he worked hard apart from his novels and public speeches in the cause of humanity. Indeed, we feel that the strongest proof of his desire for the common good of the community is to be found in these fugitive papers.

He lived amongst the poor, their troubles became his troubles, their joy his joy, and throughout all his books, wherein he paints their everyday existence in such a way as makes the reader sympathise with them instead of feeling they are something to avoid, he was imbued with a determination to ameliorate their lot; and knowing as we do that he was sincere in all he wrote in his novels, it is good to learn that apart from his books he championed them in strenuous anonymous journalism whilst others were merely looking on, and that he did all out of pure honest love for the welfare of his fellow-men, and not as a legislator justifying his position in life.

Although Dickens's time was so precious to him, he could always spare a portion of it for others. Throughout his

From "Charles Dickens."
By his Eldest Daughter.
With illustrations in colour by C. E. Brock.
(Cassell.)

PAUL AND FLORENCE DOMBEY.
By C. E. Brock.

career he appeared incessantly at public dinners as chairman or as chief spokesman, and that for no other reason than to help the particular benevolent society—for it was chiefly in such causes he was called upon to assist—in its benevolent work. A glance at his speeches alone shows how sincere was his oratory, and how greatly his services benefited the schemes in hand, particularly when it was one for the good of children, such as that of the Great Ormond Street Hospital, which owed much to his generous and willing efforts.

" Knowledge has," he said in one of his speeches, " a very limited power when it informs the head only ; but when it informs the heart as well it has a power over life and death, the body and the soul, and dominates the universe."

The knowledge which Dickens imparted did not merely inform the head, but the heart as well. And the English-speaking people throughout the world can show no greater acknowledgment of the effect of that power in them than by helping to keep his memory green.

We have attempted, in what are nothing more than a few cursory phrases, each of which would form a text for an article in itself, to indicate what a debt of gratitude is owed to this great English writer, and to suggest in what measure he merits the affection and consideration not only of those who have read and admired his works, but of those who have the welfare of their country at heart. The gratitude of his fellow countrymen has spanned the interval of a hundred years, and made yesterday seem as to-day in the light of an affection which grows only brighter as the years go by.

DICKENS AND MR. CHESTERTON

By Alfred Noyes

MR. G. K. CHESTERTON'S book on Dickens* is a remarkable piece of work. "Strictly speaking," as he would say, it is not a book at all. It is not an organic unity, it is not self-contained, it is not—taken by itself—even coherent. Like most of his other writings, it is—to borrow a figure of his own—simply a length cut from the flowing and mixed substance called Mr. Chesterton. It is a lyrical outcry rather than a criticism. Indeed, we very much doubt whether Mr. Chesterton could ever remove from his eyes those queerly-shaped lenses which prevent him from passing—even as a critic—out of his own elf-land. To a student of Dickens the little monograph by Mr. George Gissing is worth much more than Mr. Chesterton's book, which, with a few omissions and alterations, would serve better as a commentary on the "Napoleon of Notting Hill." We do not suggest for a moment that the "Napoleon of Notting Hill," in turn, might not be illuminative of Dickens, just as it is illuminative of London; or just as belief in the devil may make a livelier emerald twinkle in the grass, a purer sapphire melt into the sea. But we do very definitely assert that the devil is not the grass or the sea, or even Dickens; and that the farmer, sailor or critic who treats his particular subject as if it were in truth that ubiquitous and Protean gentleman will either be locked up in a padded cell or—like Mr. Chesterton—lose all sense of literary values, and write profoundly philosophical essays about chalk and brown boots in the daily papers. His Mr. Pickwick is a sphere-spectacled compound of Puck and the Man in the Moon. His Mrs. Gamp was begotten on a Gorgon by Gargantua. His Mr. Pecksniff washes hypocritical hands in the Milky Way. The nose of his Mr. Stiggins outreddens the Everlasting Bonfire: the whiskers of his old Peggotty are a refuge for the conies and a hiding place for the wild goats. He splashes at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comet's hair in order to expound some of the minor aspects of Dickens; while many of the more important aspects he neglects altogether.

* "Charles Dickens." By G. K. Chesterton. (Methuen.)

His whole book is entirely lacking in all the fine shades and subtle distinction of true criticism. It is full of reckless critical improvisations and riotous inconsistencies. There are downright mis-statements in it. There is even bad English in it, a sensationally bad English which looks as if it were written on the top of a motor-omnibus by an intoxicated author of Penny Dreadfuls. And, in spite of all this, it is a piece of absolute undeniable genius.

Let us briefly justify our fault-finding before we come to more important matters. Let us be regardless of appearances, and stoop to the meanness of analysing Mr. Chesterton's epigrams. At the beginning of his last chapter he lets off a somewhat erratic volley of sky-rockets. His purpose is apparently to discuss the permanence of Dickens. He begins by saying that "the hardest thing to remember about our time is that it is a time; we all instinctively think of it as the Day of Judgment." We hope we are not splitting a diamond; but the only legitimate object of such a jest—the heightening of some truth—is entirely lost owing to the simple fact that nobody in the whole world does ever think instinctively of our time as that particular Day of Judgment with capital letters upon which Mr. Chesterton relies for his effect. Seriously speaking, that joke is in a very sad predicament—it only seems funny to the man who has not seen it, the man—for instance—who is rapidly skimming a daily paper; and, worst of all, it only serves the purpose of momentarily obscuring the solemn truth that our time persistently avoids any attempt to pass final judgments (with a small j) on any living or modern writer. No journalistic cry is more common than that which, with various allusions to "perspective, nearness, plains and distant mountains," delegates the task to posterity. To cut a long story short, we must say that Mr. Chesterton's Day of Judgment is used for precisely the same purpose as a Yellow Press head-line. We venture to say that quite four-fifths of his jokes in this book are of the same nature. He has a peculiar slang or journalese of his own which shows that he—at any rate—has realised he lives in what he would call a "staggering" time. He is perpetually being "staggered" out of all proportion. His prose is packed with words and phrases like "staggering," "frantic," lunatic, blasphemous, the blasts of bigamy, the shocks of adultery, and hell. It would be characteristic of him to speak of the star-staggering personality of Poll Sweedlepipe;

and the earthquake-promoting capers of Mr. Squeers. He does actually say that Forster's Life of Dickens is "as accessible as St. Paul's Cathedral"; quite regardless of the fact that Forster's Life can be multiplied and is a great deal more accessible than the Cathedral to people living in places beyond the cab-radius—like New Zealand. But St. Paul's Cathedral is big and makes an admirable head-line. Failing the Cathedral, a Hippopotamus would have served Mr. Chesterton's purpose equally well. However, he atones for all the lack of "rightness" in his epigrams by the winning pathos and unconscious humour of one of his last remarks. Really, he informs us, "criticism of creation is so very staggering a thing"!

"Few people realise that the general habit of fiction may fade, like the general habit of the ballad has for the time faded," he remarks elsewhere; and that sentence, with its dreadful use of "like," is an instance of his motor-omnibus manner. "Few people realise," he continues, "that reading and writing are only arbitrary, and perhaps temporary sciences, like heraldry. The immortal mind will remain, and by that writers like Dickens will be securely judged." We venture to suggest that it is perfectly easy to realise all kinds of similarly remote contingencies, but wiser to refrain from their multitude—men without eyes, pigs without trotters, all such things are possible—even, alas, a world without Mr. Squeers; and, indeed, if reading and writing are to die, there is little hope of our poor old novels long surviving them. But such conjectures are inept and a blot on Mr. Chesterton's book. Nor does Mr. Chesterton often come very close to the facts when he attempts any direct analysis of Dickens; when he says, for instance, that Pumblechook is an instance of the "dehumanized vitality, fantasy, irresponsibility of creation, which belong in some sense to Dickens." He says that Pumblechook has no kind of fundamental human dignity; that "he is felt rather as one of the idle and evil fairies, who are innocuous and yet malignant, and who live for ever because they never really live at all. *It is nowhere suggested that Pumblechook will some day die.*" The first part of that statement about the fairies may be attributed to the misleading and elvish lenses aforesaid. Nothing more unfairy-like than the Pumblechook of Dickens can possibly be conceived, though we quite realise how natural a denizen of Toadstool-land he seems to Mr. Chesterton. (A very tidy and taut little elf he makes, too!)

And, of course, we cannot expect Mr. Chesterton in turn to enter into the world of Dickens; but, in the italicised sentence above we have him on a matter of fact. Dickens does actually suggest, and a very definite satirical point is made of the suggestion, that Pumblechook must one day die. The suggestion is made at the funeral of Mrs. Gargery, where Pumblechook is ridiculed for behaving—as people do every day by some coffin or other—with an air of superiority to death.

The worst of it is that Mr. Chesterton's picture of Dickens, being, as we said, a romantic poem of undeniable genius, has infectious qualities. We notice that the *Morning Post* has begun to speak of the fairy-like "Pickwick Papers." Now there is really no vulgarity in fairy-land. Fairies have no trials for breach of promise; they have no drunken men to wheel about in barrows; they have no night-capped bedroom scenes. And in "Pickwick" alone, of all the works of Dickens, are these things touched from a vulgar point of view. The wonder is—when one reads of its vulgar inception—that it was not worse. Dickens apparently did all he could to save it. At the same time the *Morning Post* inconsistently takes Mr. Chesterton to task—as we ourselves have done on a preceding page—for his excessive use of words like "sacred." "A sacred sense of humour," it says, "might pass, perhaps, or even the 'sacred bewilderment of a baby'; but why do we hear of 'the sacred house of Hogarth,' such sacred creatures as Lowten and Swiveller, Chichester and Wobbles, the sacredness even of a penny dreadful?" Why? The *Morning Post* had no right to adopt Mr. Chesterton's description of Pickwick as fairy-like, unless it realised that Mr. Chesterton belongs to a great latter-day "Renascence of Wonder," and that he sees Pickwick as a fairy simply because he sees all London as a fairy-land, and Dickens's novels as part of it. Mr. Chesterton not only sees a world in a grain of sand; he sees what he would call "the wild beauty" of the offices of the *Morning Post* against a London sunset. He sees the editor of the *Morning Post* as a fairy; and the proprietor of the *Daily Mail* as the tragic founder of an apoplectic dynasty. He is of course mistaken, but he is one of the profoundest living mystics.

Mr. Chesterton, then, looks at Dickens entirely through his own peculiar spectacles. He does not waste a single paragraph upon the very important connections between Dickens and writers like Smollett. As one would expect,

the name of Maeterlinck occurs four times as often in his index as the name of Dickens's great progenitor; and the name of Mr. Bernard Shaw competes with that of Shakespeare, though it is only fair to add that Falstaff is mentioned more frequently. But, in the meantime, you will look in vain for the Dickens of Rogue Riderhood and the Thames, the Dickens who gave us that wonderful piece of womanhood—Biddy; the Dickens of Bill Sikes and Gretna Green; the Dickens of Mantalini and Mrs. Gamp. Mr. Chesterton speaks from the place where black and white are reconciled, and the peril of his point of view is that he can say anything under the sun with perfect truth and impunity. One is afraid therefore that he may not take the trouble of entering into the minds of those whom he sets out to criticise. We are quite at variance with him, for instance, on the subject of Dickens's great characters. Mr. Chesterton's utterances on this matter are—from a finite and earthly point of view—hopelessly mixed. He defends them as having some mystic and spiritual reality. He defends them also as caricatures; but chiefly he defends them as being "too good to be true." Mr. Pecksniff's "kingdom is not of this world," he declares; and the remark has the peculiar taint of "blasphemy," which one must expect from a writer to whom all things are sacred. The hand of less employment has the finer sense. Yet Mr. Chesterton is an optimist who is quite capable of working up a passionate frenzy of protest against the bare suggestion that anything could possibly be called "too good to be true." And indeed nothing closer to the facts of human life was ever created than this great Dickens world. How otherwise should mere names like Bill Sikes and Stiggins even now remain so useful as labels among the crowd? Mr. Chesterton, indeed, comes nearest to the truth when he describes Dickens as an ordinary man of extraordinary sensibility. Reminiscence is a more important factor in the work of Dickens than in that of any other writer. The very barges that steal down the sunset-coloured Thames of his novels give us the impression of memories blurred into harmony by the passage of time. We are perpetually being confronted with the so-called originals of his characters. Whether it be true or not that Leigh Hunt is Harold Skimpole, that Landor is Mr. Boythorn, that S. C. Hall is Mr. Pecksniff, and that Dickens's own father was the model for Mr. Micawber, it is very significant that such suggestions are made with a point and

persistency unknown in the case of other writers. His own childhood, of course, was a perfect store-house of impressions, and we know what use he made of it. As he went through life there are indications that his extreme sensibility was perpetually being irritated and delighted to such an extent that he was almost bound to reproduce his mental pictures in a kind of exasperated joy of reminiscence. Mr. Chesterton says, for example, that Dickens loved Mr. Pecksniff. The remark is lacking in subtlety, for Dickens undoubtedly hated Mr. Pecksniff. He had met him; he had been irritated as madly as he had been irritated on his American tour; and he reproduced him in the same kind of voluptuous ecstasy wherewith a man bites on a sore tooth. He did not love Pecksniff; but he revelled in portraying him. There is a great deal of this irritation in Dickens. But it never leads him to exaggerate or travesty his characters. There would be no joy in that. The joy consisted in re-creating, stoke by stroke, not only their broad features, but also the secret features of their souls, which a less acute observer might miss, and might therefore think were malicious additions. Another—slightly different—effect of this kind of reminiscence is to be noticed in the scene where Joe Gargery breakfasts with Pip and Herbert. The extraordinary play which the good blacksmith made with his hat on that occasion is not to be taken as mere exaggeration. It is one of those impressionistic reminiscences which possess a man like a bad dream (though in this case it was reproduced with a kind of affectionate irritation). "His hat demanded from him a constant attention, and a quickness of eye and hand very like that exacted by wicket-keeping. He made extraordinary play with it, and showed the greatest skill; now rushing at it and catching it neatly as it dropped; now merely stopping it midway, beating it up, and humouring it in various parts of the room and against a good deal of the pattern of the paper on the wall, before he felt it safe to close with it; finally splashing it into the slop-basin, where I took the liberty of laying hands upon it." Now that kind of amiably exasperated description has nothing to do with mere elvishness. It could indeed hardly be justified artistically if it were not put into the mouth of the young prig Pip, to whom, in his intense desire to be conventional, it is not a whit exaggerated, while at the same time it renders his irritation with exquisite humour and insight. How good, too, is the foregoing

touch : " Joe, being invited to sit down, looked all round the room for a suitable spot on which to deposit his hat—*as if it were only on some few very rare substances in nature that it could find a resting place.*" All Mr. Hardy's rustics are contained in the large deliberation of those italicised words ; just as all Stevenson's pirates are contained in the convict Magwitch. This is a fact we have not seen noticed before—the enormous influence of Dickens upon Stevenson. The convict Magwitch, with his boat-cloak, his greasy little black Testament, stolen to swear his comrades on, and his awesome threats with regard to the heart and liver of Pip, is undoubtedly the father of that terrible Bill who sat in the Treasure Island tavern and terrified another boy. The very tongue they talk is the same. Is the apologetic old ruffian, for instance, in the latter part of the following quotation, Stevenson or Dickens ?—

" Stop ! " said I, almost in a frenzy of fear and dislike, " I want to speak to you. I want to know what is to be done. I want to know how you are to be kept out of danger, how long you are going to stay."

" Look 'ee here, boy," said he, laying his hand on my arm in a suddenly altered and subdued manner, " first of all, look 'ee here. I forgot myself half a minute ago. What I said was low ; that's what it was ; low. Look ee' here, boy. Look over it. I ain't a-going to be low."

But how far, in this momentary glimpse at the real Dickens, we have travelled from Mr. Chesterton's elvish conceptions. We should travel still further if we had space to touch upon grim chapters like the murder scene in Martin Chuzzlewit, upon the marvellous chorus that is kept up by old Chuffey—that masterpiece of pathos—and upon that wonderful brief outburst, when the wretched daughter of Pecksniff, who has been ridiculed and exposed to the depths of her wretched and conceited little soul, is ill-treated by that Nemesis of her flippancies—her brutal husband Jonas. The sudden pause of the satirist, the sudden outcry of the great heart of Dickens : " Oh, woman, God-beloved in old Jerusalem ! " catches one by the throat, as very few things in all our literature do. He cries out like a creature hurt by the memory of it. Mr. Chesterton points out as a weakness of Dickens that he was " easily drawn," and over sensitive to criticism. Let it be remembered that he was easily " drawn " in these other and nobler ways also ; and that the more generously and sincerely he felt what he wrote, the more likely he would be to feel the revulsion caused by " a blockhead's insult." He was quick to feel everything, from

hate to admiration. He was almost the first to hail the appearance of George Eliot's "Scenes from Clerical Life" in *Blackwood's Magazine*; and the fact is a great testimony to his insight; for the quiet beauty of her earliest work is not of the kind one would expect to awaken his enthusiasm so rapidly. His "quickness" of feeling is a sign of power rather than of weakness. It is the quickness of a disembodied soul. His face sometimes looked, said one of his contemporaries, "as if it were made of steel"; and it was the steel of which Mr. Chesterton's much desired sabres might indeed have been made to sweep Europe with democracy if blockheadism had confronted him as it confronted Gorky. He had the gift of gripping a crowd, and the energy of fifty men. The reforms he did actually accomplish are wonderful enough. But even here Mr. Chesterton misunderstands him; for Mr. Chesterton's optimism is a kind of mental crucifixion.

When he declares that "there are no pleasures like those of the poor," his remark has a pathetic, almost a tragic significance, as well as an optimistic one; and he has a fierce desire to alter the very conditions of those pleasures. But though Dickens occasionally drew exquisite pictures of cosy poverty, and at other times declared that our social system would "either have to reform or be reformed off the face of the earth," we are quite sure he was innocent of the mystical optimism which Mr. Chesterton imputes to him. And this is the head and front of Mr. Chesterton's offending. This is why we can declare his book on Dickens to be almost worthless as literary criticism in the same breath with which we can declare it to be quite admirable as a romantic poem of genius. For Mr. Chesterton very rightly sees, in the work of Dickens, the same "divine contradiction" which is in the graveyard of "Hamlet," for instance, and in life itself, and in the eternal. But Dickens did not, as it were, look at those contradictions simultaneously, or attempt to harmonise them in any new philosophy of creation, with its implied divine self-limitation, self-sacrifice, suffering and love. He was content with the Gospel of St. John. He had never been forced by this "best of all impossible words" to say what, in all reverence and in "a sense most sacred and tremendous," the Twentieth Century must soon grope once more for the old cruciform symbol to say—In the beginning was the Paradox!

Let us end on a note which seems to us to be the most

important of all. Mr. Chesterton's book is a sign of the times, a sign of the Renascence which we hold is about to sweep away not only all the little æsthetic cults, but also all possibility of a return to the Spencerian definition of art. Mr. Chesterton declared Mr. Sapsea's epitaph to be an impossible Splendour; but Herbert Spencer has, in grotesque earnest, transcended that wildest "caricature" of Dickens. For our great modern philosopher has inscribed over the tombs of the patchouli poets and the Celtic coteries, the Verlaines and their English disciples, this inspired piece of lapidary work:

Art is an activity arising even in the animal kingdom, and springing from sexual desire and the propensity to play.

Dickens is one of the few writers whom Tolstoy, in his war upon the modern decadents, could declare wholeheartedly to pass the first test of great art—that it should lead to the union of men with one another and with God. And here, because, as we said, his work is one of absolute genius, Mr. Chesterton finally shows that all his inconsistencies are rooted in an ultimate consistency, that all his critical improvisations are based on the secret and eternal harmonies. These are the final sentences of his very remarkable book:

"The hour of absinthe is over. We shall not be much further troubled with the little artists who found Dickens too sane for their sorrows and too clean for their delights. But we have a long way to travel before we get back to what Dickens meant: and the passage is along a rambling English road, a twisting road such as Mr. Pickwick travelled. But this at least is part of what he meant; that comradeship and serious joy are not interludes in our travel; but that rather our travels are interludes in comradeship and joy, which through God shall endure for ever. The inn does not point to the road; the road points to the inn. And all roads point at last to an ultimate inn, where we shall meet Dickens and all his characters: and when we drink again it shall be from the great flagons in the tavern at the end of the world."

From "Our Mutual Friend."
Illustrated by Charles Pears' character studies,
and a frontispiece in colour by Fred Barnard.
(The Waverley Book Co.)

ROGUE RIDERHOOD.
By Fred Barnard.

NOTES

DICKENS'S PORTRAITS

"The photographic portraits of Dickens form a legion," says George Augustus Sala, in the interesting little book of his personal recollections of Dickens that was published by Routledge in 1870; "and the more recent ones give a life-like resemblance of him as he seemed to the present generation —a bronzed, weather-worn, hardy man, with somewhat of a seaman's air about him. His carriage was remarkably upright, his mien almost aggressive in its confidence. He was one of the few men whose individuality was not effaced by the mournful conventionality of evening dress. Many a prince, many a peer, would, but for their stars and ribands, be absorbed at public dinners or evening parties by the terrible dead level of the black coat and white cravat; but under such circumstances the face and figure of Charles Dickens were always unmistakably conspicuous. The same prominence of individuality was strongly manifest in Mr. Leslie's well-known picture of Mr. Dickens as the Copper Captain, in 'Every Man in his Humour,' in the recent exhibition of deceased Masters at the Royal Academy. The dramatic *travestissement* was complete; the picturesque make-up was perfect; the simulated Captain was the genuine, bearded, whiskered swashbuckler and braggadocio of Ben Jonson; and yet beneath all these there shone forth, strongly as the sun darting from behind a summer cloud, the searching eyes, the determined visage, the irresistible smile of Charles Dickens. . . . Those who could look far back remembered when Dickens was in countenance, like Milton in his youth, 'eminently beautiful,' and when in attire he was, next to Count D'Orsay, the choicest and most tastefully dressed dandy in London. For the similitude of the elderly Dickens we must rely upon the wonderfully faithful photographic portraits lately published; for the Dickens of middle-age, we must refer to the noble portrait of Mr. Frith, or to the grand, but somewhat dusky, picture by Ary Scheffer, or to the engraving from the delicate miniature by Margaret Gilles, prefixed to Mr. Horne's 'Spirit of the Age'; but for the Dickens of thirty years since, for the 'unknown young man who,' as his greatest critic and admirer, Mr. Thackeray, said, 'calmly and modestly came and took his place at the head of English literature,' we must turn to the portrait by his early friend Daniel Maclise. . . . For grace, and refinement, and intellectual force we must go to

Maclise's canvas, and ponder over that exquisite delineation of the young man with the long silky hair, the fascinating smile, and the marvellous clear and inquiring eyes which, even from the copper-plate, seem to follow the beholder everywhere, as the eyes of Guido's Beatrice do in that Gallery at Rome. This was the Charles Dickens who, in high satin stock and double breast pin, in glossy frock coat and velvet collar, was in the early days of Queen Victoria's reign, one of the best-looking and best-dressed young fellows about town; he who, a few years later, in a blue frock, white vest, and white trousers looked even nattier and comelier."

IN PRAISE OF DICKENS

One hears very little nowadays of that tribe of critics who were unable to appreciate Dickens and went about consoling themselves with a notion that this lack of appreciation proved the superiority of their literary taste. It is not to be expected that he should appeal to everybody, but his appeal is not merely to the uncritical, as that lost tribe laboured to suggest, and the few who do not realise his greatness, like the many who do, are of all sorts. "There never was such another as Charles Dickens," wrote Andrew Lang; and Lang was not apt to be over-ready with his praises, "nor shall we ever see his like sooner than the like of Shakespeare. And he owed all to native genius and hard work: he owed almost nothing to literature, and that little we regret." Chief among his appreciators was Swinburne, who delighted not only in the poetry and dramatic power of the novels but to the full in their inimitable humour, as one may gather from the extracts we give elsewhere, with Mr. Watts-Dunton's permission, from his memorable little book on "Charles Dickens" that was published last year by Messrs. Chatto and Windus. It is significant that the highest, most discriminating praise of Dickens that has been written of recent years has come from two critics so widely dissimilar in taste and temperament as the pessimistic George Gissing and the gloriously optimistic G. K. Chesterton. Gissing knew with a painful intimacy that lower London and its people which figure so largely in Dickens's work, and in his admirable "Charles Dickens: A Critical Study" (Blackie) he defends him "against the familiar complaint that, however trustworthy his background, the figures designed upon it in general are mere forms of fantasy. On re-reading his works, it is not thus that

Dickens's characters, on the whole, impress me. With reserves . . . I believe him to have been what he always claimed to be, a very accurate painter of the human beings no less than of the social conditions he saw about him. Readers of Dickens who exclaim at the unreality of his characters (I do not here speak of his conduct of his story) will generally be found unacquainted with the English lower classes of to-day."

A CHILD'S JOURNEY WITH DICKENS

Among the personal recollections in this volume are some by authors who when they were young saw Dickens. Another author, not represented there, who treasures such a recollection is the charming American novelist Kate Douglas Wiggin. A year or so ago Mrs. Riggs wrote these memories down in a delightful little book called "A Child's Journey with Dickens" (Hodder & Stoughton). Describing her home life, she says that on the bookshelves in the family living-room, among other volumes, were most of the novels of Dickens: "It seems to me that no child nowadays has time to love an author as the children and young people of that generation loved Dickens; nor do I think that any living author of to-day provokes love in exactly the same fashion." She tells of how Dickens arrived at New York to give one of his readings, and her mother went with others to hear it, leaving the child at home, for she was considered too young to go with them; but she followed them unnoticed, and lingered outside the hall in which Dickens was to appear in the vain hope of catching a glimpse of him. Next morning she set out on a railroad journey with her mother, and "when the train stopped for two or three minutes at North Berwick, the people on the side of the car next the station suddenly arose and looked eagerly out at some object of apparent interest. I was not at any age a person to sit still in her seat when others were looking out of windows, and my small nose was quickly flattened against one of the panes. There on the platform stood the Adored One! His hands were plunged deep in his pockets (a favourite attitude), but presently one was removed to wave away laughingly a piece of the famous Berwick sponge cake, offered him by Mr. Osgood, his travelling companion and friend. I knew him at once!—the smiling, genial, mobile face, rather highly coloured, the brilliant eyes, the watch-chain, the red carnation in the button-hole, the expressive hands much given to gesture. It was only a

momentary view, for the train started, and Dickens vanished, to resume his place in the car next to ours, where he had been, had I known it, ever since we left Portland." Whilst her mother was reading, the child slipped away and entered the next car, and watched Dickens as he sat chatting with Mr. Osgood; then when Mr. Osgood left him and went into a smoking car, she stole forward involuntarily and sat in the seat left vacant by his side. Dickens spoke to her, and so gave her the chance to tell him how she loved his books and he, with his love of children, whimsically encouraged her frank criticisms, and by his tenderness and playful humour left an ineffaceable remembrance of that magical interview on the mind of the small girl who was to grow up and become a novelist herself, and one moreover whose stories have no little of the humour and the sympathetic humanity that are characteristic of Dickens's own.

SOME BOOKS ABOUT DICKENS

We have no space here for any sort of bibliography. To say nothing of the editions of Dickens already mentioned, his works are published in a great variety of editions at all prices, ranging from sixpence to half a guinea a volume, and more, by his original publishers, Messrs. Chapman and Hall; most of his novels are to be had in all the cheap series of reprints; and there is scarcely a publisher in London who has not published one or more of his books illustrated in black-and-white or in colour. The books about Dickens are a great and increasing multitude, and we shall have to content ourselves with a brief list of some that have been recently added to it and that the Dickens reader will find interesting and helpful:

"Charles Dickens." By A. C. Swinburne (Chatto).
"Charles Dickens: A Critical Study." By George Gissing (Blackie).
"Charles Dickens." By G. K. Chesterton (Methuen).
"Dickens." By A. W. Ward (Macmillan).
"The Comedy of Charles Dickens." By his daughter Kate (Mrs. Perugini) (Chapman & Hall).
"Charles Dickens." By his eldest daughter (Cassell).
"Charles Dickens: The Apostle of the People." By Edwin Pugh (F. Palmer).
"Phases of Dickens." By J. Cuming Walters (Chapman & Hall).

"The Dickens Originals." By Edwin Pugh (Foulis).
"Who's Who in Dickens." By T. A. Fyfe (Hodder).
"A Dickens Dictionary." By A. J. Philip (Routledge).
"The Dickens Dictionary." By Gilbert A. Pierce (Chapman & Hall).
"The Childhood and Youth of Dickens." By Robert Langton (Hutchinson).
"Charles Dickens in America." By W. Glide Wilkins (Chapman & Hall).
"Charles Dickens as Editor." By R. C. Lehmann (Smith, Elder).
"Rambles in Dickens Land." By Robert Allbut (Chapman & Hall).
"The Real Dickens Land." By H. Snowden Ward and Catharine W. B. Ward (Chapman & Hall).
"Charles Dickens and His Friends." By W. Teignmouth Shore (Cassell).
"Phiz and Dickens." By Edgar Browne (Nisbet).
"Dickens and the Drama." By S. J. Adair Fitz-Gerald (Chapman & Hall).
"Charles Dickens and Music." By James T. Lightwood (C. H. Kelly).
"A Day with Dickens." (Hodder & Stoughton).
"Clues to Dickens's Mystery of Edwin Drood." By J. Cuming Walters (Chapman & Hall).
"The Problem of Edwin Drood." By Sir W. Robertson Nicoll (Hodder & Stoughton).
"The Complete Edwin Drood." By J. Cuming Walters (Chapman & Hall).
"The Trial of John Jasper." (Chapman & Hall).
"Charles Dickens and Social Reform." By Walter Crotch (Chapman & Hall).
"A Bibliography of Dickens." By John C. Eckle (Chapman & Hall).
"Synopsis of Dickens's Novels." By J. W. McSpadden (Chapman & Hall).
"Appreciations and Criticisms of Charles Dickens." By G. K. Chesterton (Dent).

We are indebted to Mr. B. W. Matz for much assistance with the illustrations in this number, and to Messrs. Chapman and Hall (without whose aid it would indeed be difficult to

produce such a book on Dickens as this) for permission to reproduce our two colour plates by Mr. Cecil Aldin from "Pickwick" and many of the portraits and pictures from their various editions of Dickens, and from the handsome two-volume Memorial Edition of Forster's "Life of Dickens," which is enriched with five hundred portraits, facsimiles and other illustrations selected, arranged and annotated by Mr. Matz, who, as every Dickens lover knows, was one of the founders of the Dickens Fellowship, is a member of the Boz Club, and edits that invaluable monthly miscellany of Dickens lore, *The Dickensian*. A year or so ago, by the way, Mr. Matz discovered a number of miscellaneous journalistic articles contributed by Dickens to periodical literature, and collected and edited these under the title of "Miscellaneous Papers" (Chapman & Hall). For assistance with other of the illustrations here our thanks are also due to the several publishers whose names appear under them. The edition of Dickens's works published by the Educational Book Company (from which we reproduce three of Mr. Harry Furniss's drawings) is edited by Mr. J. A. Hammerton, and includes two volumes written and compiled by the editor, "The Dickens Picture Book," and "The Dickens Companion," which are of the greatest assistance to all students of Dickens and his circle. The special features of the Waverley Book Company's edition of Dickens are the series of character studies in colour by Fred Barnard, and in black-and-white by Charles Pears, and the excellent series of prefaces that have been written for the volumes by well-known authors. We reproduce, by permission, four of these character studies, and reprint Mr. William De Morgan's admirable preface to "Our Mutual Friend." Twelve of Fred Barnard's famous paintings of Dickens's characters are beautifully reproduced in colour and published by the Waverley Book Company in a separate portfolio. Six of our articles, including Mr. Alfred Noyes' brilliant essay which in criticising Mr. Chesterton's work on Dickens criticises also the work of Dickens himself, are numbers of THE BOOKMAN that are quite out of print. In addition to the indebtedness we have already acknowledged to him, we are obliged to Mr. Watts-Dunton for his kindness in permitting us to print his sonnet, "Dickens Returns on Christmas Day," and to Mr. William Watson and Mr. Herbert Jenkins for permitting us to use Mr. Watson's ode on "The Centenary of Dickens."

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