



CHARLES LEVER

*From an Engraving by W. G. Jackman.*



CHARLES DICKENS

*Engraving by J. Greatbach. From a Photograph by J. & C. Watkins.*

public Readings, 1858-59, 1861-63, 1866-67, 1868-70, in London, provinces and Scotland. Readings in Paris, 1863. Severe illness in 1865. Readings in America, Dec. 1867 to April 1868. Breakdown of health. Last Reading, in London, 1 March 1869. Died, at Gadshill, 9 June 1870. Buried in Westminster Abbey. *Works*: "Sketches by Boz," 1st series, 1835; 2nd, 1836; "Sunday under Three Heads . . . By Timothy Sparks," 1836; "The Strange Gentleman . . . By 'Boz,'" 1837; "The Village Coquettes," 1836; "Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club," 1837 (in monthly nos., April 1836 to Nov. 1837); "Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi, edited by 'Boz,'" 1838; "Oliver Twist . . . By 'Boz,'" (from "Bentley's Miscellany;" 2 vols.), 1838; "Sketches of Young Gentlemen" (anon.), 1838; "Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby," 1839 (in monthly nos., April 1838 to Oct. 1839); "Sketches of Young Couples" (anon.), 1840; "Master Humphrey's Clock," vol. i., 1840; vols. ii. and iii., 1841 (in weekly nos., April 1840 to Nov. 1841); "Barnaby Rudge," 1841; "The Old Curiosity Shop," 1841; "American Notes," 1842; "A Christmas Carol," 1843; "The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit," 1844 (in monthly nos., Jan. 1843 to July 1844); "The Chimes," 1844; "The Cricket on the Hearth," 1845; "Pictures from Italy" (from "Daily News"), 1846; "The Battle of Life," 1846; "Dealings with the firm of Dombey and Son," 1848 (in monthly nos., Oct. 1846 to April 1848); "The Haunted Man," 1848; "The Personal History of David Copperfield," 1850 (in monthly nos., May 1849 to Nov. 1850); "Bleak House," 1853 (in monthly nos., March 1852 to Sept. 1853); "A Child's History of England" (from "Household Words"), 1854; "Hard Times for these Times" (from "Household Words"), 1854; "Little Dorrit," 1857 (in monthly nos., Dec. 1855 to June 1857); "A Tale of Two Cities" (from "All the Year Round"), 1859; "The Uncommercial Traveler," 1861 [1860] (originally in weekly parts, Jan. to Oct., 1860; 2nd edn. enlarged, 1868; 3rd edn. enlarged, 1869); "Great Expectations" (from "All the Year Round"), 1861; "Our Mutual Friend," 1865 (in monthly nos., May 1864 to Nov. 1865); "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" (unfinished) six nos., April to Sept., 1870. *Posthumous*: "Speeches," 1870; "Mr. Nightingale's Diary," 1877; "Is she his Wife?" 1877; "The Lamplighter," 1879; "The Mudfog Papers" (from "Bentley's Miscellany"), 1880; "Letters" (3 vols.), 1880-82. He edited: "The Pic-Nic Papers," 1841; J. Overs' "Evenings of a Working Man," 1844; "Method of Employment," 1852; A. A. Procter's "Legends and Lyrics," 1866; "Religious Opinions of the late C. H. Townshend," 1869. *Collected Works* in 22 vols., 1858-59; in 21 vols., 1867-74. *Life*: by Forster, 1872; by Marzials, 1887.—SHARP, R. FARQUHARSON, 1897, *A Dictionary of English Authors*, p. 79.

## PERSONAL

Who the *dickens* "Boz" could be  
Puzzled many a learned elf,  
Till time revealed the mystery,  
And "Boz" appeared as Dick himself.

—DAVIDS, C. J., 1837, *Impromptu, Bentley's Miscellany, March*.

He is a fine little fellow—Boz, I think. Clear blue, intelligent eyes, eye-brows that he arches amazingly, large protrusive rather loose mouth, a face of most extreme *mobility*, which he shuttles about—eyebrows, eyes, mouth and all—in a very singular manner while speaking. Surmount this with a loose coil of common-coloured hair; and set it on a small compact figure, very small, and dressed à la D'Orsay rather than well—this is Pickwick. For the rest a quiet, shrewd-looking, little fellow, who seems to guess pretty well what he is and what others are.—CARLYLE, THOMAS, 1840, *Letter to John Carlyle, March 17*; THOMAS CARLYLE, *A History of His Life in London*, ed. Froude, vol. i, p. 152.

Mr. Dickens may be assured that there is felt for him all over Scotland a sentiment of kindness, affection, admiration, and love; and I know for certain that a knowledge of these sentiments must make him happy.—WILSON, JOHN, 1841, *Speech at a Public Dinner to Dickens in Edinburgh*.

Above all, of Charles Dickens, with whom I have struck up what I mean to be an eternal and intimate friendship. He lives very near us here, and I often run over and sit an hour *tête-à-tête*, or take a long walk in the park with him—the only way really to know or be known by either man or woman. Taken in this way, I think him very amiable and agreeable. In mixed company, where he is now much sought after as a lion, he is rather reserved, &c.—JEFFREY, FRANCIS LORD, 1841, *Letter to Lord Cockburn, May 4*; *Life of Lord Jeffrey*, ed. Cockburn, vol. II, p. 267.

I admire and love the man exceedingly, for he has a deep warm heart, a noble

sympathy with and respect for human nature, and great intellectual gifts wherewith to make these fine moral ones fruitful for the delight and consolation and improvement of his fellow-beings.—KEMBLE, FRANCES ANN, 1842, *Letter*, April 22; *Records of Later Life*, p. 318.

Called on Dickens at 10.30 A. M. by appointment, as he leaves at one. He was at breakfast. Sat down with him. He was very agreeable and full of life. He is the *cleverest* man I ever met. I mean he impresses you more with the alertness of his various powers. His forces are all light infantry and light cavalry, and always in marching order. There are not many heavy pieces, but few *sappers and miners*, the scientific corps is deficient, and I fear there is no chaplain in the garrison.—DANA, RICHARD HENRY, 1842, *Journal*, Feb. 5; *Richard Henry Dana*, ed. C. F. Adams, vol. I, p. 33.

Among the passengers in the "Britannia" are Mr. Charles Dickens and his wife. This gentleman is the celebrated "Boz," whose name "rings through the world with loud applause,"—the fascinating writer whose fertile imagination and ready pen conceived and sketched the immortal Pickwick, his prince of valets, and his body-guard of choice cronies; who has made us laugh with "Mantilini," and cry with poor "little Nell;" caused us to shrink with horror from the effects of lynch law, as administered by the misguided Lord George Gordon, and to listen with unmitigated delight to the ticking of "Master Humphrey's Clock." The visit of this popular writer has been heralded in advance. He was expected by this packet, and I signed, three or four days ago, with a number of other persons, a letter to be presented to him on his arrival in this city, giving him a hearty welcome and inviting him to a public dinner, which, from the spirit which appears to prevail on the subject, will be no common affair. . . . The great dinner to Dickens was given yesterday, at the City Hotel, and came off with flying colours. Two hundred and thirty persons sat down to dinner at seven o'clock. The large room was ornamented with two illuminated scenes from the works of "Boz," busts of celebrated persons and classical devices, all in good taste; and the eating and drinking part of the affair was excellent. The president was Washington Irving (I beg pardon,

"His Excellency"). "Non Nobis" was sung by Mr. Horn and his little band of vocalists, who gave several glees during the evening. After the unintellectual operation of eating and drinking was concluded, the president rose and began a prepared speech, in which he broke down flat (as he promised us beforehand he would), and concluded with this toast: "Charles Dickens, the literary guest of the nation." To this the guest made his acknowledgment in an excellent speech, delivered with great animation, and characterized by good taste and warm feeling.—HONE, PHILIP, 1842, *Diary*, Jan. 24, Feb. 19, vol. II, pp. 109, 118.

You ask about Mr. Boz. I am quite delighted with him. He is a thorough good fellow, with nothing of the author about him but the reputation, and goes through his task as Lion with exemplary grace, patience, and good-nature. He has the brilliant face of a man of genius, and a pretty Scottish lassie for a wife, with roses on her cheeks, and "een sae bonny blue." His writings you know. I wish you had listened to his eloquence at the dinner here. It was the only specimen of eloquence I have ever witnessed. Its charm was not in its words, but in the manner of saying them.—HALLECK, FITZ-GREENE, 1842, *To Mrs. Rush*, March 8; *Life and Letters*, ed. Wilson, p. 434.

At a dinner-party at Mr. Holland's last evening, a gentleman, in instance of Charles Dickens's unwearability, said that during some theatrical performances in Liverpool he acted in play and farce, spent the rest of the night making speeches, feasting, and drinking at table, and ended at seven o'clock in the morning by jumping leap-frog over the backs of the whole company.—HAWTHORNE, NATHANIEL, 1853, *English Note-Books*, vol. I, p. 59.

He is a virtuous and happy family man, in the first place. His glowing and generous heart is kept steady by the best domestic influences: and we may fairly hope now that he will fulfil the natural purpose of his life, and stand by literature to the last; and again, that he will be an honour to the high vocation by prudence as well as by power: so that the graces of genius and generosity may rest on the finest basis of probity and prudence; and that his old age may be honoured as heartily as his youth and manhood have been admired.—Nothing could exceed the frank kindness and consideration

shown by him in the correspondence and personal intercourse we have had; and my cordial regard has grown with my knowledge of him.—MARTINEAU, HARRIET, 1855-77, *Autobiography*, ed. Chapman, vol. II, p. 63.

Dickens is forty-five years old, cheerful, amiable, noble, and good. However highly I may place him as an author, I must prize him just as highly as an actor in tragedy, as well as in comedy.—ANDERSEN, HANS CHRISTIAN, 1857, *To the Grand-Duke of Weimar*, Aug. 9; *Correspondence*, ed. Crawford, p. 358.

I heard Dickens last night; got a capital reserved seat by favour of the Director,—right opposite to him. It was a great treat, without any exaggeration. He has a voice of great compass and play of feeling, great dramatic gifts altogether, and he maintained unabated interest for upwards of two hours. It was all the better to me, I daresay, as I had pretty well forgot the "Christmas Carol." Scrooge, the hero, was his great forte; but he gives the Cratchetts also—both father and mother and the children—with great effect; and as his voice deepened into the sweetest pathetic tones in reading the death of Tiny Tim, nothing could have been finer. The only objection I could find to the whole was, that it was too *histrionic*, which, however, I daresay is a good deal owing to his appearance. The latter was in all respects a great disappointment. It is a sort of mixture of the *wailer* and the actor, Frenchified in his dress to a degree quite disagreeable. He has not a pleasant face, singular lines—I don't know whether of care—running under his eyes and from his mouth—in short, not very gentlemanly.—TULLOCH, JOHN, 1858, *Letter to his Wife, March; Memoir by Mrs. Oliphant*, p. 125.

He looks about the age of Longfellow. His hair is not much grizzled and is thick, although the crown of his head is getting bald. His features are good, and the nose rather high, the eyes largish, greyish and very expressive. He wears a moustache and beard, and dresses at dinner in exactly the same uniform which every man in London or the civilised world is bound to wear, as much as the inmates of a penitentiary are restricted to theirs. I mention this because I had heard that he was odd and extravagant in his costume. I liked him exceedingly. We sat next each other at table,

and I found him genial, sympathetic, agreeable, unaffected, with plenty of light easy talk and touch-and-go fun without any effort or humbug of any kind.—MOTLEY, JOHN LOTHROP, 1861, *To His Mother, March 15; Correspondence*, ed. Curtis, vol. I, p. 365.

My love to noble Dickens.—LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE, 1864, *Letter to Forster, May 9; Life by Forster*, p. 674.

Dickens, at home, seems to be perpetually jolly, and enters into the interest of games with all the ardor of a boy. Physically (as well as mentally) he is immensely strong, having quite regained his wonted health and strength. He is an immense walker, and never seems to be fatigued. He breakfasts at eight o'clock; immediately afterward answers all the letters received that morning; writes until one o'clock; lunches, walks twelve miles (every day), dines at six, and passes the evening entertaining his numerous friends.—PHILP, FRANKLIN, 1869, *Diary, A Short Life of Charles Dickens by Jones*, p. 192.

I emphatically direct that I be buried in an inexpensive, unostentatious, and strictly private manner, that no public announcement be made of the time or place of my burial, that at the utmost not more than three plain mourning coaches be employed, and that those who attend my funeral wear no scarf, cloak, black bow, long hatband, or other such revolting absurdity. I direct that my name be inscribed in plain English letters on my tomb, without the addition of "Mr." or "Esquire." I conjure my friends on no account to make me the subject of any monument, memorial, or testimonial whatever. 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, I commit my soul to the mercy of God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and I exhort my dear children to try to guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament in its broad spirit, and to put no faith in any man's narrow construction of its letter here or there.—DICKENS, CHARLES, 1869, *Will, May 11*.

No man ever kept himself more aloof than Dickens from the ordinary honours of life. No titles were written after his name. He was not C. B., or D. C. L., or F. R. S.; nor did he ever attempt to become M. P. What titles of honour may ever have been

offered to him I cannot say; but that titles were offered I do not doubt. Lord Russell, a year or two ago, proposed a measure by which, if carried, certain men of high character and great capacity would have been selected as peers for life; but Charles Dickens would never have been made a lord. He probably fully appreciated his own position; and had a noble confidence in himself, which made him feel that nothing Queen, Parliament, or Minister, could do for him would make him greater than he was. No title to his ear could have been higher than that name which he made familiar to the ears of all reading men and women.—TROLLOPE, ANTHONY, 1870, *Charles Dickens, Saint Paul's Magazine*, vol. 6, p. 374.

A lithe, energetic man, of medium stature, crosses the platform at the brisk gait of five miles an hour, and takes his position behind the table. . . . Dickens has a broad, full brow, a fine head,—which, for a man of such power and energy, is singularly small at the base of the brain,—and a cleanly cut profile. There is a slight resemblance between him and Louis Napoleon in the latter respect, owing mainly to the nose; but it is unnecessary to add that the faces of the two men are totally different. Dickens's eyes are light-blue, and his mouth and jaw, without having any claim to beauty, possess a strength that is not concealed by the veil of iron-gray mustache and generous imperial. His head is but slightly graced with iron-gray hair, and his complexion is florid. If any one thinks to obtain an accurate idea of Dickens from the photographs that flood the country, he is mistaken. He will see Dickens's clothes, Dickens's features, as they appear when Nicholas Nickleby is in the art of knocking down Mr. Wackford Squeers; but he will not see what makes Dickens's face attractive, the geniality and expression that his heart and brain put into it.—FIELD, KATE, 1870, *Pen Photographs of Charles Dickens's Readings*, p. 20.

What portrait can do justice to the frankness, kindness, and power of his eyes? They seemed to look through you, and yet only to take notice of what was best in you and most worthy of notice. And then his smile, which was most charming! And then his laughter—not poor, thin, arid, ambiguous laughter, that is ashamed of itself, that moves one feature only of the face—but the largest and heartiest kind, irradiating

his whole countenance, and compelling you to participate in his immense enjoyment of it.—HELPS, ARTHUR, 1870, *In Memoriam, Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. 22, p. 236.

Once when a bad man died, a savage wit, being apprised of the event, observed that the average value of mankind was sensibly raised. Who does not feel that, by the death of Charles Dickens, the average value of ourselves, as Englishmen of the nineteenth century, is incalculably lowered?—AUSTIN, ALFRED, 1870, *Charles Dickens, Temple Bar*, vol. 29, p. 554.

Dickens's personal taste in dress was always "loud." He loved gay vests, glittering jewelry, showy satin stocks, and everything rather *prononcé*, yet no man had a keener or more unsparing critical eye for these vulgarities in others. He once gave to a friend a vest of a most gorgeous shawl-pattern. Soon after, at a party, he quizzed his friend most unmercifully for his "stunning" vest, although he had on him at that very moment its twin-brother, or sister—whichever sex vests belong to.—MACKENZIE, R. SHELTON, 1870, *Life of Charles Dickens*, p. 243.

How well I recall the bleak winter evening in 1842 when I first saw the handsome, glowing face of the young man who was even then famous over half the globe! He came bounding into the Tremont House, fresh from the steamer that had brought him to our shores, and his cheery voice rang through the hall, as he gave a quick glance at the new scenes opening upon him in a strange land on first arriving at a Transatlantic hotel. "Here we are!" he shouted, as the lights burst upon the merry party just entering the house, and several gentlemen came forward to greet him. . . . Young, handsome, almost worshipped for his genius, belted round by such troops of friends as rarely ever man had, coming to a new country to make new conquests of fame and honor. . . . From top to toe every fibre of his body was unrestrained and alert. What vigor, what keenness, what freshness of spirit, possessed him! He laughed all over, and did not care who heard him! He seemed like the Emperor of Cheerfulness on a cruise of pleasure, determined to conquer a realm or two of fun every hour of his overflowing existence. That night impressed itself on my memory for all time, so far as I am concerned with things sublunary. It was Dickens, the true "Boz," in flesh and blood,

who stood before us at last, and with my companions, three or four lads of my own age, I determined to sit up late that night. None of us then, of course, had the honor of an acquaintance with the delightful stranger, and I little thought that I should afterwards come to know him in the beaten way of friendship, and live with him day after day in years far distant; that I should ever be so near to him that he would reveal to me his joys and his sorrows, and thus that I should learn the story of his life from his own lips.—FIELDS, JAMES T., 1871, *Yesterdays with Authors*, pp. 127, 128.

I had the honor of being Mr. Dickens's school-fellow for about two years (1824–1826), both being day-scholars at Mr. Jones's "Classical and Commercial Academy." . . . My recollection of Dickens whilst at school . . . is that of a healthy looking boy, small but well built, with a more than usual flow of spirits, inducing to harmless fun, seldom or never I think to mischief, to which so many lads at that age are prone. I cannot recall any thing that then indicated he would hereafter become a literary celebrity; but perhaps he was too young then. He usually held his head more erect than lads ordinarily do, and there was a general smartness about him. His week-day dress of jacket and trousers, I can clearly remember, was what is called pepper-and-salt; and, instead of the frill that most boys of his age wore then, he had a turn-down collar, so that he looked less youthful in consequence. He invented what he termed a "lingo," produced by the addition of a few letters of the same sound to every word; and it was our ambition, walking and talking thus along the street, to be considered foreigners.—THOMAS, OWEN P., 1871, *Letter to John Forster, Feb.*; *Forster's The Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. I, ch. III.

He helped men with a spontaneous grace and sweetness which are indescribable. The deep, rich, cheery voice; the brave and noble countenance; the hand that had the fire of friendship in its grip—all played their part in comforting in a moment the creature who had come to Charles Dickens for advice, for help, for sympathy. When he took a cause in hand, or a friend under his wing, people who knew him breathed in a placid sense of security. He had not only the cordial will to be of use wherever his services could be advantageously enlisted, but he could see at a glance the exact thing

he might do; and beyond the range of his conviction as to his own power, or the limit of proper asking or advancing, no power on earth could move him the breadth of a hair.—JERROLD, BLANCHARD, 1873, *Best of all Good Company*.

Of his attractive points in society and conversation I have particularized little, because in truth they were himself. Such as they were, they were never absent from him. His acute sense of enjoyment gave such relish to his social qualities that probably no man, not a great wit or a professed talker, ever left, in leaving any social gathering, a blank so impossible to fill up. In quick and varied sympathy, in ready adaptation to every whim or humour, in help to any mirth or game, he stood for a dozen men. If one may say such a thing, he seemed to be always the more himself for being somebody else, for continually putting off his personality. His versatility made him unique.—FORSTER, JOHN, 1874, *The Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. III, ch. xix.

Close under the bust of Thackeray lies Charles Dickens, not, it may be, his equal in humour, but more than his equal in his hold on the popular mind, as was shown in the intense and general enthusiasm evinced over his grave. The funeral, according to Dickens's urgent and express desire in his will, was strictly private. It took place at an early hour in the summer morning, the grave having been dug in secret the night before, and the vast solitary space of the Abbey was occupied only by the small band of mourners, and the Abbey Clergy, who, without any music except the occasional peal of the organ, read the funeral service. For days the spot was visited by thousands; many were the flowers strewn upon it by unknown hands; many tears shed by the poorer visitors. He rests beside Sheridan, Garrick, and Henderson.—STANLEY, ARTHUR PENRHYN, 1876–82, *Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, p. 283.

In the midst of his own constant and arduous work, no household matter was considered too trivial to claim his care and attention. He would take as much pains about the hanging of a picture, the choosing of furniture, the superintending any little improvement in the house, as he would about the more serious business of his life; thus carrying out to the very letter his favourite motto of "What is worth doing at all is worth doing well."—DICKENS, MAMIE,

AND HOGARTH, GEORGINA, 1879, *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, vol. I, *Preface*, p. x.

It is idle to speculate whether he went into the state of matrimony from the heat and impulse of youth, or after long and sober reflection. He laid some store by his exact and practical wisdom, and probably in that he was superior to most authors. Nor was he one to plunge into the ocean of wedded possibility without retiring to some remote and tranquil inlet where he might adjust compasses before setting sail. Yet his incongruous incapability in erotic affairs in general must, we think, have given an oblique turn to any calculations he had formed on this subject; at all events, his romance, so far as his wife was concerned, does not seem to have extended much beyond the honeymoon. He never speaks of her with fondness; there was no ethereal mixing of souls, such as we find in the biographies of other equally gifted and ecstatic pairs. We are left in the dark as to the causes of the estrangement; there are only occasional murmurs of extravagant house-keeping on the one side and nervous irritability on the other. The former was of course a risk he faced, and a burden from which, however vexatious it might be, he should not have flinched. On the other hand, it does not say a great deal for the sympathy or patience of any wife, especially an intellectual one, that she did not understand or, failing to understand, that she did not bear with, a failing which many great thinkers and writers have found inseparable from the indulgence of fanciful or philosophic thought.—WATT, JAMES CRABB, 1880, *Great Novelists: Scott, Thackeray, Dickens, Lytton*.

Londoners were familiar with Dickens's personal appearance as well as with his writings, and certain London streets did not seem quite the same when his striking face and energetic movements could be seen there no more. It is likely that Dickens overworked his exuberant vital energy, his superb resources of physical health and animal spirits. In work and play, in writing and exercising, he was unsparing of his powers. Like the lavish youth with the full purse in "Gil Blas," he appeared to believe that his stock could never be spent. Men who were early companions of his, and who had not half his vital power, outlived him many years. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, although his own desire

was to be laid quietly in Rochester churchyard. It was held that the national cemetery claimed him. We cannot help thinking it a pity the claim was made. All true admirers of Scott must be glad that he rests in his dear and congenial Dryburgh; most of the admirers of Dickens would have been better pleased to think that he lay beneath the green turf of the ancient churchyard, in venerable and storied Rochester, amid the scenes that he loved and taught so many others to love.—MCCARTHY, JUSTIN, 1880, *A History of Our Own Times from the Accession of Queen Victoria to the General Election of 1880*, vol. IV, p. 287.

The blacking-warehouse at Old Hungerford Stairs, Strand, opposite Old Hungerford Market, in which he tied up the pots of blacking in company with Bob Fagin . . . has long since been torn down. That "crazy old house, with a wharf of its own, abutting on the water when the tide was in and on the mud when the tide was out, and literally overrun with rats," is now replaced by a row of stone buildings; the embankment has risen over the mud; and the vast Charing Cross Station stands opposite on the site of the old Hungerford Market and of "The Swan, or The Swan and something else"—the miserable old "public" where he used to get his bread and cheese and glass of beer. The very name of the street is gone, and Villiers street has sponged out the memory of Hungerford Stairs. . . . Indeed, it is no longer possible to find any of the places he makes mention of in his narrative to Forster. . . . Bayham street, where he lived, is entirely rebuilt.—MARTIN, B. E., 1881, *In London with Dickens*, *Scribner's Monthly*, vol. 21, p. 650.

There never was a man so unlike a professional writer: of tall, wiry, energetic figure; brisk in movement; a head well set on; a face rather bronzed or sunburnt; keen, bright, searching eyes, and a mouth which was full of expression, though hidden behind a wiry moustache and grizzled beard. Thus the French painter's remark that "he was more like one of the old Dutch admirals we see in the picture galleries, than a man of letters," conveyed an admirably true idea to his friends. He had, indeed, much of the quiet resolute manner of command of a captain of a ship. He strode along briskly as he walked; as he listened his searching eye rested on you, and the nerves in his face quivered, much

like those in the delicately formed nostrils of a finely bred dog. There was a curl or two in his hair at each side which was characteristic; and the jaunty way he wore his little morning hat, rather on one side, added to the effect. But when there was anything droll suggested, a delightful sparkle of lurking humour began to kindle and spread to his mouth, so that, even before he uttered anything, you felt that something irresistibly droll was at hand. No one ever told a story so drolly, and, what is not so common, relished another man's story so heartily. A man of his great reputation and position might have chosen what company he pleased, and would have been welcome in the highest circles; but he never was so happy as with one or two intimate friends who understood him, who were in good spirits or in good humour. He was always grateful, as it were, to hear a good thing.—FITZGERALD, PERCY, 1882, *Recreations of a Literary Man*, vol. 1, p. 97.

I knew the great novelist when he was a boy; again in the days of his early celebrity, while he was still a bachelor: and later, Mrs. Hall and I were present at the christening of his first-born. We had known Mrs. Dickens also while she was Miss Catherine Hogarth. Much has been said on the unhappy subject of their separation, and some of the most unfortunate utterances were those put in print by Dickens himself at the time. It is a theme that all will feel bound to treat with a reserve similar to that discreetly maintained by his biographer. Undoubtedly, sympathy was largely felt for Mrs. Dickens—and rightly so.—HALL, SAMUEL CARTER, 1883, *Retrospect of a Long Life*, p. 394.

I have heard Dickens described by those who knew him as aggressive, imperious, and intolerant, and I can comprehend the accusation; but to me his temper was always of the sweetest and kindest. He would, I doubt not, have been easily bored, and would not have scrupled to show it; but he never ran the risk. He was imperious in the sense that his life was conducted in the *Sic volo sic jubeo* principle, and that everything gave way before him. The society in which he mixed, the hours which he kept, the opinions which he held, his likes and dislikes, his ideas of what should or should not be, were all settled by himself, not merely for himself, but for all those brought into connection with him, and it

was never imagined they could be called in question. Yet he was never regarded as a tyrant: he had immense power of will, absolute mesmeric force, as he proved beneficially more than once; and that he should lead and govern seemed perfectly natural to us. . . . Dickens was not only a genius, but he had the volcanic activity, the perturbed restlessness, the feverish excitability of genius. What he created, that he was. His personages were, as readers of his letters know, an integral part of his life. . . . In regard to the friendship which Dickens vouchsafed me, I have been frequently asked, "Did he come up to the expectations you had formed of him? Was Dickens the man as lovable as Dickens the author?" and I have always replied, "Yes; wholly."—YATES, EDMUND, 1884, *Recollections and Experiences*.

In bringing up his children, Charles Dickens was always most anxious to impress upon them that as long as they were honest and truthful, so would they always be sure of having justice done to them. . . . Notwithstanding his constant and arduous work, he was never too busy to be unmindful of the comfort and welfare of those about him, and there was not a corner in any of his homes, from kitchen to garret, which was not constantly inspected by him, and which did not boast of some of his neat and orderly contrivances. We used to laugh at him sometimes and say we believed that he was personally acquainted with every nail in the house. . . . He loved all flowers, but especially bright flowers, and scarlet geraniums were his favourite of all. . . . Charles Dickens was very fond of music, and not only of classical music. He loved national airs, old tunes, songs, and ballads, and was easily moved by anything pathetic in a song or tune, and was never tired of hearing his special favourites sung or played. He used to like to have music of an evening, and duets used to be played for hours together, while he would read or walk up and down the room. . . . Among his many attributes, that of a doctor must not be forgotten. He was invaluable in a sick room, or in any sudden emergency; always quiet, always cheerful, always useful, and skillful, always doing the right thing, so that his very presence seemed to bring comfort and help. From his children's earliest days his visits, during any time of sickness, were eagerly longed for



and believed in, as doing more good than those even of the doctor himself. He had a curiously magnetic and sympathetic hand, and his touch was wonderfully soothing and quieting. As a mesmerist he possessed great power, which he used, most successfully, in many cases of great pain and distress.—DICKENS, MAMIE, 1885, *Charles Dickens at Home, Cornhill Magazine, vol. 51, pp. 37, 39, 43, 47, 49.*

It was at this time [1859] that John Forster called upon me to paint a portrait of his friend Dickens. I need scarcely say with what delight, mixed with fear, I heard of this commission—delight because of my veneration for the author and my love for the man; fear that I might fail, as so many had done already. Forster had hinted his wish to me a year or two before, when Dickens had adopted the moustache—a hirsute appendage of which Forster had a great horror; and with reason as regarded Dickens, for it partly covered, and certainly injured, a very handsome and characteristic mouth. “This is a whim—the fancy will pass. We will wait till the hideous disfigurement is removed,” said Forster; but we waited in vain. Indeed, we waited till the beard was allowed to grow upon the chin as well as upon the upper lip; so, fearing that if we waited longer there would be little of the face to be painted, if whiskers were to be added to the rest, the order was given and the portrait begun.—FRITH, W. P., 1888, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences, vol. I, p. 215.*

We were at first disappointed, and disposed to imagine there must be some mistake. No! *that* is not the man who wrote “Pickwick!” What we saw was a dandified, pretty-boy-looking sort of figure; singularly young-looking, I thought, with a slight flavor of the whipper-snapper genius of humanity. . . . Dickens’ eyes were not blue, but of a very distinct and brilliant hazel—the color traditionally assigned to Shakespeare’s eyes. . . . Dickens was only thirty-three when I first saw him, being just two years my junior. I have said what he appeared to me then. As I knew him afterwards, and to the end of his days, he was a strikingly manly man, not only in appearance, but in bearing. The lustrous brilliancy of his eyes was very striking. And I do not think that I have ever seen it noticed that those wonderful eyes which saw so much and so keenly were appreciably,

though to a very slight degree, near-sighted eyes. Very few persons, even among those who knew him well, were aware of this, for Dickens never used a glass. But he continually exercised his vision by looking at distant objects, and making them out as well as he could without any artificial assistance. It was an instance of that force of will in him which compelled a *naturally* somewhat delicate frame to comport itself like that of an athlete. Mr. Forster somewhere says of him, “Dickens’ habits were robust, but his health was not.” This is entirely true as far as my observation extends.—TROLLOPE, THOMAS ADOLPHUS, 1888, *What I Remember, pp. 315, 352, 353.*

I have just returned from a pilgrimage (many a pilgrim has gone to a shrine with a far less reverent joy) to Gad’s Hill Place. The present owner, Mr. Latham, has greatly improved, without altering the general appearance of, the home of Dickens. He has introduced more light and air both into the house and grounds, developing the capabilities of the place, after the example of those who preceded him; but there is no material change. The dear old study remains as it was, with the dummy books on the door and on part of the walls, bearing the quaint titles which Dickens invented for them.—HOLE, SAMUEL REYNOLDS, 1893, *Memories, p. 83.*

For all his genius as a novelist, I have always thought that his real vocation was as an actor of low comedy, much as the world might have lost by such a change. Warm-hearted and sentimental, but not unselfish, he was not the gentleman. There was no grace of manner, no soul of nobility in him.—LINTON, WILLIAM JAMES, 1894, *Threescore and Ten Years, p. 160.*

My first experience, I think, of my father’s extraordinary energy and of the thoroughness—the even alarming thoroughness—with which he always threw himself into everything he had occasion to take up, was in connection with a toy theatre of which I was the proud possessor somewhere about the middle forties. Toy theatres with scenery and sheets of the characters only requiring painting and cutting out—one Skelt was the principal artist for such things—were very popular indeed in my very early youth, and it was the aim of every self-respecting boy to be the manager of one or more of them. . . . This extraordinary, eager, restless energy, which

first showed itself to me in this small matter, was never absent from my father all through his life. Whatever he did he put his whole heart into, and did as well as ever he could. Whether it was for work or for play, he was always in earnest. Painting the scenes for a toy theatre, dancing Sir Roger de Coverley at a children's party, gravely learning the polka from his little daughters for a similar entertainment, walking, riding, picnicing, amateur acting, public reading, or the every-day hard work of his literary life—it was all one to him. Whatever lay nearest to his hand at the moment had to be done thoroughly.—DICKENS, CHARLES, JR., 1895, *Glimpses of Charles Dickens, North American Review, vol. 160, pp. 526, 527.*

I have mentioned the name of Charles Dickens, and done so with grateful affection. I know of no biography to compare with his, for I have not found a bitter word in it from first to last. All is sunshine—all is gentle humor. What patience he had with young authors! How he criticised, suggested, amended, and encouraged! I do not know of any minister who has taken equal pains with young preachers. Then, how Charles Dickens exerted himself to help poor artists and writers and widows! He was addicted to works of charity; he loved them, and therefore he found strength and time to do them. I shall be told that as an author he lived an idyllic life.—PARKER, JOSEPH, 1896, *Might Have Been, p. 93.*

Mr. Dickens's visit was measurably disappointing; we did too much for him and his lady; they did not appreciate the honor bestowed on them, and overrated their importance. When in Washington they were charged with a neglect of etiquette amounting to incivility. It must be added that on the subsequent visit of Mr. Dickens, at the Press Dinner given to him in April, 1868, just before his departure, he made a graceful and feeling statement in the nature of an apology, or even a recantation, which he engaged to have appended to every copy of the offending works so long as he or his representatives should retain control of their publication.—HASWELL, CHARLES H., 1896, *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian, p. 384.*

Suddenly there was a stir in the room, and all the ladies rose. A young Englishman, named Charles Dickens, entered the room. Then my heart stopped beating. I had read "Pickwick" and several of his

novels, and, like all the world, I admired and wondered how a genius looked. I can see him now, overdressed, with billows of green-satin necktie, long hair, a rather handsome face, and hanging on his arm a pretty little, fat, rosy-cheeked wife.—SHERWOOD, MARY E. W., 1897, *An Epistle to Posterity, p. 23.*

One fails to see that he ever thought for a moment about the title of gentleman. Commercial by instinct, he wished his genius to receive the material reward which was its due; he wanted to live largely, liberally, and generously. His tastes and his beneficence needed money, and the making of money by labour in his art probably tended to become, unconsciously, an end in itself. He never could bear to yield to age, to resign his endeavour, to leave his portentous energy unoccupied. Like Scott, he might have said, "No rest for me but in the woolen;" he could not withdraw, like Shakespeare, to country quiet. His native bent was as much towards the stage as to fiction, and he wore himself out untimely in working the theatrical side of his nature, in his Readings. The desire to be conspicuously before the world which idolised him, may have been as potent as the need of money in spurring the energy of Dickens to its fatal goal. It is to these circumstances, extraordinary energy, craving for employment, a half-suppressed genius for the stage, need of money, and need of publicity, that we trace these defects of Dickens's work which are due to surplusage. He did too much, with the inevitable consequences. He read too little. His nature was all for literary action; not for study, criticism, and reflection. The results were these blemishes with which he is reproached in that age of reaction which ever succeeds to a career of vast popular success. Criticism, indeed, was not lacking, even when he was best accepted. It is quite an error to think that Dickens's literary contemporaries did not see the motes where a younger generation is apt to see the beams.—LANG, ANDREW, 1898, *Charles Dickens, Fortnightly Review, vol. 70, p. 945.*

He was the second son (in a family of eight, six surviving infancy) of Mr. John Dickens, a clerk in the Navy Pay Office at the Dockyard. The name of his mother, previous to her marriage, was Elizabeth Barrow. The baptismal record at Portsea registers him as CHARLES JOHN HUFFHAM DICKENS, but he very seldom used any other

signature than the one with which we are all familiar. On arrival at the Portsmouth town station, we leave the railway, turning to the right, and proceed onwards, in the main thoroughfare of Commercial Road. Thus we shortly reach, in due course, THE BIRTHPLACE OF DICKENS. The house (No. 387 Commercial Road, Landport,) stands about half a mile northward (to the right) from the railway station, with a neat fore court.—ALLBUT, ROBERT, 1899, *Rambles in Dickens' Land*, p. 145.

I have heard famous talkers,—Greeley when in vehement mood; Grant when among his friends, say at one in the morning; Conkling, with a grievance, Bismarck, Beaconsfield,—have been under the spell of perhaps the most exquisite of all, even the silvery spell of Wendell Phillips; have talked with *Tribune* Smalley and Gen. Sherman, Robert Ingersoll and Henry George, but the talk of Dickens was unique, an art in itself. The supreme dramatic power, dramatic expression in repose, as in Wendell Phillips; his way of setting himself in the chair as his narrative proceeded, head rather bent forward, the eye archly turned upon you, partly sidewise, glancing with its ascending look, as if studying the effect. This is as I recall him.—YOUNG, JOHN RUSSELL, 1901, *Men and Memories*, ed. Young, p. 130.

As regards the circumstances appertaining to his 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 and retained his grip of the public by the sheer force of genius—there is, I venture to believe, no parallel in the history of Literature. Born in a humble station of life, his early years spent in the midst of an uncongenial (not to say demoralising) environment, his natural gifts, combined with almost superhuman powers of perseverance, enabled him to overcome obstacles which would have deterred ordinary men, with the result that he rapidly attained the topmost rung of the ladder of fame, and remained there.—KITTON, F. G., 1901, *Charles Dickens, The Bookman*, vol. 13, p. 463.

#### READINGS AND THEATRICALS

I had to go yesterday to Dickens's Reading, 8 p. m., Hanover Rooms, to the complete upsetting of my evening habitudes and spiritual composure. Dickens does do it capitally, such as *it is*; acts better than

any Macready in the world; a whole tragic, comic, heroic *theatre* visible, performing under one *hat*, and keeping us laughing—in a sorry way, some of us thought, the whole night. He is a good creature, too, and makes fifty or sixty pounds by each of these readings.—CARLYLE, THOMAS, 1863, *Letter, Thomas Carlyle, A History of His Life in London*, ed. Froude, vol. II, p. 229.

To pronounce judgment on Mr. Dickens as a reader we are not in all respects competent. But we may say that as we listened to him it seemed to us that in the level passages he was not extraordinarily good: that his voice is not a particularly fine one; that many of his inflections and the spirit in which he reads many passages are not at all what we should have expected or what we liked, but that wherever his admirable histrionic abilities could supplement or almost take the place of his abilities as a reader merely—then all things were done at least well, many things excellently well, and some things done so well that we have not as yet conceived of their being done better.—DENNET, J. R., 1867, *Dickens in New York*, *The Nation*, vol. 5, p. 482.

Every character was individualized by the voice and by a slight change of expression. But the reader stood perfectly still, and the instant transition of the voice from the dramatic to the descriptive tone was un-failing and extraordinary. This was perfection of art. Nor was the evenness of the variety less striking. Every character was indicated with the same felicity. Of course the previous image in the hearer's mind must be considered in estimating the effect. The reader does not create the character, the writer has done that; and now he refreshes it into unwonted vividness, as when a wet sponge is passed over an old picture. Scrooge, and Tiny Tim, and Sam Weller and his wonderful father, and Sergeant Buzfuz, and Justice Stareleigh have an intenser reality and vitality than before. As the reading advances the spell becomes more entrancing. The mind and heart answer instantly to every tone and look of the reader. In a passionate outburst, as in Bob Cratchit's wail for his lost little boy, or in Scrooge's prayer to be allowed to repent, the whole scene lives and throbs before you. And when, in the great trial of Bardell against Pickwick, the thick, fat voice of the elder Weller wheezes from the gallery, "Put it

down with a wee, me Lerd, put it down with a wee," you turn to look for the gallery and behold the benevolent parent.—CURTIS, GEORGE WILLIAM, 1867, *Dickens Reading, From the Easy Chair*, p. 47.

How it happened, in this instance, that a writer of celebrity like Charles Dickens became a reader of his own works before large public audiences may readily be explained. Before his first appearance in that character professionally—that is, as a public reader, on his own account—he had enjoyed more than twenty years of unexampled popularity as a novelist. During that period he had not only securely established his reputation in authorship, but had evidenced repeatedly, at intervals during the latter portion of it, histrionic powers hardly less remarkable in their way than those gifts which had previously won for him his wholly exceptional fame as a writer of imagination. Among his personal intimates, among all those who knew him best, it had long come to be recognised that his skill as an impersonator was only second to his genius as a creator of humorous and pathetic character. His success in each capacity sprang from his intense sympathy and his equally intense earnestness. Whatever with him was worth doing at all, was worth doing thoroughly. Anything he undertook, no matter what, he went at, according to the good old sea phrase, with a will. He always endeavoured to accomplish whatever had to be accomplished as well as it could possibly be effected within the reach of his capabilities.—KENT, CHARLES, 1872, *Charles Dickens as a Reader*, p. 12.

Unlike most professional rehearsals, where waiting about, dawdling, and losing time, seem to be the order of the day, the rehearsals under Charles Dickens' stage-managership were strictly devoted to work—serious, earnest work; the consequence was, that when the evening of performance came, the pieces went off with a smoothness and polish that belong only to finished stage-business and practised performers. He was always there among the first arriv-ers at rehearsals, and remained in a conspicuous position during their progress till the very last moment of conclusion. He had a small table placed rather to one side of the stage, at which he generally sat, as the scenes went on in which he himself took no part. On this table rested a moderate-sized box; its interior divided into con-

venient compartments for holding papers, letters, etc., and this interior was always the very pink of neatness and orderly arrangement. Occasionally he would leave his seat at the managerial table, and stand with his back to the foot-lights, in the very centre of the front of the stage, and view the whole effect of the rehearsed performance as it proceeded, observing the attitudes and positions of those engaged in the dialogue, their mode of entrance, exit, etc. He never seemed to overlook anything; but to note the very slightest point that conduced to the "going well" of the whole performance. With all this supervision, however, it was pleasant to remark the utter absence of dictatorialness or arrogation of superiority that distinguished his mode of ruling his troop; he exerted his authority firmly and perpetually; but in such a manner as to make it universally felt to be for no purpose of self-assertion or self-importance; on the contrary, to be for the sole purpose of ensuring general success to their united efforts.—CLARKE, MARY COWDEN, 1878, *Recollections of Writers*, p. 300.

The rendering of a piece by Dickens was composed as an oratorio is composed, and was then studied by heart as music is studied. And the piece was all given by memory, without any looking at the notes or words.—TROLLOPE, ANTHONY, 1879. *Thackeray (English Men of Letters)*, p. 45.

He [Carlyle] had an admiration for Charles Dickens, especially after hearing that author read some of his own works. He could, he said, hardly recall any theatrical representation he had witnessed in which the whole company had exhibited more variety of effect than came from the play of Dickens's voice and features.—CONWAY, MONCURE DANIEL, 1881, *Thomas Carlyle*, p. 85.

In taking leave of Mr. Dickens in this capacity, it may be interesting to set down the total number of public Readings he gave. Putting aside those given for charitable or friendly purposes between the years 1854 and 1858, in which latter year, at St. Martin's Hall, April 29, 1858, he commenced reading for his own especial benefit, up to the time of his retirement from the platform, at St. James's Hall, March 15, 1870, the full number of Readings was 423. Of these 111 were given under the management of Mr. Arthur Smith; 70 under the management of Mr. Headland (who succeeded to the post of manager on the death

of Mr. Smith), and 242 under my management. These latter were delivered in England, Ireland, Scotland, and America, between April 10, 1866, and March 15, 1870. Mr. Dickens kept no particular account of the amount of money he netted from the Readings under the management of Messrs. Arthur Smith and Headland, but he always computed it at about £12,000. Out of the 242 Readings given under my management (which included the three engagements of Messrs. Chappell and Co.), he cleared nearly £33,000. Handsome as these results were, and of course highly satisfactory to Mr. Dickens, they were purchased at the dear cost of the sacrifice of his health. But his career as a public reader was his own choice, and setting aside his pecuniary profits, the pleasure he derived from it is not to be told in words. For my part, at this distance of time, I think less of the dark than of the bright side of those never-to-be-forgotten days.—DOLBY, GEORGE, 1885, *Charles Dickens as I Knew Him*, p. 45.

#### PICKWICK PAPERS

1837

The most cursory reference to preceding English writers of the comic order will show, that, in his own peculiar walk, Mr. Dickens is not simply the most distinguished, but the first. Admirers and detractors will be equally ready to admit that he has little, if anything, in common with the novelists and essayists of the last century. Of Fielding's intuitive perception of the springs of action, and skill in the construction of the prose epic—or Smollett's dash, vivacity, wild spirit of adventure and rich poetic imagination—he has none: still less can he make pretensions to the exquisite delicacy, fine finish, and perfect keeping of Steele's and Addison's pet characters,—Sir Roger de Coverley, Will Wimble, Will Honeycombe, Sir Andrew Freeport, and the rest; though we know few things better in conception than Sam Weller, with his chivalrous attachment to his master, his gallantry to the fair sex, his imperturbable self-possession, and singularly acquired knowledge of the world.—CROKER, JOHN WILSON, 1837, *The Pickwick Papers, Quarterly Review*, vol. 59, p. 484.

But what praise can be sufficiently enthusiastic for the admirable conception of Sam Weller, that inimitable compound of wit, simplicity, quaint humour, and fidelity!

The "gamin de Paris" does not possess a more distinctive and attractive physiognomy than Dickens has here immortalised in this exquisite portrait of the Londoner; perhaps since Parson Adams literature cannot afford an instance of a personage so exquisitely true to nature, so intensely comic, so individual, and at the same time so perfect a type of a class, as this delightful creation.—SHAW, THOMAS B., 1847, *Outlines of English Literature*, p. 392.

In humour, he will hardly surpass "Pickwick," simply because "Pickwick" is scarcely surpassable in humour.—MARTINEAU, HARRIET, 1855-77, *Autobiography*, ed. Chapman, vol. II, p. 62.

It has been said that "The Pickwick Papers" was its author's best book; and, in certain respects, this judgment is sound. Humor was Mr. Dickens's great distinctive trait; and for humor, pure and simple, he produced in all his life nothing quite equal to "Pickwick"—nothing so sustained, so varied, so unstrained.—WHITE, RICHARD, GRANT, 1870, *The Styles of Disraeli and of Dickens*, *The Galaxy*, vol. 10, p. 258.

By most people "Pickwick" is accepted as Dickens's *Magnum Opus*. It certainly is a typical one, but while the whole book is farcical in the extreme, while character degenerates to caricature, and fun to pantomimic romp and "rally," there are now and then touches of very clever shrewd observation, most admirable sketches of character—Sergeant Buzfuz and the trial scene are evidently quite true to nature, and pathos of the genial easy and ordinary kind in which the author delighted. But as a novel of nature and of plot and character compared to Fielding, "Pickwick" is very small. Who ever met with man, woman, or child, who could sit down by a winter fire and tell the "plot" of "Pickwick?" Had it come out as a whole book, it would have failed to find readers, it would, like Hudibras, have palled on the taste; it is too full of incident, scene succeeds scene, and adventure adventure. The novel is crowded with persons, and each person is—how different from real life and Mr. Trollope—not cut to pattern, but a character.—FRISWELL, JAMES HAIN, 1870, *Modern Men of Letters Honestly Criticised*, p. 8.

There is perhaps no book more widely known in the English language, nor, strange enough, many which have been received with such favour on the Continent,

though it is intensely national in character. It is, indeed, an almost perfect specimen of the strictly English quality of fun—using English in its very narrowest sense as applying only to that part of her Majesty's dominions called England—which differs as greatly from the humour of Scotland and Ireland as from French wit or American extravagance.—OLIPHANT, M. O. W., 1892, *The Victorian Age of English Literature*, p. 251.

The glory of Charles Dickens will always be in his "Pickwick," his first, his best, his inimitable triumph. It is true that it is a novel without a plot, without beginning, middle, or end, with much more of caricature than of character, with some extravagant tom-foolery, and plenty of vulgarity. But its originality, its irrepressible drolleries, its substantial human nature, and its intense vitality, place it quite in a class by itself.—HARRISON, FREDERIC, 1895, *Studies in Early Victorian Literature*, p. 143.

It would be vain to praise or to disparage the immortal "Pickwick." Everything about it is remarkable. No modern work of the century has engendered so many other books, commentaries, illustrations, &c., or been so Protean in its developments. Drama, opera, music, translations, pictures, topography, philology, almanacs, songsters, advertisements, pens, cigars, all exhibit this generative influence. There is a little library of writers on Pickwick. Grave professors, men of law, politicians, schoolmasters, all have been drawn to it. Neither Scott, nor Thackeray, nor Byron, nor Macaulay, nor Tennyson can show anything like it. The commentary on the Waverleys is quite meagre by comparison. The oddity, too, is that no other work of "Boz" has had this fruitfulness. The reason would seem to be the tone of perfect conviction and reality in which it is conceived and carried out. The characters are treated almost biographically, and move forward according to its dates.—FITZGERALD, PERCY, 1898, *Among My Books, Literature*, vol. 2, p. 384.

There are three official accounts variously explaining the veracious story, each materially differing in dates and details, and respectively emanating from the three principal personages most likely to be fully informed upon the actual facts of the case. The artist Seymour undoubtedly originated the initial scheme of illustrating various unconnected adventures of Cockney sports-

men, to be graphically portrayed under the convenient if trite expedient of a "Nimrod Club"—all three accounts are agreed to this extent. The vivacious author of "PICKWICK" from the first start, turned, twisted, shaped, and made the crude materials his very own by the absolute force of his genius, and fiery Pegasus-like, immediately dashing away with the lead, from ingredients, perhaps a trifle uncongenial to himself, produced the most popularly appreciated book of the century—possibly of any century; and, at one lucky bound, on the strength of his parts, became the most famous of novelists. The "third party" was the connecting link, the useful, necessary publishers, upon whose business-like conduct of the affair the commercial responsibilities depended.—GREGO, JOSEPH, 1899, ed. *Pictorial Pickwickiana*, vol. 1, p. 6.

"Pickwick" has always been a fascinating book for the artist. At one time everybody who could draw attempted to illustrate it. Indeed, the number of artists who indulged in such attempts are legion, "Pickwick Papers" being more favored in this respect than the others. At the time of its issue in 1836 and 1837, more than one artist produced sets of etchings to be used as "extras" for the monthly parts as they appeared. The best of these were by Onwhyn, who used the pseudonym of "Sam Weller" on some of his engravings, William Heath, Alfred Crowquill (A. H. Forrester), and T. Gibson. We recall a characteristic one by Heath and also one by Sir John Gilbert, whose series on wood appeared later.—MATZ, B. W., 1902, *Dickens and his Illustrators*, *The Critic*, vol. 40, p. 44.

#### OLIVER TWIST

1838

Not only with the Author's happiest praise  
Thy work should be rewarded;—it is kin  
To theirs who, steeling finest nerves to win  
Great blessings for mankind, explor'd the maze  
Oppression's ages harden'd; trod the ways  
Where fruitful Sorrow tracks and quickens Sin,  
To draw forth strains of music from the din  
Of passions; in the culprit soul to raise  
Sweet thoughts of goodness; bid the fetters fall  
And hail the slave immortal;—for within  
Wan childhood's squalid haunts, where frightful  
needs

Make tyranny more bitter, at thy call  
An angel face with patient sadness pleads  
Undying kindred to the heart of all.

—TALFOURD, THOMAS NOON, 1838, *To Charles Dickens, on his "Oliver Twist."*

The work which is most full of crimes and atrocities and the lowest characters, of all its author's productions, in which these things are by no means scarce—there are some of the deepest touches of pathos, and of the purest tenderness, not exceeded by any author who ever lived—simply because they grow out of the very ground of our common humanity, and being Nature at her best, are in themselves perfect, by universal laws.—HORNE, RICHARD HEN-GIST, 1844, *A New Spirit of the Age*, p. 17.

Nor Smollett, nor Fielding, nor perhaps all the romance-writers whose works we possess, could have produced anything equal, in terrific reality and vividness, to the murder of Nancy and the wanderings of the ruffian Sykes. Sykes and his dog alone are enough to establish Dickens's fame as a great original writer.—SHAW, THOMAS B., 1847, *Outlines of English Literature*, p. 393.

When Dickens wrote "Oliver Twist" he desired, as he says, to paint vice in its true characters, without the fascinations of highway adventure, or snug robbers' caves, or anything approaching the attractions that too often pervaded the literature of profligacy. He wished to answer those who

Proved, by cool discriminating sight,

Black's not so black, nor white so very white.

The dens and stews of London are painted from life, and the picture is not inviting. In the character of Nancy there is some redeeming quality—she might have been different under different circumstances; in the characters of Fagin or Bill Sikes there is none; they are simply bad, as bad as they can be, without one silver thread lining the edge of the cloud. Unfortunately for the artist, but fortunately for the rest of the world, the haunts of vice that were standing when this work was written are demolished; and whatever remains of the Bill Sikes or the Fagin element is left in the cold; but if we read the police summaries we are sadly reminded that they are hardly extinct.—RIMMER, ALFRED, 1883, *About England with Dickens*, p. 133.

Here and there appeared glimpses of the humor which had marked his earlier work, but, on the whole, the tale was cast in the mold of the horrible, and depended for its strength on the debased characters and the criminal life of which Fagin is the central figure. It was eighteen years since Ivanhoe had appeared, and what a contrast between its Jewish personage and the char-

acter in this, the next work of a great English writer, in which a Jew plays a prominent rôle! In the one the charm, in the other the disgrace of the work; in the one the possessor of all human virtues, in the other of all human vices; in the one fair in body and fairer in soul, in the other distorted in body and black in soul; the one a plea for kindness toward a community at that time still unrecognized as worthy of the rights of men and women, the other calculated to re-awaken all the old thoughts, if ever they had died out, of the baseness and wickedness of the Jews. . . . All that interests us here is the character of Fagin, who is continually intruded upon our notice as "the Jew." Were the miscreant, whenever introduced upon the scene, merely spoken of as Fagin, we would look upon him as an example of London's criminal class, and there would be nothing further to arrest our special attention. . . . The author presented this character as a Jew, and hence has laid himself open to the charge of gross wrong and injustice. The fact of Fagin being a Jew does not make him what he is; but when the novel was written such an idea was far from being deemed impossible. The Jew was still an unknown quantity; people thought him *sui generis*; it was not known, according to popular opinion, what he was likely to do. . . . Strange it is, at best, that Charles Dickens, who, of all fictionists, contributed the most toward reforming social abuses, should, in this one instance, have joined the vulgar cry, and marked his worst character as a Jew. Knowing what we do of his works, we should rather have looked for the opposite.—PHILIPSON, DAVID, 1889, *The Jew in English Fiction*, pp. 89, 90, 93.

It is a picaresque story humanized, and given a realistic setting in the London slums.—CROSS, WILBUR L., 1899, *The Development of the English Novel*, p. 182.

When we pass from the subjects of Dickens's stories to the mechanism of their plots we find little to admire and much to condemn. The most serious fault from the artistic stand-point is their lack of probability. In "Oliver Twist" the series of remarkable coincidences is perfectly absurd. When Oliver goes up to London and falls in with the pickpockets, the first person he comes across is the old gentleman whom he is suspected of robbing and who afterwards befriends him. This turns out to be his father's oldest friend. By a curious chance

Oliver is captured by the thieves again and forced to take part in the robbery of a house in the country. He is caught, and the young lady of the house, who befriends him, turns out to be his aunt! Really this is too childish. We allow a novelist a good deal of freedom in arranging his incidents to suit his purposes, but if he cannot manage them in a more convincing fashion than that, the whole illusion is gone.—OLIPHANT, JAMES, 1899, *Victorian Novelists*, p. 38.

#### NICHOLAS NICKLEBY

1839

Nickleby is very good. I stood out against Mr. Dickens as long as I could, but he has conquered me.—SMITH, SYDNEY, 1838, *To Sir George Philips, Sept.*; *Letters of Sydney Smith*, ed. Mrs. Austin.

The town of Barnard Castle is most picturesque, with a ruined castle of the Baliols. Dickens, in early life, used frequently to come down and stay there with some young artist friends of his. The idea of "Humphrey's Clock" first sprung from Humphrey, the watchmaker in the town, and the picture in the beginning of the book is of the clock over the door of his shop. While at Barnard Castle, Dickens heard of the school at Bowes which he afterwards worked up as Dotheboys Hall. Many of these schools, at £15 and £20 a year, existed at that time in the neighbourhood, and were principally used for the sons of London tradesmen, who, provided their sons got a moderate education, cared little or nothing what became of them in the meantime. Dickens went over to see the school at Bowes, and was carefully shown over it, for they mistook him for a parent coming to survey it, with a view of sending his son there. Afterwards the school was totally ruined. At one of Mr. Bowes's elections, the Nicholas Nickleby or former usher of the school, who was then in want of a place, wrote to him to say in what poverty he was. He "had formerly been living with Mr. Shawe at Bowes, and they had been happy and prosperous, when Mr. Dickens's misguided volume, sweeping like a whirlwind over the schools of the North, caused Mr. Shawe to become a victim to paralysis, and brought Mrs. Shawe to an untimely grave."—HARE, AUGUSTUS J. C., 1861, *The Story of My Life*, Sept. 27, vol. II, p. 275.

"Nicholas Nickleby" combined the comic and the sensational elements for the first time, and is still the type of Dickens's

longer books, in which the strain of violent pathos or sinister mystery is incessantly relieved by farce, either of incident or description. In this novel, too, the easy-going, old-fashioned air of "Pickwick" is abandoned in favour of a humanitarian attitude more in keeping with the access of puritanism which the new reign had brought with it, and from this time forth a certain squeemishness in dealing with moral problems and a certain "gush" of unreal sentiment obscured the finer qualities of the novelist's genius.—GOSSE, EDMUND, 1897, *A Short History of Modern English Literature*, p. 341.

#### MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK

1840-41

Read the two concluding numbers of "Humphrey's Clock," which ends very sadly and very sweetly. Wonderful Dickens!—MACREADY, W. C., 1841, *Diary*, Nov. 26; *Reminiscences*, ed. Pollock, p. 507.

Is somewhat diffuse and its characters are exaggerated.—SCHERR, J., 1874, *A History of English Literature*, tr. M. V., p. 275.

There is little except biographical interest in the half-forgotten history of "Master Humphrey's Clock."—WARD, ADOLPHUS WILLIAM, 1882, *Dickens (English Men of Letters)*, p. 40.

#### BARNABY RUDGE

1841

That this fiction, or indeed that any fiction written by Mr. Dickens, should be based in the excitement and maintenance of curiosity, we look upon as a misconception, on the part of the writer, of his own very great yet very peculiar powers. He has done this thing well, to be sure—he would do anything well in comparison with the herd of his contemporaries; but he has not done it so thoroughly well as his high and just reputation would demand.—POE, EDGAR ALLAN, 1842, *Literary Criticism*, Works, ed. Stedman and Woodberry, vol. VII, p. 64.

In May, 1841, he [Poe] contributed to the Philadelphia "Saturday Evening Post"—a paper belonging to Mr. Graham—that *prospective* notice of the newly commenced story of "Barnaby Rudge," which drew from Dickens a letter of admiring acknowledgment. In this said notice the poet, with mathematical precision, explained and foretold the exact plot of the as yet unpublished story.—INGRAM, JOHN H., 1876, A



*Biographical Sketch of Edgar Allan Poe, Poe Memorial, ed. Rice, p. 21.*

This was Dickens's first attempt at what is called the historical novel, and it must be confessed that it contained slight promise of the conspicuous success which he afterwards achieved in this field with "The Tale of Two Cities." Though constructed with much care, and exceptionally well written, it seems to lack both reality and interest; and, though the management of the Raven is a masterpiece of humorous fancy, "Barnaby Rudge" has afforded fewer than any other of Dickens's novels of those types of character, and racy sayings, which fasten themselves upon the memory of the reader.—JONES, CHARLES H., 1880, *A Short Life of Charles Dickens, p. 95.*

What the author of "The Pupil of Pleasure" assayed to do in the last century, the author of "Barnaby Rudge" has assayed to do in our own time. On the unspeakable vulgarity and absurdity of Dickens's caricature and travesty—with pain do we say a disrespectful word of one to whom we in common with half the world are so much indebted—it would be superfluous to comment. But what is certain is that in the imagination of millions Chesterfield will exist, and exist only, in association with a character combining all that is worst, all that is most vile, most contemptible, most repulsive, in the traditional portrait of him.—COLLINS, JOHN CHURTON, 1895, *Essays and Studies, p. 200.*

"Barnaby Rudge" is, by general consent, second-rate.—WALKER, HUGH, 1897, *The Age of Tennyson, p. 87.*

In any just sense there is no heroine in "Barnaby Rudge," which is a book of more skill and power than any that Dickens had yet written. We may dismiss without self-reproach such a ladylike lay-figure as Emma Haredale, and a goblin effigy like Miss Miggs, and come without delay to Dolly Varden, who, in turn, need hardly delay us longer. She is a cheap little coquette, imagined upon the commonest lines, with abundant assertion as to her good looks and graces, but without evidence of the charm that the silliest flirt has in reality. She is nothing and she does nothing; and she cannot be petted and patted by her inventor, with all his fondness, into any semblance or personality.—HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN, 1901, *Heroines of Fiction, vol. 1, p. 136.*

## OLD CURIOSITY SHOP

1841

Mr. Dickens's head must puzzle the phrenologists. The organs of ideality are small; and the conclusion of the "Old Curiosity Shop" is more truly ideal (in both phrenological senses) than any composition of equal length in the English language.—POE, EDGAR ALLAN, 1841, *Marginalia, Works, ed. Stedman and Woodberry, vol. VII, p. 281.*

Extravagance and want of fidelity to nature and the possibilities of life are what everywhere mar Dickens to me, and these faults are fatal, because the *modes* of life amongst which these extravagances intrude are always the absolute realities of vulgarized life as it exists in plebeian ranks amongst our countrymen at this moment. Were the mode of life one more idealized or removed from our own, I might be less sensible of the insupportable extravagances.—DEQUINCEY, THOMAS, 1847, *Letter to his Daughter, Life, ed. Japp, vol. 1, p. 349.*

I admire Nell in the "Old Curiosity Shop" exceedingly. No doubt the whole thing is a good deal borrowed from Wilhelm Meister. But little Nell is a far purer, lovelier, more English conception than Mignon, treasonable as the saying would seem to some. No doubt it was suggested by Mignon.—COLERIDGE, SARA, 1849, *To Aubrey De Vere, Oct. 2; Memoir and Letters, ed. her Daughter, p. 407.*

We have buried warriors and poets, princes and queens, but no one of these was followed to the grave by sincerer mourners than was little Nell.—SMITH, ALEXANDER, 1863, *Dreamthorp, p. 18.*

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,  
And 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."  
—HARTE, FRANCIS BRET, 1870, *Dickens in Camp.*

In the "Old Curiosity Shop" was created the character of "Little Nell," the most famous of all the author's pathetic children, and perhaps as famous as any in literature—even as the Mignon of Goethe, a being as pure and good as Nell, though as impassioned as the little English girl is snow-cold.—PERKINS, F. B., 1870, *Charles Dickens*, p. 62.

Dear, sweet, loving little Nell! We doubt if any other creation of poet or novelist in any language has received the tribute of as many tears as thou. From high, from low, on land, on sea, wherever thy story has been read, there has been paid the spontaneous tribute of tears. Whether or not many of the fantastic creations of the great master's hand will live in the far future we cannot tell, but of thy immortality there is no more question than there is of that of Hamlet or Lear.—GRISWOLD, HATTIE TYNG, 1886, *Home Life of Great Authors*, p. 344.

A whole generation, on either side of the Atlantic, used to fall sobbing at the name of Little Nell, which will hardly bring tears to the eyes of any one now, though it is still apparent that the child was imagined with real feelings, and her sad little melodrama was staged with sympathetic skill. When all is said against the lapses of taste and truth, the notion of the young girl wandering up and down the country with her demented grandfather, and meeting good and evil fortune with the same devotion, till death overtakes her, is something that must always touch the heart. It is preposterously overdone, yes, and the author himself falls into pages of hysterical rhythm, which once moved people, when he ought to have been writing plain, straight prose; yet there is in all a sense of the divinity in common and humble lives, which is the most precious quality of literature, as it is almost the rarest, and it is this which moves and consoles. It is this quality in Dickens which Tolstoy prizes and accepts as proof of his great art, and which the true critic must always set above any effect of literary mastery.—HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN, 1901, *Heroines of Fiction*, vol. I, p. 131.

I believe that the first book—the first real, substantial book—I read through was "The Old Curiosity Shop." At all events, it was the first volume of Dickens which I made my own. . . . "The Old Curiosity Shop" makes strong appeal to a youthful imagination, and contains little that is be-

yond its scope. Dickens's sentiment, however it may distress the mature mind of our later day, is not unwholesome, and, at all events in this story, addresses itself naturally enough to feelings unsubdued by criticism. His quality of picturesqueness is here seen at its best, with little or nothing of that melodrama which makes the alloy of "Nicholas Nickleby" and "Oliver Twist"—to speak only of the early books. The opening scene, that dim-lighted storehouse of things old and grotesque, is the best approach to Dickens's world, where sights of every day are transfigured in the service of romance. The kindness of the author's spirit, his overflowing sympathy with poor and humble folk, set one's mind to a sort of music which it is good to live with; and no writer of moralities ever showed triumphant virtue in so cheery a light as that which falls upon these honest people when rascality has got its deserts.—GISSING, GEORGE, 1902, *Dickens in Memory*, *The Critic*, vol. 40, p. 48.

## AMERICAN NOTES

1842

I have read Dickens's book. It is jovial and good-natured, and at times very severe. You will read it with delight and, for the most part, approbation. He has a grand chapter on Slavery. *Spitting and politics at Washington* are the other topics of censure. Both you and I would censure them with equal severity, to say the least.—LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH, 1842, *Letter to Charles Sumner*, Oct. 16; *Life*, ed. Longfellow, vol. I, p. 440.

His "Notes" upon America come out, I believe, immediately; and I shall be extremely curious to see them, and sorry if they are unfavorable, because his popularity as a writer is immense, and whatever he publishes will be sure of a wide circulation. Moreover, as it is very well known that, before going to America, he was strongly prepossessed in favor of its institutions, manners, and people, any disparaging remarks he may make upon them will naturally have proportionate weight, as the deliberate result of experience and observation. M—told me, after dining with Dickens immediately on his return, that one thing that had disgusted him was the almost universal want of conscience upon money matters in America; and the levity, occasionally approaching to something like self-satisfaction, for their "sharpness," which he had

repeated occasions of observing, in your people when speaking of the present disgraceful condition of their finances and deservedly degraded state of their national credit. . . . But I do hope (because I have a friend's and not a "foe's" heart towards your country) that Dickens will not write unfavorably about it, for his opinion will influence public opinion in England, and deserves to do so.—KEMBLE, FRANCES ANN, 1842, *Letter Oct. 2; Records of Later Life*, p. 359.

A thousand thanks to you for your charming book! and for all the pleasure, profit, and relief it has afforded me. You have been very tender to our sensitive friends beyond sea, and really said nothing which should give any serious offence to any moderately rational patriot among them. The "Slavers," of course, will give you no quarter, and I suppose you did not expect they should. But I do not think you could have said less, and my whole heart goes along with every word you have written. Some people will be angry, too, that you have been so strict to observe their *spitting*, and neglect of ablutions, &c. And more, that you should have spoken with so little reverence of their courts of law and state legislature, and even of their grand Congress itself. But all this latter part is done in such a spirit of good-humoured playfulness, and so mixed up with clear intimations that you have quite as little veneration for things of the same sort at home, that it will not be easy to represent it as the fruit of English insolence and envy.—JEF-FREY, FRANCIS LORD, 1842, *Letter to Dickens*, Oct. 16; *Life ed. Cockburn*, vol. II, p. 294.

*Dear Napier*,—This morning I received Dickens's book. I have now read it. It is impossible for me to review it; nor do I think that you would wish me to do so. I cannot praise it, and I will not cut it up. I cannot praise it, though it contains a few lively dialogues and descriptions; for it seems to me to be on the whole a failure. It is written like the worst part of "Humphrey's Clock." What is meant to be easy and sprightly is vulgar and flippant, as in the first two pages. What is meant to be fine is a great deal too fine for me, as the description of the Fall of Niagara. A reader who wants an amusing account of the United States had better go to Mrs. Trollope, coarse and malignant as she is. A reader who

wants information about American politics, manners, and literature, had better go even to so poor a creature as Buckingham. In short, I pronounce the book, in spite of some gleams of genius, at once frivolous and dull. Therefore I will not praise it. Neither will I attack it; first, because I have eaten salt with Dickens; secondly, because he is a good man, and a man of real talent; thirdly, because he hates slavery as heartily as I do; and, fourthly, because I wish to see him enrolled in our blue and yellow corps, where he may do excellent service as a skirmisher and sharp-shooter.—MACAULAY, THOMAS BABINGTON, 1842, *Letter*, Oct. 19; *Life and Letters*, ed. Trevelyan, ch. ix.

Since the voyage of Columbus in search of the New World, and of Raleigh in quest of El Dorado, no visit to America has excited so much interest and conjecture as that of the author of "Oliver Twist." . . . In the mean time the book, after long budding in advertisement has burst into full leaf, and however disconcerting to those persons who had looked for something quite different, will bring no disappointment to such as can be luxuriously content with good sense, good feeling, good fun, and good writing.—HOOD, THOMAS, 1842, *Boz in America*, *New Monthly Magazine*, vol. 66, pp. 396, 397.

The little information to be gleaned from these two volumes, with few exceptions, might be gained much more advantageously from the map and gazetteer. The perusal of them has served chiefly to lower our estimate of the man, and to fill us with contempt for such a compound of egotism, coxcombry, and cockneyism. . . . We have never read a book, professing to give an account of any country, which, in respect to its natural features, its towns and cities, its manners and customs, its social, civil, and religious institutions—in short, in respect to everything about which the reader wishes to receive information, or at least to ascertain the opinions of the author, is so profoundly silent as the book before us.—THOMPSON, J. P., 1843, *Dickens' Notes on America*, *The New Englander*, vol. I, pp. 67, 76.

Though the book is said to have given great offence on the other side of the Atlantic, we cannot see any sufficient reason for it. To us it appears that Mr. Dickens deserves great praise for the care with which he has avoided all offensive topics, and

abstained from amusing his readers at the expense of his entertainers; and if we had an account of the temptations in this kind which he has resisted, we do not doubt that the reserve and self-control which he has exercised would appear scarcely less than heroic. But, on the other hand, we cannot say that his book throws any new light on his subject. He has done little more than confide to the public what should have been a series of letters for the entertainment of his private friends. Very agreeable and amusing letters they would have been; and as such, had they been posthumously published, would have been read with interest and pleasure. As it is, in the middle of our amusement at the graphic sketches of life and manners, the ludicrous incidents, the wayside conversations about nothing, so happily told, and the lively remarks, with which these "Notes" abound—in the middle of our respect for the tone of good sense and good humour which runs through them.—SPEDDING, JAMES, 1843, *Dickens's American Notes, Reviews and Discussions*, p. 247.

As shallow a book of travels as ever appeared.—TUCKERMAN, HENRY T., 1857, *Essays, Biographical and Critical*, p. 175.

The debt which America owed to this man was hardly less than that which England owed him. The insane fury with which his "American Notes" was received in our country was simply an outburst of the same rage that afterward was visited on Mrs. Stowe for her "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The outcries about "exaggerated and distorted statements" heard in England from poor-house authorities, when "Oliver Twist" was published, were counterparts of the angry denunciations of slavery when Dickens published the advertisements about negroes which he read daily. I remember that the Southerners were also furious at his description of the roads and the driver in Northern Virginia, declaring it all a caricature. But I happened to have been born and reared close to that old Acquis road, and have often seen the stage and the driver which figure in the "American Notes;" and it was known to me, as to others dwelling in the same region, that the descriptions were all not only graphic, but photographic in their accuracy.—CONWAY, MONCURE DANIEL, 1870, *Footprints of Charles Dickens, Harper's Magazine*, vol. 41, p. 612.

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

1848

It is the work of the master of all the English humourists now alive; the young man who came and took his place calmly at the head of the whole tribe, and who has kept it. . . . Who can listen to objections regarding such a book as this? It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man or woman who reads it a personal kindness. The last two people I heard speak of it were women; neither knew the other, or the author, and both said, by way of criticism, "God bless him!" . . . As for Tiny Tim, there is a certain passage in the book regarding that young gentleman about which a man should hardly venture to speak in print or in public, any more than he would of any other affections of his private heart. There is not a reader in England but that little creature will be a bond of union between the author and him; and he will say of Charles Dickens, as the woman just now, "God bless him!" What a feeling is this for a writer to be able to inspire, and what a reward to reap!—THACKERAY, WILLIAM MAKEPEACE, 1844, *Christmas Carols by Dickens, Fraser's Magazine*, vol. 29, pp. 167, 169.

There was indeed nobody that had not some interest in the message of the "Christmas Carol." It told the selfish man to rid himself of selfishness; the just man to make himself generous; and the good-natured man to enlarge the sphere of his good nature. Its cheery voice of faith and hope, ringing from one end of the island to the other, carried pleasant warning alike to all, that if the duties of Christmas were wanting no good could come out of its outward observances; that it must shine upon the cold hearth and warm it, and into the sorrowful heart and comfort it; that it must be kindness, benevolence, charity, mercy, and forbearance, or its plum pudding would turn to bile, and its roast beef be indigestible. Nor could any man have said it with the same appropriateness as Dickens.—FORSTER, JOHN, 1873, *The Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. II, p. 89.

Simple in its romantic design like one of Andersen's little tales, the "Christmas Carol" has never lost its hold upon a public in whom it has called forth Christmas thoughts which do not all center on "holly, mistletoe, red berries, ivy, turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, meat, pigs, sausages,

oysters, pies, puddings, fruit, and punch;" and the Cratchit household, with Tiny Tim, who did NOT die, are living realities even to those who have not seen Mr. Toole—an actor after Dickens's own heart—as the father of the family, shivering in his half-yard of comforter.—WARD, ADOLPHUS WILLIAM, 1882, *Dickens (English Men of Letters)*, p. 60.

Another characteristic of Dickens's is benevolence, and here in his "Christmas Carol" we see it: peace, charity, good-will, does he not revel in it? does he not give way to joyous raptures, shout and sing? Yes; and even dances with delight at the happiness of others. Does he not get right to the heart, and enter into every little detail of joy; and does he not send bubbling up pleasures and delights, which are in themselves the best Christmas anthems ever sung?—O'DELL, STACKPOOL E., 1882, *Phrenology: Its Truthfulness and Usefulness*.

What a thrill ran through the whole English-speaking race when "A Christmas Carol in Prose" announced to it that Marley was dead, to begin with—as dead as a door-nail. No carol that ever was sung so stirred the deep heart of humanity. The world laughed and cried over it, and Scrooge and Scrooge's nephew, and old Fezziwig, and Bob Cratchit, and Tiny Tim, became household words in a million homes.—DORR, JULIA C. R., 1885, *Christmas and Its Literature, The Book Buyer*, vol. 2, p. 285.

#### MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

1844

Dickens has just published, as one of the chapters of "Martin Chuzzlewit," an account of the arrival of his hero in New York, and what he saw, and heard, and did, and suffered, in this land of pagans, brutes, and infidels. I am sorry to see it. Thinking that Mr. Dickens has been ungenerously treated by my countrymen, I have taken his part on most occasions; but he has now written an exceedingly foolish libel upon us, from which he will not obtain credit as an author, nor as a man of wit, any more than as a man of good taste, good nature, or good manners. It is difficult to believe that such unmitigated trash should have flown from the same pen that drew the portrait of the immortal Pickwick and his expressive gaiters, the honest locksmith and his pretty Dolly of Clerkenwell, and poor little Nell, who has caused so many tears to flow. Shame, Mr. Dickens! Con-

sidering all that we did for you, if, as some folks say, I and others made fools of ourselves to make much of you, you should not afford them the triumph of saying, "There! we told you so!" "It serves you right!" and other such consolatory phrases. If we were fools, you were the cause of it, and should have stood by us. "*Et tu, Brute!*"—HONE, PHILIP, 1843, *Diary, July 29, vol. II*, p. 189.

This novel is one of the finest of his compositions—not the American scenes, perhaps, for these have generally an air of exaggeration which injures them; but the adventures which occur before and after the hero makes his unfortunate and unsuccessful voyage across the Atlantic.—SHAW, THOMAS B., 1847, *Outlines of English Literature*, p. 394.

This last work contains, besides all the fun, some very marked and available morals. I scarce know any book in which the evil and odiousness of selfishness is more forcibly brought out, or in a greater variety of exhibitions. In the midst of the merry quotations, or at least on any fair opportunity, I draw the boys' attention to these points, bid them remark how *unmanly* is the selfishness of young Martin, and I insist upon it that Tom Pinch's character, if it could really exist, would be a very beautiful one.—COLERIDGE, SARA, 1848, *To Mrs. H. M. Jones, Aug. 17; Memoir and Letters, ed. her Daughter*, p. 346.

The novel "Martin Chuzzlewit" is a bitter but just satire on Yankeeism.—SCHERR, J., 1874, *A History of English Literature, tr. M. V.*, p. 275.

I liked Martin Chuzzlewit, too, and the other day I read a great part of it again, and found it roughly true in the passages that referred to America, though it was surcharged in the serious moods, and caricatured in the comic. The English are always inadequate observers; they seem too full of themselves to have eyes and ears for any alien people; but as far as an Englishman could, Dickens had caught the look of our life in certain aspects. His report of it was clumsy and farcical; it wanted nicety of accent and movement, but in a large, loose way it was like enough; at least he had caught the note of our self-satisfied, intolerant and hypocritical provinciality, and this was not altogether lost in his mocking horse-play.—HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN, 1895, *My Literary Passions*, p. 100.

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH  
1845

If the palm is to be granted to any one among them [Christmas books] above its fellows, few readers would hesitate, I think, to declare themselves in favour of "The Cricket on the Hearth," as tender and delicate a domestic idyl as any literature can boast.—WARD, ADOLPHUS WILLIAM, 1882, *Dickens (English Men of Letters)*, p. 59.

It seems strange that Dickens's plots, though interesting, and his dialogue and characters apparently dramatic, should be unsatisfactory when arranged for the stage. The story of "The Cricket on the Hearth" is the one exception, for with trifling condensation it can be acted with effect from the book itself, having all the completeness and direct motives that go to make a play, together with a strong female interest which in a domestic drama seems to be an essential element. And though there are two distinct plots in the story, they are most adroitly woven together, and one wonders how the author could have missed detecting his own dramatic accident. For had Dickens known that his little Christmas story contained these qualities he would undoubtedly have given it to the stage.—JEFFERSON, JOE, 1898, *The Cricket on the Hearth, Introduction*, p. ix.

DOMBEY AND SON  
1848

Oh, my dear, dear Dickens! what a No. 5 you have now given us! I have so cried and sobbed over it last night, and again this morning; and felt my heart purified by those tears, and blessed and loved you for making me shed them; and I never can bless and love you enough. Since the divine Nelly was found dead on her humble couch, beneath the snow and the ivy, there has been nothing like the actual dying of that sweet Paul, in the summer sunshine of that lofty room. And the long vista that leads us so gently and sadly, and yet so gracefully and winningly, to the plain consummation! Every trait so true and so touching—and yet lightened by the fearless innocence which goes playfully to the brink of the grave, and that pure affection which bears the unstained spirit, on its soft and lambent flash, at once to its source in eternity.—JEFFREY, FRANCIS LORD, 1847, *Letter to Dickens*, Jan. 31; *The Life of Charles Dickens*, ed. Forster, vol. II, p. 361.

It was Thackeray's delight to read each

number of "Dombey and Son" with eagerness as it issued from the press. He had often been heard to speak of the work in terms of the highest praise, and when it had reached its fifth number, wherein Dickens describes the end of little Paul with a depth of pathos which produced a vibrating emotion in the hearts of all who read it, Thackeray seemed electrified at the thought that there was one man living who could exercise so complete a control over him. Putting No. 5 of "Dombey and Son" in his pocket, he hastened down to the printing-office of *Punch*, and entering the editor's room, he dashed it on the table with startling vehemence, and exclaimed, "There's no writing against such power as this—one has no chance! Read that chapter describing young Paul's death: it is unsurpassed—it is stupendous!"—HODDER, GEORGE, 1870, *Memories of My Time*.

Raymond's *Toots* was so thoroughly *Toots*, we had learned to know and to think of *Toots* so decidedly, as Raymond, and subsequently as Johnston had shown him to us, that the *Toots* of Dickens himself, when the novelist read "Dombey" to us here, was a woful disappointment. Neither in tone nor look was he our *Toots*, and *Toots* has never been *Toots* to us since. Dickens, who created *Toots*, ought to have known him, but we could not give up the friend of our youth for the *Toots* Dickens introduced to us that night at Steinway Hall, and between the two *Toots* we are *Tootsless*. Dickens's *Toots* may have been the real *Toots*, but we felt when we saw him that even "Diogenes" himself would not have recognized him.—HUTTON, LAURENCE, 1875, *Plays and Players*, p. 51.

It is, perhaps, not generally known that Dickens's pen-picture of Paul Dombey was inspired by the pathetic personality of a favourite nephew, Master Harry Burnett. This poor lad, who unfortunately became a cripple and died in his tenth year, resembled in many respects the little Paul of fiction; notwithstanding his affliction, he was one of the happiest and brightest of children, with a mind always marvellously active, and, especially during the last months of his short life, was full of religious sentiment, for he insisted upon having his much-thumbed Bible placed ready to his hand.—KITTON, FREDERIC G., 1897, *The Novels of Charles Dickens*, p. 106.

It is in the tragedy and the pathos that

the author oftenest falls down, as we now perceive, though the time was when Macaulay, the historian and critic, cried over Florence Dombey, as he has himself recorded, in inconsolable heart-break. This is the more wonderful because Macaulay, more than any other, had felt the incomparable fineness of Jane Austen's art. It must be that the critical fibre of the British public, never too sensitive, had been coarsened by a whole generation of romanticistic fiction, until the bearing on and rubbing in of Dickens was not only not an affliction, but a positive delight.—HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN, 1901, *Heroines of Fiction*, vol. I, p. 144.

#### DAVID COPPERFIELD

1850

I hope you see Copperfield, it is delightful and useful.—ALEXANDER, JAMES W., 1849, *Forty Years' Familiar Letters*, Sept. 13, vol. II, p. 102.

I have read "David Copperfield;" it seems to me very good—admirable in some parts. You said it had affinity to "Jane Eyre." It has, now and then—only what an advantage has Dickens in his varied knowledge of men and things!—BRONTË, CHARLOTTE, 1849, *Letter to W. S. Williams*, Sept. 13; *Charlotte Brontë and her Circle*, ed. Shorter, p. 397.

I do not find it easy to get sufficiently far away from this Book, in the first sensations of having finished it, to refer to it with the composure which this formal heading would seem to require. My interest in it, is so recent and strong; and my mind is so divided between pleasure and regret—pleasure in the achievement of a long design, regret in the separation from many companions—that I am in danger of wearying the reader whom I love, with personal confidences, and private emotions. Besides which, all that I could say of the Story, to any purpose, I have endeavoured to say in it. It would concern the reader little, perhaps, to know, how sorrowfully the pen is laid down at the close of a two years' imaginative task; or how an Author feels as if he were dismissing some portion of himself into the shadowy world, when a crowd of the creatures of his brain are going from him for ever. Yet, I have nothing else to tell; unless, indeed, I were to confess (which might be of less moment still) that no one can ever believe this Narrative, in the reading, more than I have believed it in the writing. In-

stead of looking back, therefore, I will look forward. I cannot close this Volume more agreeably to myself, than with a hopeful glance towards the time when I shall again put forth my two green leaves once a month, and with a faithful remembrance of the genial sun and showers that have fallen on these leaves of David Copperfield, and made me happy.—DICKENS, CHARLES, 1850, *The Personal History and Experience of David Copperfield the Younger*, Preface.

Have you read "David Copperfield," by the way? How beautiful it is—how charmingly fresh and simple! In those admirable touches of tender humour—and I should call humour, Bob, a mixture of love and wit—who can equal this great genius? There are little words and phrases in his books which are like personal benefits to the reader. What a place it is to hold in the affections of man! What an awful responsibility hanging over a writer! What man holding such a place, and knowing that his words go forth to vast congregations of mankind,—to grown folks—to their children, and perhaps to their children's children,—but must think of his calling with a solemn and humble heart! May love and truth guide such a man always! It is an awful prayer; may heaven further its fulfilment! And then, . . . let the *Record* revile him.—THACKERAY, WILLIAM MAKEPEACE, 1856, *Brown the Younger at a Club*, *Sketches and Travels in London*.

It is a great pleasure to find in an author's innermost circle the types of those characters that have delighted one in his works. I had previously heard many people remark that Agnes in "David Copperfield" was like Dickens's own wife; and although he may not have chosen her deliberately as a model for Agnes, yet still I can think of no one else in his books so near akin to her in all that is graceful and amiable. Mrs. Dickens had a certain soft, womanly repose and reserve about her; but whenever she spoke there came such a light into her large eyes, and such a smile upon her lips, and there was such a charm in the tones of her voice, that henceforth I shall always connect her and Agnes together.—ANDERSEN, HANS CHRISTIAN, 1870, *A Visit to Charles Dickens*, *Temple Bar*, vol. 31, p. 29.

The imagination of Dickens's is like that of monomaniacs. To plunge oneself into an idea, to be absorbed by it, to see nothing else, to repeat it under a hundred forms, to

enlarge it, to carry it thus enlarged to the eye of the spectator, to dazzle and overwhelm him with it, to stamp it upon him so tenacious and impressive that he can never again tear it from his memory,—these are the great features of this imagination and style. In this “David Copperfield” is a masterpiece. Never did objects remain more visible and present to the memory of a reader than those which he describes.—TAINÉ, H. A., 1871, *History of English Literature*, tr. Van Laun. vol. II, bk. v, p. 344.

In “David Copperfield” especially, Dickens’s humour shows itself in the richest colours, recalling Smollett’s power and Sterne’s light-heartedness.—SCHERR, J., 1874, *A History of English Literature*, tr. M. V., p. 275.

There is a book familiar to us all, and the more familiar now, probably, to many of us, because Mr. Gladstone solaced himself with it after his illness, and so set all good Liberals (of whom I wish to be considered one) upon reading it over again. I mean “David Copperfield.” Much as I have published, I do not think it has ever happened to me before to comment in print upon any production of Charles Dickens. What a pleasure to have the opportunity of praising a work so sound, a work so rich in merits, as “David Copperfield!” *Man lese nicht die mit-strebende, mit-wirkende*, says Goethe: do not read your fellow-strivers, your fellow-workers. Of the contemporary rubbish which is shot so plentifully all round us, we can, indeed, hardly read too little. But to contemporary work so good as “David Copperfield” we are in danger perhaps of not paying respect enough, of reading it (for who could help reading it?) too hastily, and then putting it aside for something else and forgetting it. What treasures of gaiety, invention, life, are in that book! what alertness and resource! what a soul of good-nature and kindness governing the whole!—ARNOLD, MATTHEW, 1881, *The Incompatibles, The Nineteenth Century*, vol. 9, p. 1034.

I have said that in “David Copperfield” Dickens is freer from defect than in any other of his works. It is rarely that public opinion has ratified an author’s judgment so completely as it has here. As we all know, this was Dickens’s favourite, and the reason we all know. It may be noted in passing how characteristic of the two men is their choice. To Dickens “David Cop-

perfield” was, to use his own words, his favourite child, because in its pages he saw the reflection of his own youth. . . . It is not only Dickens’s most attractive work, but it is his best work. And it is his best for this reason, that whereas in all his others he is continually striving to realise the conception of his fancy, in this alone his business is to idealise the reality; in this alone, as it seems to me, his imagination prevails over his fancy. In this alone he is never grotesque, or for him so rarely that we hardly care to qualify the adverb. Nowhere else is his pathos so tender and so sure; nowhere else is his humour, though often more boisterous and more abundant, so easy and so fine; nowhere else is his observation so vivid and so deep; nowhere else has he held with so sure a hand the balance between the classes.—MORRIS, MOWBRAY, 1882, *Charles Dickens, The Fortnightly Review*, vol. 38, p. 776.

Copperfield’s first meeting with Dora is Dickens’s meeting (when little more than a boy) with a lady by no means so young as Dora is there represented. The courtship is derived from his youthful love for the original of Flora. The married life with Dora, so far as her household ways are concerned, presents Dickens’s own experience, so that Dora there represents a third person, and that person his wife. And lastly the death of Dora, and Copperfield’s sorrow during the following years, are drawn from the death of his wife’s younger sister, Mary, and the sorrow Dickens felt for years thereafter. Yet, though the real Flora furnished only one of these four copies from which the Dora of fiction was combined, we find her forming part of two distinct and very unlike characters, the characteristics of her later years being in part reproduced in Flora—but only in part, for some of Dora’s ways were derived from other sources. Nor can it be said that, after all, Dickens so artistically combines and distributes what he had observed that they become effective as if they were real creations. For no one possessing any power of critical discrimination had failed to recognise the incongruity of many—one may almost say all—of Dickens’s characters long before it became known that he had constructed them of heterogeneous materials and applied his materials to heterogeneous purposes.—PROCTOR, RICHARD A., 1885, *Dickens and Thackeray, Knowledge*, vol. 7, p. 537.



I am trying to get rested by reading Dickens, and am over "David Copperfield" now. I had never read it, I find, though Mr. Micawber has become so proverbial that, finding his name in it, I thought I had. Dickens says in his preface that David Copperfield was his "favorite child," and I don't wonder, for it is amazingly well done so far as I have got.—LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL, 1887, *To C. E. Norton, April 8; Letters, ed. Norton, vol. II, p. 334.*

Here was a man and an artist, the most strenuous, one of the most endowed; and for how many years he laboured in vain to create a gentleman! With all his watchfulness of men and manners, with all his fiery industry, with his exquisite native gift of characterisation, with his clear knowledge of what he meant to do, there was yet something lacking. In part after part, novel after novel, a whole menagerie of characters, the good, the bad, the droll and the tragic, came at his beck like slaves about an oriental despot; there was only one who stayed away; the gentleman. If this ill fortune had persisted it might have shaken man's belief in art and industry. But years were given and courage was continued to the indefatigable artist; and at length, after so many and such lamentable failures, success began to attend upon his arms. David Copperfield scrambled through on hands and knees; it was at least a negative success; and Dickens, keenly alive to all he did, must have heaved a sigh of infinite relief.—STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS, 1888, *Some Gentlemen in Fiction, Miscellaneous Papers, p. 368.*

It is in the character of Agnes Wickfield that Charles Dickens has touched the height of his ideal of womanhood; of all his books, "David Copperfield," as he has told us himself, was the favourite "child of his fancy," and in its heroine we have the full realisation of that which he always conceived to be woman's mission—to lead men higher, to "point upward," to strengthen and to guide. In Agnes he has painted for us a perfectly unselfish character living day by day in the lives of others, but accustomed from childhood to a certain self-restraint, which enables her the better to conceal the one attachment of her life under the modest veil of true sisterly affection, to be for years as an adopted sister to the man whom in the secret shrine of her pure heart she worshipped as a lover. No description of Agnes

in outward form or feature is given to us in any part of the book; we only see the soul shining through the face with a noble purity in keeping with her name.—TOWNSEND, M. E., 1893, *Great Characters of Fiction, p. 75.*

The popular instinct is not astray in selecting "David Copperfield" out of the long list of Dickens's stories and giving it the foremost place. It is not so powerful a story as "A Tale of Two Cities," the most dramatic and soundly constructed of all the stories that Dickens gave the world, but it is far more characteristic, sweeter in sentiment, and as fresh in feeling and touch. It is the personal note which gives this beautiful tale its victorious appeal for the suffrages of the greatest number of readers. It is significant of a sound taste, also, that "The Old Curiosity Shop" and "Dombey and Son," in which, to recall Mr. Lang's phrase, Dickens wallowed in a sea of sentimentalism, appear well down on the list, and that "Barnaby Rudge" does not appear.—MABIE, HAMILTON W., 1893, *The Most Popular Novels in America, The Forum, vol. 16, p. 512.*

I find, on examination, that my "David Copperfield" is more dilapidated than any other novel upon my shelves. As I turn its dog-eared pages, reading the familiar headlines: "Mr. Micawber in difficulties," "Mr. Micawber in prison," "I fall in love with Dora," "Mr. Barkis goes out with the tide," "My child wife," "Traddles in a nest of roses"—pages of my own life recur to me, so many of my sorrows, so many of my joys, are woven in my mind with this chapter or the other. That day—how well I remember it! I read of *David's* wooing, but *Dora's* death I was careful to skip. Poor, pretty little *Mrs. Copperfield* at the gate, holding up her baby in her arms, is always associated in my memory with a child's cry, long listened for. I found the book, face downwards on a chair, weeks afterwards, not moved from where I had hastily laid it.—JEROME, JEROME K., 1898, *My Favorite Novelist and His best Book, Munsey's Magazine, vol. 19, p. 30.*

That power, blowing where it listeth, came back in fullest measure with "David Copperfield," which, no doubt, is Dickens's masterpiece as a novel, "Pickwick," as has been said, being no novel, but simply an isolated phenomenon. . . . The entire charm of "Copperfield" was never recaptured by Dickens.—LANG, ANDREW,

1898, *Charles Dickens, Fortnightly Review*, vol. 70, pp. 954, 955.

In that unequal and irregular masterpiece his comic and his tragic genius rose now and then to the very highest pitch of all. — SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES, 1902, *Charles Dickens, Quarterly Review*, vol. 196, p. 23.

### BLEAK HOUSE

1853

"Bleak House" is, even more than any of its predecessors, chargeable with not simply faults, but absolute want of construction. . . . In "Bleak House," the series of incidents which form the outward life of the actors and talkers has no close and necessary connexion; nor have they that higher interest that attaches to circumstances which powerfully aid in modifying and developing the original elements of human character. The great Chancery suit of Jarndyce and Jarndyce, which serves to introduce a crowd of persons as suitors, lawyers, law-writers, law-stationers, and general spectators of Chancery business, has positively not the smallest influence on the character of any one person concerned; nor has it any interest of itself.—BRIMLEY, GEORGE, 1853-58, "*Bleak House*," *Essays*, ed. Clark, pp. 282, 283.

In "Bleak House," Dickens exhibits his greatest defects, and his greatest excellencies, as a novelist; in none of his works are the characters more strongly marked, or the plot more loosely and inartistically constructed. One-half of the personages might be ruled out without their loss being perceived, for, although they are all introduced with a flourish, as though they had an important part to perform, yet there would be no halt in the story if they were dropped by the way, as some of them are.—BIGGS, CHARLES F., 1853, *Characters in "Bleak House*," *Putnam's Monthly Magazine*, vol. 2, p. 559.

His present romance, though as wonderfully rich as any of his former in observations on life and character, has some of his old faults in an aggravated form, and some which have not appeared before. His story is, as usual, inartificial; his mysteries perplex much more than they interest; his love of low life seems to grow upon him. We are detained too long in filthy corners, and surprised too unceremoniously at finding the delicacy of virtuous sentiment in the lowest depths of human degradation.—

DENMAN, THOMAS LORD, 1853, *Slavery and Slave Trade*, p. 51.

Whoever wishes to get a good look at Landor will not seek for it alone in John Forster's interesting life of the old man, admirable as it is, but will turn to Dickens's "Bleak House" for side-glances at the great author. In that vivid story Dickens has made his friend Landor sit for the portrait of Lawrence Boythorn. The very laugh that made the whole house vibrate, the roundness and fulness of voice, the fury of superlatives, are all given in Dickens's best manner, and no one who has ever seen Landor for half an hour could possibly mistake Boythorn for any body else. Talking the matter over once with Dickens, he said, "Landor always took that presentation of himself in hearty good humor, and seemed rather proud of the picture."—FIELDS, JAMES F., 1875, "*Barry Cornwall*" and *some of his Friends*, *Harper's Magazine*, vol. 51, p. 785.

Those pages of Dickens which hold the story of Little Nell; a story in which all the elaborate accumulation of pathetic incident and interest, so tenderly and studiously built up, has never, to speak truth, given me one passing thrill—in the exquisitely fit and faithful phrase of a great living poet, one "sweet possessive pang"—of the tender delight and pity re-quickened well nigh to tears at every fresh re-perusal or chance recollection of that one simpler page in "Bleak House" which describes the baby household tended by the little sister who leaves her lesser charges locked up while she goes out charing; a page which I can imagine that many a man unused to the melting mood would not undertake to read out aloud without a break.—SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES, 1877, *A Note on Charlotte Brontë*, p. 64.

"Bleak House" (1853) is constructed only too well. Here Dickens applied himself laboriously to the perfecting of that kind of story he had always had in view, and produced a fine example of theatrical plot. One cannot say, in this case, that the intrigue refuses to be remembered; it is a puzzle, yet ingeniously simple; the parts fitting together very neatly indeed. So neatly, that poor untidy Life disclaims all connection with these doings, however willingly she may recognize for her children a score or so of the actors. To be sure there are oversights. How could Dickens expect

one to believe that Lady Dedlock recognized her lover's handwriting in a piece of work done by him *as law-writer*—she not even knowing that he was so employed? What fate pursued him that he could not, in all the resources of his brain, hit upon a device for such a simple end more convincing than this? Still, with an aim not worth pursuing, the author here wrought successfully. The story is child's play compared with many invented, for instance by Wilkie Collins; but in combination with Dickens's genuine powers, it produces its designed effect; we move in a world of choking fog and squalid pitfalls, amid plot and counter-plot, cold self-interest and passion overwrought, and can never refuse attention to the magician who shows it all.—GISSING, GEORGE, 1898, *Charles Dickens*, p. 67.

In "Bleak House" the prominence accorded to the sensational is somewhat repellent, though this is artistically the best constructed of Dickens' novels, as it is also the most exciting.—ENGEL, EDWARD, 1902, *A History of English Literature*, rev. Hamley Bent, p. 452.

#### HARD TIMES

1854

I read Dickens' "Hard Times." One excessively touching, heart-breaking passage and the rest sullen socialism. The evils which he attacks he caricatures grossly, and with little humor. Another book of Pliny's letters. Read "Northanger Abbey;" worth all Dickens and Pliny together. Yet it was the work of a girl. She was certainly not more than twenty-six. Wonderful creature!—MACAULAY, THOMAS BABINGTON, 1854, *Journal*, Aug. 12; *Life and Letters*, ed. Trevelyan, ch. xiii.

The essential value and truth of Dickens' writings have been unwisely lost sight of by many thoughtful persons, merely because he presents his truths with some colour of caricature. Unwisely, because Dickens's caricature, though often gross, is never mistaken. Allowing for his manner of telling them, the things he tells us are always true. I wish that he could think it right to limit his brilliant exaggeration to works written only for public amusement; and when he takes up a subject of high national importance, such as that which he handled in "Hard Times," that he would use severer and more accurate analysis. The usefulness of that work (to my mind, in several respects, the greatest he has written) is with

many persons seriously diminished because Mr. Bounderby is a dramatic monster, instead of a characteristic example of a worldly master; and Stephen Blackpool a dramatic perfection, instead of a characteristic example of an honest workman. But let us not lose the use of Dickens's wit and insight, because he chooses to speak in a circle of stage fire. He is entirely right in his main drift and purpose in every book he has written; and all of them, but especially "Hard Times," should be studied with close and earnest care by persons interested in social questions. They will find much that is partial, and, because partial, apparently unjust; but if they examine all the evidence on the other side, which Dickens seems to overlook, it will appear, after all their trouble, that his view was the finally right one, grossly and sharply told.—RUSKIN, JOHN, 1862, *The Roots of Honour*, "Unto this Last," note.

In comparison with most of Dickens's novels, "Hard Times" is contained within a narrow compass; and this, with the further necessity of securing to each successive small portion of the story a certain immediate degree of effectiveness, accounts, in some measure, for the peculiarity of the impression left by this story upon many of its readers. Short as the story relatively is, few of Dickens's fictions were elaborated with so much care.—WARD, ADOLPHUS WILLIAM, 1882, *Dickens (English Men of Letters)*, p. 126.

The novel of "Hard Times" is a satire on political economy, of which Dickens knew little, and the little he knew offended his benevolent feelings—as if the law of gravitation itself did not frequently offend benevolent feeling! Still, Mr. Gradgrind will for generations prevent a large number of amiable people from admitting the demonstrations of Adam Smith and Ricardo.—WHIPPLE, EDWIN PERCY, 1887, *In Dickens-Land*, *Scribner's Magazine*, vol. 2, p. 747.

Contains in the episode of Stephen and Rachel one of the best pieces of serious writing which Dickens ever did.—OLIPHANT, MARGARET O. W., 1892, *The Victorian Age of English Literature*, p. 260.

#### LITTLE DORRIT

1857

With the exception of the Circumlocution Office passages—adventitious as they are to the progress of the action—

"Little Dorrit" exhibits a palpable falling-off in inventive powers.—WARD, ADOLPHUS WILLIAM, 1882, *Dickens (English Men of Letters)*, p. 137.

About four months after Dickens's death, an incident happened that would have more than counteracted the effects upon the author's mind of the most unfavourable comments upon "Little Dorrit." The scene was the meeting of Bismarck and Jules Favre under the walls of Paris; as the Prussian was waiting to open fire on the city, the Frenchman was engaged in the arduous task of showing the wisdom of not doing it, and "while the two eminent statesmen were trying to find a basis of negotiation, Von Moltke was seated in a corner reading 'Little Dorrit.'" One is inclined to ask, with Mr. Forster, "Who will doubt that the chapter on 'How to do it' was then absorbing the old soldier's attention?"—KITTON, FREDERIC G., 1897, *The Novels of Charles Dickens*, p. 170.

Of "Little Dorrit," as of "Martin Chuzzlewit," who can pretend to bear the story in mind? There is again a moral theme; the evils of greed and vulgar ambition. As a rule, we find this book dismissed rather contemptuously; it is held to be tedious, and unlike Dickens in its prevalent air of gloom. For all that, I believe it to contain some of his finest work, some passages in which he attains an artistic finish hardly found elsewhere; and to these I shall return. . . . As a narrative, "Little Dorrit" is far from successful; it is cumbered with mysteries which prove futile, and has no proportion in its contrasting parts. Here and there the hand of the master is plainly weary.—GISSING, GEORGE, 1898, *Charles Dickens*, pp. 70, 71.

The conception of "Little Dorrit" was far happier and more promising than that of "Dombey and Son;" which indeed is not much to say for it. Mr. Dombey is a doll; Mr. Dorrit is an everlasting figure of comedy in its most tragic aspect and tragedy in its most comic phase. Little Dorrit herself might be less untruly than unkindly described as Little Nell grown big, or, in Milton's phrase, "writ large." But on that very account she is a more credible and therefore a more really and rationally pathetic figure.—SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES, 1902, *Charles Dickens, Quarterly Review*, vol. 196, p. 29.

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

1859

It is a story of human passions, of misery, crime, guilt, revenge, heroism, love, and happiness. And if the lack of the properly historical element does not so strongly appear in this novel as in "Barnaby Rudge," the reason is clear: it is, that the period was one that, beyond any other in history, boiled and burned with passion; so that in fact, the novelist who writes a romance of the French Revolution must, if his story is to seem truthful, write a story of psychology.—PERKINS, F. B., 1870, *Charles Dickens*, p. 63.

Mr. Dickens, however, wrote one book so noble in its spirit, so grand and graphic in its style, and filled with a pathos so profound and simple, that it deserves, and will surely take, a place among the great serious works of imagination. "The Tale of Two Cities," his shortest story, and the one least thought of by the public of his own day, is the work that will secure him an enduring fame. It has little humor, and that is not of its author's best; but its picture of the fierce passion of the first French Revolution, of the hideous oppression which provoked that outbreak of ruthless revenge on the part of a whole people, and above all its portrayal of the noble-natured castaway Sidney Carton, make it almost a peerless book in modern literature, and give it a place among the highest examples of all literary art.—WHITE, RICHARD GRANT, 1870, *The Styles of Disraeli and Dickens, The Galaxy*, vol. 10, p. 259.

It is a profitable experience for one who read Dickens forty years ago to try to read him now. Last winter I forced myself through the "Tale of Two Cities." It was a sheer dead pull from start to finish. It all seemed so insincere, such a transparent make-believe, a mere piece of acting. My sympathies were hardly once touched. I was not insensible to the marvelous genius displayed in the story, but it left me cold and unmoved. A feeling of unreality haunted me on every page.—BURROUGHS, JOHN, 1897, *On the Re-reading of Books, Century Magazine*, vol. 55, p. 149.

To Dickens as an historical novelist imperfect justice has been done. The "Tale of Two Cities" is said to be most admired by those who admire Dickens the least. A similar remark has been made of "Esmond."

The "Tale of Two Cities" is founded upon Carlyle's "French Revolution." It has no humour, or next to none. But it is a marvelous piece of writing; the plot, though simple, is excellent, and, whatever may be thought about the genuineness of the pathos in "Dombey and Son," or the "Old Curiosity Shop," the tragedy of Sidney Carton is a tragedy indeed.—PAUL, HERBERT, 1897, *The Apotheosis of the Novel, The Nineteenth Century, vol. 41, p. 771.*

"The Tale of Two Cities" is the best thing that could be expected of Dickens when this humour was veiled, and he was working at serious historical melodrama. It is hardly "the true Dickens," and is best liked by many who like the true Dickens least.—LANG, ANDREW, 1898, *Charles Dickens, Fortnightly Review, vol. 70, p. 957*

If no greatness can be claimed for a "Tale of Two Cities," either as an historical picture or as a well-constructed story, it cannot assuredly be praised for the excellence of its portraiture. There is not a single figure in the book that leaves any impression on the memory. The devotion of Sydney Carton, finding so dramatic a climax on the guillotine, is of course an outstanding feature, but its pathos gains little or nothing from any sympathetic grasp of the character of the devotee.—OLIPHANT, JAMES, 1899, *Victorian Novelists, p. 42.*

"A Tale of Two Cities" presents an interesting field for study of Dickens's varying literary style. From the first remarkably "balanced" paragraph to the supposed prophecies of Carton at the foot of the guillotine, are constant and conscious mannerisms. Of the use of balance, another passage may be instanced, where Madame Defarge seeks vengeance on Charles Darnay. . . . Dickens's narrative style appears at its best, not in the melodramatic scene at the guillotine, but in the flight from Paris and the thrilling narrative of Dr. Manette.—NETTLETON, GEORGE HENRY, 1901, *ed. Specimens of the Short Story, p. 138.*

#### GREAT EXPECTATIONS

1861

I am now reading "Great Expectations" and like it much. The characters, though, seem to me unreal somehow. Dickens appears to make his characters as the Chinese do those distorted wooden images. He

picks out the crookedest and knottiest roots of temperament or accidental distortion and then cuts a figure to match. But this book is full of fine touches of nature, though I can't help dreading something melodramatic to come.—LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL, 1861, *To C. E. Norton, Aug. 7; Letters, ed. Norton, vol. I, p. 312.*

Dickens is not a favourite of mine; I think it would go against the grain to applaud him highly in his present phase.—OLIPHANT, MARGARET O. W., 1862, *To Mr. Blackwood, Autobiography and Letters, ed. Mrs. Coghill, p. 186.*

Last night I made my Reader begin Dickens's wonderful "Great Expectations:" not considered one of his best, you know, but full of wonderful things, and even with a Plot which, I think, only needed less intricacy to be admirable. I had only just read the Book myself: but I wanted to see what my Reader would make of it; and he was so interested that he re-interested me too.—FITZGERALD, EDWARD, 1877, *Letter, May 5; Letters to Fanny Kemble, ed. Wright, p. 122.*

Notwithstanding the fact that the first edition of "Great Expectations" contains no illustrations, the price demanded for a clean copy is from £7 to £10. This high figure is accounted for by the great scarcity of the three consecutive volumes in their original form, purchasers having sometimes to be content with making up the set with volumes of varying editions. The book, when first issued, was sold out immediately, the greater part of the impression going to the libraries; it was therefore looked upon with comparative disrespect, and, being immensely popular, became popularly thumbed, torn, and marked; whereas the weekly instalments in "All the Year Round" were preferred by private purchasers and collectors, who preserved them for binding. Mr. Wilkie Collins's copy of "Great Expectations" realised £9, 5s in the auction-room, at the sale of his library in 1890.—KITTON, FREDERIC G., 1897, *The Novels of Charles Dickens, p. 195.*

#### OUR MUTUAL FRIEND

1865

We are justified in concluding that Dickens's opinion of the Jews underwent a complete change, as we may learn from this novel, which may be regarded in a manner

as his literary last will and testament. . . . Riah is as little the picture of the Jew as Fagin is; he gives utterance to some words about the Jews which are true enough, but he can not stand as a representative of the Jews. If they are to be characters in fiction, they wish but justice, and no more. An advocate who gives a rose-colored account of his client will not be believed. The Jew has his faults as all men have. There is as much harm in overestimating as in undervaluing. A constant flow of praise loses all strength for an impartial mind, as does also a constant flow of abuse. We have in fiction demonically bad Jews, and ideally good ones. Barabbas and Fagin on the one hand, Sheva, Rebecca, and Riah on the other. In the works we have treated thus far, the true picture has not yet been given; it will only be drawn by such a one who has made a searching and psychological study of the religious and hereditary traits of the descendants of this most remarkable stock.—PHILPSON, DAVID, 1889, *The Jew in English Fiction*, pp. 97, 101.

Consider "Our Mutual Friend," which he is stated to have regarded with peculiar satisfaction. I took it up, a few days ago, intending to read it carefully through. I was greatly tempted to lay it down at the second chapter. That chapter, as some of you will doubtless remember, gives an account of a dinner-party at the Veneerings. I wonder whether anything bearing a less appreciable relation to life was ever written. Twemlow is as unreal as Lord Dundreary, and much less amusing. Lady Tippins is as untrue as she is uninteresting. Was there ever a barrister bearing the remotest likeness to Eugene Wrayburn? or a solicitor possessing the smallest affinity with Mortimer Lightfoot?—LILLY, WILLIAM SAMUEL, 1895, *Four English Humourists of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 15.

It is very easy to select from the army of characters which Dickens has given us, those which were the truly beloved children of his brain. Sometimes he seemed to adopt a hero or a heroine, generally the latter, and to make himself believe that she was really his own offspring. Such a character occurs in one of Dickens' poorest novels, "Our Mutual Friend." This is *Bella*, and in regard to her, Dickens writes in the notes to the manuscript of "Our Mutual Friend," in which he frequently calls upon himself to do his duty by his characters,

these words: "Make *Bella* as attractive as I can." Now he would never have written, in relation to *Mr. Pickwick*: "Make him as jolly, as funny, and as good hearted as I can." It would not have been necessary. *Picwick*, in the mind of Dickens, was a real man; *Bella Wilfer* was not a real person, and, do his best, he could not make her the lovely woman he wanted her to be.—STOCKTON, FRANK R., 1897, *My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book*, *Munsey's Magazine*, vol. 17, p. 354.

We hear too much of the dragging of the river for dead bodies in "Our Mutual Friend." Dickens never could learn where to stop. His high pictorial imagination presented to him every detail of the scene; and, like a Pre-Raphaelite, he forgot that to the reader a general impression conveyed more truth than minute accuracy in every detail.—WALKER, HUGH, 1897, *The Age of Tennyson*, p. 90.

In "Our Mutual Friend" he relapsed into his outworn satire, the stage diction out of place, the needless and *voulu* phantastic.—LANG, ANDREW, 1898, *Charles Dickens*, *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 70, p. 957.

#### THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD 1870

Of Mr. Fildes's work for Charles Dickens's book, our own opinion is that it is the best illustrative interpretation which has ever been made of the author, albeit old and fine reputations belong to the former associations of artists' names with the great series of the Dickens novels.—MEYNELL, ALICE, 1884, *How Edwin Drood was Illustrated*, *The Century*, vol. 27, p. 527.

"Edwin Drood" would probably have been his best constructed book: as far as it goes, the story hangs well together, showing a care in the contrivance of detail which is more than commonly justified by the result. One cannot help wishing that Dickens had chosen another subject—one in which there was neither mystery nor murder, both so irresistibly attractive to him, yet so far from being the true material of his art. Surely it is unfortunate that the last work of a great writer should have for its theme nothing more human than a trivial mystery woven about a vulgar deed of blood. . . . His selection of scene was happy and promising—the old city of his

childhood, Rochester. The tone, too, of his descriptive passages is much more appropriate than the subject. But Dickens had made his choice in life, and therefrom inevitably resulted his course in literature.—GISSING, GEORGE, 1898, *Charles Dickens*, pp. 76, 77.

## LETTERS

Ten years are nearly enough to show that in Dickens himself the future admirers of his works will take almost no interest at all. In reading through these letters one's irresistible feeling is that it is at least well that their publication was not delayed longer, if, indeed, it has not been delayed too long already. They present the man very adequately, we imagine, and, in presenting him, inevitably betray how slight was the real foundation for the quick personal interest taken in him during the last thirty or forty years. . . . But, though the lapse of time is slow, it is also certain, and, unless we are mistaken about the fact, popular interest in the man has already appreciably declined, if it has not subsided. There are probably few who will read these two volumes from cover to cover.—BROWNELL, W. C., 1879, *The Letters of Dickens*, *The Nation*, vol. 29, p. 388.

But after all, published collections of private letters are usually disappointing things, and these two large volumes, interesting as they are, constitute no exception to the general rule. We do, indeed, obtain glimpses of physical suffering and ill-health, for which the general public were quite unprepared; but the Dickens of these pages is the Dickens we already knew, and we have *not* the key to his interior life; while we are helped to discern inconsistencies of opinion and conduct of which there is no accessible explanation.—BROWNE, MATTHEW, 1880, *The Letters of the Late Mr. Dickens*, *The Contemporary Review*, vol. 37, p. 77.

Charles Dickens was an excellent correspondent—punctual, regular—and when he had said all that was necessary, he stopped. His letters are easy, simple, and unaffected, and show him to have been a frank, genial, vain, generous, egotistical fellow. His spirits were high, his enjoyment of life keen, and he was an industrious and indefatigable literary worker: in the latter respect he was like Scott. But he differed from the author of "Waverley" in being a

very painstaking and laborious writer. These letters open to us glimpses of Dickens's domestic life which are calculated to increase our interest in their author. He was essentially a domestic man; his children ever occupied the first place in his thoughts; and, when absent from them, his letters were very frequent, and evinced the deepest interest in all that concerned them.—DIDIER, EUGENE L., 1880, *Recent Biography, etc.*, *North American Review*, vol. 130, p. 303.

## GENERAL

A rhyme! a rhyme! from a distant clime,—

From the gulph of the Genoese:  
O'er the rugged scalps of the Julian Alps

Dear Boz! I send you these,  
To light the *Wick* your candlestick

Holds up, or, should you list,  
To usher in the yarn you spin

Concerning *Oliver Twist*.

Immense applause you've gained, oh, Boz

Through continental Europe;

You'll make *Pickwick* oecumenick;

Of fame you have a sure hope:

For here your books are found, gadzooks!

In greater *luxure* than any

That have issued yet, hotpress'd or wet,

From the types of Galignani.

—MAHONY, FRANCIS, 1838, *Poetical Epistle from Father Prout to "Boz," on the Appearance of the First Portions of "Oliver Twist," Bentley's Miscellany*, Jan.

That rare painter of human character.—

HALLECK, FITZ-GREENE, 1842, *Letter to Louis Gaylord Clark*, *Life and Letters*, ed. Wilson, p. 439.

His more obvious excellences are of the kind which are easily understood by all classes—by the stable-boy as well as the statesman. His intimate knowledge of character, his familiarity with the language and experience of low life, his genuine humor, his narrative power, and the cheerfulness of his philosophy, are traits that impress themselves on minds of every description. But, besides these, he has many characteristics to interest the higher order of the mind. They are such as to recommend him peculiarly to Americans. His sympathies seek out that class with which American institutions and laws sympathize most strongly. He has found subjects of thrilling interest in the passions, sufferings, and virtues of the mass.—BRYANT, WILLIAM CULLEN, 1842, *New York Evening Post*, *A Biography of William Cullen Bryant*, ed. Godwin, vol. 1, p. 396.

Not merely thine the tribute praise,  
Which greets an author's progress here;  
Not merely thine the fabled bays,  
Whose verdure brightens his career.  
Thine the pure triumph to have taught  
Thy brother man a gentle part;  
In every line a fervent thought,  
Which gushes from thy generous heart.  
For thine are words which rouse up all  
The dormant good among us found,  
Like drops which from a fountain fall,  
To bless and fertilize the ground.

—NORTON, CAROLINE E. S., 1842, *A Tribute to Charles Dickens, Bijou Almanac*.

Do you know that the royal Boz lives close to us, three doors from Mr. Kenyon in Harley Place? The new numbers appear to me admirable, and full of life and blood—whatever we may say to the thick rouging and extravagance of gesture. There is a beauty, a tenderness, too, in the organ scene, which is worthy of the gilliflowers. But my admiration for “Boz” fell from its “sticking place,” I confess, a good furlong, when I read Victor Hugo; and my creed is, that, *not* in his tenderness, which is as much his own as his humour, but in his serious powerful Jew-trial scenes, he has followed Hugo closely, and never scarcely looked away from “*Les Trois Jours d'un Condamné*.”—BROWNING, ELIZABETH BARRETT, 1843, *To James Martin, Feb. 6; Letters, ed. Kenyon, vol. 1, p. 123*.

Mentally he is indisputably below Fielding; but in tenderness, in pathos, in sweetness and purity of feeling, in that comprehensiveness of sympathy which springs from a sense of brotherhood with mankind, he is as indisputably above him. . . . He has gleaned all his facts with observation and sympathy, in a diligent scrutiny of actual life, and no contemporary author is less indebted to books. His style is all his own, its quaint texture of fancy and humor being spun altogether from his own mind, with hardly a verbal felicity which bears the mark of being stolen. . . . Had he been an egotist, devoured by a ravenous vanity for personal display, and eager to print the image of himself on the popular imagination, his talents would hardly have made him known beyond the street in which he lived, and his mind by self-admiration would soon have been self-consumed. His fellow-feeling with his race is his genius.—WHIPPLE, EDWIN PERCY, 1844, *Novels and Novelists, Literature and Life, pp. 60, 62, 63*.

Mr. Dickens' characters, numerous as they are, have each the roundness of individual reality combined with generalization—most of them representing a class. The method by which he accomplishes this, is worth observing, and easily observed, as the process is always the same. He never develops a character from within, but commences by showing how the nature of the individual has *been* developed externally by his whole life in the world. To this effect, he first paints his portrait at full-length; sometimes his dress before his face, and most commonly his dress and demeanor. When he has done this to his satisfaction, he *feels in* the man, and the first words that man utters are the key-note of the character, and of all that he subsequently says and does. The author's hand never wavers, never becomes untrue to his creations. HORNE, RICHARD HENGIST, 1844, *A New Spirit of the Age, p. 21*.

His writings are a continual preaching from the text of Burns:

“A man's a man for a' that!”

While they tend to call forth the best feelings of the wealthier classes, they tend equally to elevate the self-respect and estimation of the people. They make them feel that humanity is paramount to all artificial distinctions, and that, spite of the harshest treatment of fortune, if we maintain our inward worth we never can become contemptible.—HOWITT, WILLIAM, 1846, *The People's Portrait Gallery; The People's Journal, vol. 1, p. 12*.

Scott's higher characters possess massive good sense, great shrewdness, much intelligence: they are always very superior, if not always great men; and by a careful arrangement of drapery, and much study of position and attitude, they play their parts wonderfully well. The higher characters of Dickens do not stand by any means so high; the fluid in the original tube rests at a lower level: and no one seems better aware of the fact than Dickens himself. He knows his proper walk; and, content with expatiating in a comparatively humble province of human life and character, rarely stands on tiptoe, in the vain attempt to portray an intellect taller than his own.—MILLER, HUGH, 1847, *First Impressions of England and its People, p. 280*.

Dickens's Christmas story is paltry; though one of its puns showed me how the



English pronounce "Ma."—ALEXANDER, JAMES, 1849, *Forty Years' Familiar Letters*, Jan. 8, vol. II, p. 91.

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 sound's 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.

—HUNT, LEIGH, 1849, *To Charles Dickens*.

Many of his portraits excite pity, and suggest the existence of crying social sins; but of almost all we are obliged to say that they border on and frequently reach caricature, of which the essence is to catch a striking likeness by exclusively selecting and exaggerating a peculiarity that marks the man but does not represent him. Dickens belongs in literature to the same class as his illustrator, Hablot Browne, in design, though he far surpasses the illustrator in range and power.—BRIMLEY, GEORGE, 1853-58, "*Bleak House*," *Essays*, ed. Clark, p. 292.

The English novels of these days seem to me the more detestable the one than the other—Dickens all cant (Liberal cant, the worst sort) and caricature.—MITFORD, MARY RUSSELL, 1853, *To Mr. Starkey*, Jan. 31; *The Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford*, ed. *L'Estrange*, ch. xxvi.

There may be, and I believe there are, many who go beyond me in admiration of his works,—high and strong as is my delight in some of them. Many can more keenly enjoy his peculiar humour,—delightful as it is to me; and few seem to miss as I do the pure plain daylight in the atmosphere of his scenery. So many fine painters have been mannerists as to atmosphere and colour that it may be unreasonable to object to one more: but the very excellence and diversity of Mr. Dickens's powers makes one long that they should exercise their full force under the broad open sky of nature,

instead of in the most brilliant place of art. While he tells us a world of things that are natural and even true, his personages are generally, as I suppose is undeniable, profoundly unreal. It is a curious speculation what effect his universally read works will have on the foreign conception of English character.—MARTINEAU, HARRIET, 1855-77, *Autobiography*, ed. Chapman, vol. II, p. 61.

We have one great novelist who is gifted with the utmost power of rendering the external traits of our town population; and if he could give us their psychological character—their conceptions of life, and their emotions—with the same truth as their idiom and manners, his books would be the greatest contribution Art has ever made to the awakening of social sympathies. But while he can copy Mrs. Plornish's colloquial style with the delicate accuracy of a sun-picture, while there is the same startling inspiration in his description of the gestures and phrases of "Boots," as in the speeches of Shakespeare's mobs or numskulls, he scarcely ever passes from the humorous and external to the emotional and tragic without becoming as transcendent in his unreality as he was a moment before in his artistic truthfulness. But for the precious salt of his humour, which compels him to reproduce external traits that serve in some degree as a corrective to his frequently false psychology, his preternaturally virtuous poor children and artisans, his melodramatic boatmen and courtesans, would be as obnoxious as Eugène Sue's idealized proletaires in encouraging the miserable fallacy that high morality and refined sentiment can grow out of harsh social relations, ignorance, and want; or that the working-classes are in a condition to enter at once into a millennial state of *altruism*, wherein everyone is caring for everyone else, and no one for himself.—ELIOT, GEORGE 1856, *The Natural History of German Life*.

Dickens, with preternatural apprehension of the language of manners and the varieties of street life; with pathos and laughter, with patriotic and still enlarging generosity writes London tracts. He is a painter of English details, like Hogarth; local and temporary in his tints and style, and local in his aims.—EMERSON, RALPH WALDO, 1856-84, *English Traits; Works, Riverside Ed.*, vol. v, p 234.

If we glance over the wit and satire of the popular writers of the day, we shall find that the *manner* of it, so far as it is distinctive is always owing to Dickens; and that out of his first exquisite ironies branch innumerable other forms of wit, varying with the dispositions of the writers; original in the matter and substance of them, yet never to have been expressed as they now are, but for Dickens.—RUSKIN, JOHN, 1856, *Modern Painters*, vol. III, *Appendix*.

We do not know any instance of imaginative power on which we would more willingly rely, which we could more absolutely trust, than that of Dickens. Yet when he leaves the alleys of St. Giles and the office in Bow Street, which he has seen, and sets himself to depict what he merely imagines to exist, how strange is the work he produces! . . . His early works are all aglow with genius. The supreme potency with which he commands it, is shown in the total absence of effort, in the classic chasteness and limpid flow, of thought, fancy, and diction. You are in a meadow just after dawn; the flowers are fresh as if they had awakened from slumber, and the dew is on them all. A word, an idea, a glimpse of beauty, is always at hand; the writer never tarries a moment; yet there is no display, no profusion, of opulence. You do not see him waving the wand; the tear or the smile is on your cheek before you are aware.—BAYNE, PETER, 1857, *The Modern Novel: Dickens, Bulwer, Thackeray; Essays in Biography and Criticism, First Series*, pp. 370, 384.

His genius is essentially irregular and unsymmetrical,—hardly any English writer perhaps is much more so. His style is an example of it: it is descriptive, racy, and flowing; it is instinct with new imagery and singular illustration: but it does not indicate that due proportion of the faculties to one another which is a beauty in itself, and which cannot help diffusing beauty over every happy word and moulded clause. . . . An artist once said of the best work of another artist. "Yes, it is a pretty patch:" if we might venture on the phrase, we should say that Mr. Dickens's pictures are graphic scraps, his best books are compilations of them. . . . The *bizarrerie* of Mr. Dickens's genius is rendered more remarkable by the inordinate measure of his special excellences.—BAGEHOT, WALTER, 1858, *Charles Dickens, Works, ed. Morgan*, vol. II.

Of Charles Dickens' fame a grand feature is its universality. His name is much a "Household Word" in every sequestered hamlet lying between the most extreme points of our *home* islands, as it is in the metropolis; and he is as well known in the United States, Canada, and Australia, as he is in the city round St. Paul's. Wherever there are men of English origin, speaking the English tongue, there the genius of Charles Dickens is one of the most important facts of life. It would be a long task to say all that Dickens has done for the English novel. It would be easier to state what he has not done for it. Indeed the novel of his generation is so completely a work of his *re-creation*, that it would be mere ingratitude, backed up by stupidity, not to hail him as the immediate parent of it.—JEAFFRESON, JOHN CORDY, 1858, *Novels and Novelists*, vol. II.

From the incessant repetition by Mr. Dickens of this inventive process openly and without variation, except in the results, the public have caught what is called his mannerism or trick; and hence a certain recoil from his later writings among the cultivated and fastidious. But let any one observe our current table-talk or our current literature, and, despite this profession of dissatisfaction, and in the very circles where it most abounds, let him note how gladly Dickens is used, and how frequently his phrases, his fancies and the names of his characters come in, as illustration, embellishment, proverb, and seasoning. Take any periodical in which there is a severe criticism of Dickens's last publication; and, ten to one, in the same periodical, and perhaps by the same hand, there will be a leading article, setting out with a quotation from Dickens that flashes on the mind of the reader the thought which the whole article is meant to convey, or containing some allusion to one of Dickens's characters which enriches the text in the middle and floods it an inch round with colour and humour.—MASSON, DAVID, 1859, *British Novelists and Their Styles*, p. 252.

Choosing some character of the most unpromising outward appearance—Smike, the starved, half-witted drudge of a Yorkshire school; Pinch, the awkward, shambling assistant of a rascally country architect; Ham, a rough, tar-splashed, weather-beaten fisherman of Yarmouth; Joe, the huge,

stout blacksmith, whose dull brain can scarcely shape a thought clearly into words—he makes us love them all, for the truth, the honesty, the sweet, guileless, forgiving spirit that lives within the ungainly frame. If Dickens had done no more than create the Tom Pinch of "Chuzzlewit," and the blacksmith Joe of "Great Expectations," he deserves lasting gratitude and fame.—COLLIER, WILLIAM FRANCIS, 1861, *A History of English Literature*, p. 484.

You ask me what I see in Dickens . . .

A game-cock among bantam chickens.

—LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE, 1863, *Heroic Idyls with Additional Poems; Works*, vol. VIII, p. 323.

If Mr. Dickens's characters were gathered together, they would constitute a town populous enough to send a representative to Parliament. Let us enter. The style of architecture is unparalleled. There is an individuality about the buildings. In some obscure way they remind one of human faces. There are houses sly-looking, houses wicked-looking, houses pompous-looking. Heaven bless us! what a rakish pump! what a self-important town-hall! what a hard-hearted prison! The dead walls are covered with advertisements of Mr. Slearey's circus. Newman Noggs comes shambling along. Mr. and the Misses Pecksniff come sailing down the sunny side of the street. Miss Mercy's parasol is gay; papa's neck-cloth is white, and terribly starched. Dick Swiveller leans against a wall, his hands in his pockets, a primrose held between his teeth, contemplating the opera of Punch and Judy, which is being conducted under the management of Messrs. Codlings and Short. You turn a corner and you meet the coffin of little Paul Dombey borne along. Who would have thought of encountering a funeral in this place? In the afternoon you hear the rich tones of the organ from Miss LaCrevey's first floor, for Tom Pinch has gone to live there now; and as you know all the people as you know your own brothers and sisters, and consequently require no letters of introduction, you go up and talk with the dear old fellow about all his friends and your friends, and towards evening he takes your arm, and you walk out to see poor Nelly's grave—a place which he visits often, and which he dresses with flowers with his own hands.—SMITH, ALEXANDER, 1863, *Dreamthorp*, p. 283.

To give so much pleasure, to add so much to the happiness of the world, by his writings, as Mr. Dickens has succeeded in doing, is a felicity that has never been attained in such full measure by any other author. For the space of a generation he has done his beneficent work, and there are few English-speaking men or women who do not feel themselves under peculiar obligation to the great novelist, and bound to him, not by any mere cold literary tie, but by the warm and vital cords of personal sympathy.

. . . No one thinks first of Mr. Dickens as a writer. He is at once, through his books, a friend. He belongs among the intimates of every pleasant-tempered and large-hearted person. He is not so much the guest as the inmate of our homes. He keeps holidays with us, he helps us to celebrate Christmas with heartier cheer, he shares at every New Year in our good wishes; for, indeed, it is not in his purely literary character that he has done most for us, it is as a man of the largest humanity, who has simply used literature as the means by which to bring himself into relation with his fellow-men, and to inspire them with something of his own sweetness, kindness, charity, and goodwill. He is the great magician of our time. His wand is a book, but his power is in his own heart. It is a rare piece of good fortune for us that we are the contemporaries of this benevolent genius, and that he comes among us in bodily presence, brings in his company such old and valued friends as Mr. Pickwick, and Sam Weller, and Nicholas Nickleby, and David Copperfield, and Boots at the Swan, and Dr. Marigold.—NORTON, CHARLES ELIOT, 1868, *Charles Dickens*, *North American Review*, vol. 106, p. 671.

With a Thackeray, a Lytton, an Eliot, on the course, we cannot say that Dickens was first and the rest nowhere; but though, ever and anon, men might momentarily think that these would overtake and even outstrip him, they never did so. They made great spurts, and slackened; but he, though he sometimes amazed us by accelerating the pace, rarely diminished it, and never halted. If the meditation of novels may, in one sense, be said to be the meditation of trifles, of Dickens it may be affirmed that he was *totus in illis*. His whole heart, indeed his whole nature, was in them. And he is the only English novelist of real genius

of whom this can truly be said.—AUSTIN, ALFRED, 1870, *Charles Dickens, Temple Bar*, vol. 29, p. 555.

The admiring and passionate devotee of Dickens is in danger of copying his broad caricature, his not very elevated or elevating slang, and the free and easy swing of the society in which Mr. Dickens delights.—PORTER, NOAH, 1870, *Books and Reading*, p. 230.

The fierce debater's tongue grew mute,  
 Wise men were silent for his sake;  
 The poet threw aside his lute,  
 And paused enraptured while he spake.  
 The proudest lady in the land  
 Forgot that praise and power were sweet;  
 She dropped the jewels from her hand,  
 And sat enchanted at his feet.

Children, with locks of brown and gold,  
 Gathered about like flocks of birds;  
 The poor, whose story he had told,  
 Drew near and loved him for his words.  
 His eye burns bright, his voice is strong,  
 A waiting people eager stands;  
 Men on the outskirts of the throng  
 Interpret him to distant lands.

—CARY, PHOEBE, 1870, *Dickens, The Last Poems of Alice and Phæbe Cary*, ed. Ames, p. 250.

The critics may lash and tie him as they will; one, we observe, queries if he is to be ranked as a great novelist at all; another, still more fearfully astute, questions if he could lay any claim to genius. Well, well; let them have their talk; the tormenting flies may buzz all through our August—they cannot steal away our sunshine. The English reading people everywhere have taken Charles Dickens to their hearts, and they will hold him there. God bless his memory! It shall be green for us always.—MITCHELL, DONALD G., 1870, *Hours at Home, August*.

He has the painter in him, and the English painter. Never surely did a mind figure to itself with more exact detail or greater energy all the parts and tints of a picture. . . . Dickens is a poet; he is as much at home in the imaginative world as in the actual. . . . His excessive imagination is like a string too tightly stretched; it produces of itself, without any violent shock, sounds not otherwise heard. . . . Dickens has drawn three or four portraits of madmen, very agreeable at first sight, but so true that they are in reality horrible. . . .

He never abandons his impassioned tone; he never rests in a natural style and in simple narrative; he only rails or weeps; he writes but satires or elegies. He has the feverish sensibility of a woman who laughs loudly, or melts into tears at the sudden shock of the slightest occurrence. This impassioned style is extremely potent, and to it may be attributed half the glory of Dickens. . . . At bottom, Dickens is gloomy, like Hogarth; but, like Hogarth, he makes us burst with laughter by the buffoonery of his inventions and the violence of his caricatures.—TAINÉ, H. A., 1871, *History of English Literature*, tr. Van Laun, vol. II, bk. pp. 340, 342, 343, 346, 349, 352.

Dickens knows nothing of science, and has, indeed, as little knowledge of any kind, save that which is derived from observation, as any respectable Englishman could well have.—MCCARTHY, JUSTIN, 1872, *George Eliot and George Lewes, Modern Leaders*, p. 137.

The truest friend of humanity in the literary world. Neither Shakespeare, nor Byron, nor Walter Scott, nor Tom Moore, nor Alfred Tennyson, deigned to show so honest a devotion to the poor and the unfortunate as Charles Dickens.—FORNEY, JOHN W., 1872, *Anecdotes of Public Men*, vol. I, p. 400.

Dickens sees and feels, but the logic of feeling seems the only logic he can manage. Thought is strangely absent from his works. I do not suppose a single thoughtful remark on life or character could be found throughout the twenty volumes. Not only is there a marked absence of the reflective tendency, but one sees no indication of the past life of humanity having ever occupied him; keenly as he observes the objects before him, he never connects his observations into a general expression, never seems interested in general relations of things. Compared with that of Fielding or Thackeray, his was merely an *animal* intelligence, *i. e.*, restricted to perceptions. On this ground his early education was more fruitful and less injurious than it would have been to a nature constructed on a more reflective and intellectual type. It furnished him with rare and valuable experience, early developed his sympathies with the lowly and struggling, and did not starve any intellectual ambition. He never was and never would have been a student.—

LEWES, GEORGE HENRY, 1872, *Dickens in Relation to Criticism, Fortnightly Review*, vol. 17, p. 151.

To the praise of having written with invariable purity, of never having attempted to attract readers by the most distant suggestion of impropriety, he is fully entitled. It is probably rather overstraining his merits when he is further represented as having deliberately designed to bring about a reform of abuses by his writings: to make parish beadles humble and nurses abstemious by the moral drawn from Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Gamp. And even in respect to the quality of his abilities, as developed in his works, the novelty of his style led to his being greatly overpraised. . . . He never once attempted to delineate either man or woman the contemplation of whose character can refine or elevate the feelings of the reader: he does indeed on more than one occasion endeavor to be pathetic, but his talents were not formed to draw tears:

Si vis me flere dolendum est  
Primum ipsi tibi.

His sense of fun is visible through his mask of dolefulness, and the effect he produces on the reader is certainly not that which he appears to desire.—YONGE, CHARLES DUKE, 1872, *Three Centuries of English Literature*, pp. 625, 626.

The number of names of characters included in the General Index, and more or less fully treated in the pages preceding the Index, is upwards of fifteen hundred and fifty. The number of names of imaginary places, societies, and literary works, and of familiar phrases or sayings, and the like,—also included in the Index,—is upwards of two hundred.—PIERCE, GILBERT A., 1872, *The Dickens Dictionary, Preface*, p. vii.

The mirror held up by him to Nature was certainly not provided with a properly even surface, and consequently all the images he saw in it, and drew from it, were apt to be distorted and out of proportion. . . . In this respect Dickens strikingly contrasts, to his disadvantage, with Chaucer, whose fidelity to nature is far too sincere to permit him to take such liberties with her fair works, or to select her monstrosities as her types. Both writers are pre-eminently realistic; no Englishmen, perhaps, exhibit more clearly that intense realism which it may be lies at the basis of the Low German mind, and which pro-

duced that school of painting amongst our own nearest kinsmen on the Continent which may compete with photography in the minute accuracy and exactness of its representations. Chaucer and Dickens are as precise in their delineations of external life and manners as are Hooze or Teniers. We know the outside look of the Miller and the Reeve just as we know that of Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller. But even in wardrobe matters the modern is not seldom fantastic and grotesque, which Chaucer never is. To some extent the difference between these two great writers is one of culture. Chaucer was of the highest culture to be reached in his age, and all his works are fragrant with evidence of it. Dickens could have drawn certain of the Pilgrims with excellent success, but he could not have drawn the Knight or the Prioress. But the difference is not only of culture; it is also of soil.—HALES, JOHN W., 1873-84, *Notes and Essays on Shakespeare*, p. 73.

I have been sunning myself in Dickens— even in his later and very inferior "Mutual Friend," and "Great Expectations."— Very inferior to his best: but with things better than any one else's best, caricature as they may be. I really must go and worship at Gadshill, as I have worshipped at Abbotsford, though with less Reverence, to be sure. But I must look on Dickens as a mighty Benefactor of Mankind.—FITZGERALD, EDWARD, 1874, *Letter, Aug. 24; Letters to Fanny Kemble, ed. Wright*, p. 49.

Satirists have stormed against the abuses of the court, and governments, the intrigues of statesmen, and the intolerance of the pulpit. But Dickens was the first to employ fiction as an instrument to tell the dark history of those human beings who herd in the loathsome alleys of our great cities, to show that men are allowed to rot out of life into eternity because a duty was neglected which love ought to have dictated.—IRVING, WALTER, 1874, *Charles Dickens*.

Truth to life distinguishes nearly all the characters of Dickens, those at least which belong to the lower classes; but this truth is the obvious truth of caricature rather than of reality.—SMITH, GEORGE BARNETT, 1875, *William Makepeace Thackeray, Poets and Novelists*, p. 45.

He has an exuberance of animal spirits—a surplus vitality like that which makes him,

after signing his name to a letter or note, give such a whirl of flourishing. . . . Sometimes his humour not only takes the show of mere animal spirits, but may be said to depend solely on them. . . . His boisterous fun and good-humour are like Smollett's, with this advantage, that to find his best things we have not to go to a dunghill and scratch them out.—DAVEY, SAMUEL, 1876, *Darwin, Carlyle and Dickens, and Other Essays*.

As one who flings large hospitable doors  
Wide to a world of masquers whom he has bade  
Sweep hurrying onward with their paces mad  
And merrily flood his vacant chamber-floors,  
Even so with him about whose form in scores  
Humanity's eager passions, blithe or sad,  
Rush reveling, and however strangely clad,  
Are still the old rascals, bigots, fools and bores!  
Ah, what a riotous witch-dance they prolong,  
Of avarice, hatred, hope, revenge, despair!  
How right flies timorous from the clutch of  
wrong!

How pleasure and ease take hands with toil and  
care!

While humor, that wild harlequin, here and  
there,

Dashes in spangled somersaults through the  
throng!

—FAWCETT, EDGAR, 1877, *Dickens, Fantasy and Passion*, p. 185.

Dickens's want of perfect sympathy with the cultured society of his time incapacitated him for that kind of novel which answers to comedy in dramatic composition, although it left him free for work of a greater and more enduring kind. What may be called the comedy novel, the novel of Thackeray in Dickens's generation, is much less sure of enduring fame, because the sentiments on which it rests, being the product of a particular knot of circumstances, are more fugitive, and pass sooner into the province of the historian. The novels of Dickens will live longer because they take hold of the permanent and universal sentiments of the race,—sentiments which pervade all classes, and which no culture can ever eradicate. His fun may be too boisterous for the refined tastes of his own time, or, for the matter of that, of posterity; his pathos may appear maudlin; but they carried everything before them when they first burst upon our literature, because, however much exaggerated, they were exaggerations of what our race feels in its inner heart; and unless culture in the future works a miracle, and carries its

changes beneath the surface, we may be certain that Dickens will keep his hold.—MINTO, WILLIAM, 1878, *Encyclopædia Britannica, Ninth Ed., vol. VII, p. 154*.

Dickens, alas! soon passed into a mannerism of artificial whimsicalities, alternating with shallow melodrama.—HARRISON, FREDERIC, 1879–86, *The Choice of Books and Other Literary Pieces*, p. 67.

It is very noticeable that Dickens seemed incapable of intellectual growth. The greatest expansion to which he ever attained he arrived at very early. Thereafter history, literature, even contemporaneous events, added little to his store of thought and knowledge. Endless fun, inimitable drollery, were the gifts which he had to bestow upon his fellow-men; these, indeed, he bestowed lavishly, gloriously, so that the English-reading world would doubtless much more readily part with any three of its profoundest thinkers than with this most witty and laughter-moving of all its writers. But this was all he had to give; and from the very nature of the gift it was nearer perfection in his earlier years than as he advanced in life. This is apparent enough in his letters.—MORSE, JOHN T., 1880, *Charles Dickens's Letters, The International Review, vol. 8, p. 273*.

Perhaps no one has succeeded better, or discovered a more effectual plan of drawing popular attention to public abuses, evils, and wrongs, than Dickens has done by mingling terrible descriptions of London misery and crime with the most amusing sketches of London life.—CANNING, ALBERT S. G., 1880, *Philosophy of Charles Dickens, p. 335*.

The primary object of a novelist is to please; and this man's novels have been found more pleasant than those of any other writer. It might, of course, be objected to this, that though the books have pleased, they have been injurious, that their tendency has been immoral and their teaching vicious; but it is almost needless to say that no such charge has ever been made against Dickens. His teaching has ever been good. From all which, there arises to the critic a question whether, with such evidence against him as to the excellence of this writer, he should not subordinate his own opinion to the collected opinion of the world of readers. To me it almost

seems that I must be wrong to place Dickens after Thackeray and George Eliot, knowing as I do that so great a majority put him above those authors. . . . Of Dickens' style it is impossible to speak in praise. It is jerky, ungrammatical, and created by himself in defiance of rules—almost as completely as that created by Carlyle. To readers who have taught themselves to regard language, it must, therefore, be unpleasant. But the critic is driven to feel the weakness of his criticism, when he acknowledges to himself—as he is compelled in all honesty to do—that with the language, such as it is, the writer has satisfied the great mass of the readers of his country.—TROLLOPE, ANTHONY, 1882-83, *An Autobiography*.

Chief in thy generation born of men  
Whom English praise acclaimed as English  
born,  
With eyes that matched the world-wide eyes of  
morn  
For gleam of tears or laughter, tenderest then  
When thoughts of children warmed their light,  
or when  
Reverence of age with love and labour worn,  
Or godlike pity fired with godlike scorn,  
Shot through them flame that winged thy swift  
live pen:  
Where stars and suns that we behold not burn,  
Higher even than here, though highest was  
here thy place,  
Love sees thy spirit laugh and speak and shine  
With Shakespeare, and the soft bright soul of  
Sterne,  
And Fielding's kindest might, and Goldsmith's  
grace;  
Scarce one more loved or worthier love than  
thine.  
—SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES, 1882,  
*Dickens*.

It would, of course, be against all experience to suppose that to future generations Dickens, as a writer, will be all that he was to his own. Much that constitutes the subject, or at least furnishes the background, of his pictures of English life, . . . has vanished, or is being improved off the face of the land. The form, again, of Dickens's principal works may become obsolete, as it was in a sense accidental. He was the most popular novelist of his day; but should prose fiction, or even the full and florid species of it which has enjoyed so long-lived a favour ever be out of season, the popularity of Dickens's books must experience an inevitable diminution. . . . Nature, when she

gifted Dickens with sensibility, observation, and imagination, had bestowed upon him yet another boon in the quality which seems more prominent than any other in his whole being. The vigour of Dickens—a mental and moral vigour supported by a splendid physical organism—was the parent of some of his foibles; amongst the rest, of his tendency to exaggeration. . . . But without this vigour he could not have been creative as he was; and in him there were accordingly united with rare completeness a swift responsiveness to the impulses of humour and pathos, an inexhaustible fertility in discovering and inventing materials for their exercise, and the constant creative desire to give to these newly-created materials a vivid, plastic form.—WARD, ADOLPHUS WILLIAM, 1882, *Dickens (English Men of Letters)*, pp. 194, 202, 203.

If Dickens's taste did not incline strongly in the direction of the poetic drama—and so much perhaps is proved by his criticisms—his admiration for its chief interpreter and representative of those days, Macready, was without doubt very hearty and genuine. Into his criticisms, and especially his literary criticisms, the question of personal and private regard largely entered, and this man's tragedy or that man's book was all the better assured of approval if the man happened to occupy a place upon the critic's list of friends.—COOK, DUTTON, 1883, *Charles Dickens as a Dramatic Critic*, *Longman's Magazine*, vol. 2, p. 37.

"So we arraign her; but she," the Genius of Charles Dickens, how brilliant, how kindly, how beneficent she is! dwelling by a fountain of laughter imperishable; though there is something of an alien salt in the neighbouring fountain of tears. How poor the world of fancy would be, how "dispeopled of her dreams," if, in some ruin of the social system, the books of Dickens were lost.—LANG, ANDREW, 1886, *Letters to Dead Authors*, p. 20.

Dickens was never happier than when he was writing a story with a moral as obvious and as sharply cut as the moral of one of Æsop's fables; indeed, after the "Pickwick Papers" he only wrote one or two works which had not some distinct purpose quite apart from any mere artistic end. He waged war against Yorkshire Schools, against the Court of Chancery, against popular political economy—against a score of

real or supposed abuses; and he fought with such eagerness and persistency that more than half of his novels may be described as disguised pamphlets. He actually conceived the idea of writing a story to exhibit various manifestations of the vice of selfishness, and not only conceived it but carried it out in "Martin Chuzzlewit," which may therefore be read either as a novel or as a gigantic lay sermon. In any estimate of Dickens as a simple artist these facts might be used as evidence against him rather than in his favour.—NOBLE, JAMES ASHCROFT, 1886, *Morality in English Fiction*, p. 32.

Dickens is always a boy in his humour, and exaggerates his tragedy, as a man would who relies for his materials on imagination rather than experience; and, moreover, he seldom gives us any sense of intellectual resource.—DAWSON, W. J., 1886, *Quest and Vision*.

His style is easy, flowing, vigorous, picturesque, and humorous; his power of language is very great; and, when he is writing under the influence of strong passion, it rises into a pure and noble eloquence. The scenery—the external circumstances of his characters, are steeped in the same colors as the characters themselves; everything he touches seems to be filled with life and to speak—to look happy or sorrowful,—to reflect the feelings of the persons. His comic and humorous powers are very great; but his tragic power is also enormous—his power of depicting the fiercest passions that tear the human breast,—avarice, hate, fear, revenge, remorse. The great American statesman, Daniel Webster, said that Dickens had done more to better the condition of the English poor than all the statesmen Great Britain had ever sent into the English Parliament.—MEIKLEJOHN, J. M. D., 1887, *The English Language: Its Grammar, History and Literature*, p. 363.

I find it hard work to read Dickens, and, in fact, have but a very limited acquaintance with his novels, some of which I have begun, but laid aside. I dislike his literary method, which seems to proceed by repetitions of little peculiarities, and by describing traits and oddities of character rather than complete characters.—HAMERTON, PHILIP GILBERT, 1887, *Books which Have Influenced Me*, p. 59.

Cheerfulness was with him one of the

Christian graces. Probably no character in English Letters more fully illustrates the influence on style of a happy, hopeful, hearty temperament. "He was so full of life," said our own Longfellow, "that it did not seem possible he could die." This often took the form, at home and elsewhere, of a good-natured expression of gladness of heart by which all others were made glad. Often, it took the form of innocent pleasantry, and, still again, often rose in its best expressions to the highest example of humor and satire combined. He could not but see the droll side of men and things. It was as natural for him to detect the eccentricities as the more regular features of character and one glance at an object was sufficient for him to make it the occasion of genuine English mirth.—HUNT, THEODORE W., 1887, *Representative English Prose and Prose Writers*, p. 457.

The only other writer of fiction who has had any enduring influence on my ways of thinking and feeling is Dickens, who moved me very strongly in the several directions in which his best stories were designed to move the English mind. I am sure that I derived from him a healthful stimulus to various sympathies and activities. I subsequently was disposed to think that I had overestimated him; but within the last two years I have reperused all his works, and the result has been the renewal and justification of my first impressions, though with a clear recognition of certain defects in conception, in plot, and in the drawing of the best, especially his female, characters, which had struck me less forcibly as I read the stories in monthly installments.—PEABODY, ANDREW P., 1888, *Books That Have Helped Me*, p. 45.

Such was my enthusiasm for Dickens, that when he visited Fredericksburg I sacrificed my reputation as an obedient pupil by jumping from our schoolroom window in order to get a glimpse of my hero on the stage-coach; my flogging was envied by some of my school-fellows when they heard I had seen the great man. Of all his works "Oliver Twist" moved me most deeply. An inland boy's first glimpse of the sea and its sails is a Copernican discovery; his homestead or village shrinks to an atom; but even more vast seemed that sea of humanity called London, and small indeed are remote affairs compared with



the populations to which we were introduced by our magician. . . . Awakened the sentiment of humanity. From him, too, I learned how much the pen may achieve. We heard good stories of panics in Dotheboy's Halls and Bumbledom under these scathing exposures; and could well believe them, for even our old stage-road began to mend after its caricature in the "American Notes."—CONWAY, MONCURE D., 1888, *Books That Have Helped Me*, p. 92.

Dickens was of the middle class, thrown into work early, and at his best at twenty-three. His creations are imaginations as much as Puck or Ariel. In the which sense, certainly, Dickens was a poet, too. He knew nothing of Society, and cared less. Few things have been more unconsciously funny than his rather indignant rebuke of somebody who told him that he didn't know anything about lords, when he answered that Lord Chief Justice Cockburn was one of his greatest friends. Cockburn was of course "my lord" only in the legal sense, but one lord was as good to Dickens as another—in this case better. And perhaps he wasn't far wrong. Dickens's ladies and gentlemen were not the least like gentlemen and ladies—Thackeray's were the very thing. Dickens's characters are either black or white—Thackeray's are the grey mixture. Thackeray was the mighty master of that kind of humour whose brightest laughter has a touch of tears—Dickens was the master of its other side, which turns straight to the fun-god, and suffereth not its god to be eclipsed.—MERIVALE, HERMAN, 1888, *About Two Great Novelists, Temple Bar*, vol. 83, p. 202.

Although Dickens was endowed with quick perceptions and a ready sympathy with whatever he saw, his manner of working was too methodical, and his interest lay too much in England for him to be greatly affected by his surroundings when in the act of composition, or for his novels to show many traces of his life on the Continent. We all know the picture of his favourite writing-table at Gadshill, and he could do no work, either at Genoa or Lausanne, or Paris or Boulogne, unless his table were placed in the same way in front of the window, with the same orderly arrangement of paper and pens, knives and weights, and of the cheap and tasteless little ornaments, each of which had for him some

particular meaning.—SCHUYLER, EUGENE, 1888–1901, *Italian Influences*, p. 73.

Dickens . . . gives caricatures instead of actual men and women. He does not suppress truth, but he enlarges and exaggerates it. Bumble, Tigg, Pecksniff, Dombey, Mrs. Gamp, Chadband, and Mark Tapley become standards of reference, not because such persons are known to us in the flesh, for they are not, but because the pictures, though exaggerated, are not perverted; they stand truly for character though not for persons.—LEWIN WALTER, 1889, *The Abuse of Fiction, The Forum*, vol. 7, p. 668.

His faults were many and grave. He wrote some nonsense; he sinned repeatedly against taste; he could be both noisy and vulgar; he was apt to be a caricaturist where he should have been a painter; he was often mawkish and often extravagant; and he was sometimes more inept than a great writer has ever been. But his work, whether bad or good, has in full measure the quality of sincerity. He meant what he did; and he meant it with his whole heart. He looked upon himself as representative and national—as indeed he was; he regarded his work as a universal possession; and he determined to do nothing that for lack of pains should prove unworthy of his function. If he sinned it was unadvisedly and unconsciously; if he failed it was because he knew no better. . . . I love to remember that I came into the world contemporaneously with some of his bravest work, and to reflect that even as he was the inspiration of my boyhood so is he a delight of my middle age. I love to think that while English literature endures he will be remembered as one that loved his fellow-men, and did more to make them happy and amiable than any other writer of his time.—HENLEY, WILLIAM ERNEST, 1890, *Views and Reviews*, pp. 5, 7.

The might of that great talent no one can gainsay, though in the light of the truer work which has since been done his literary principles seem almost as grotesque as his theories of political economy. In no one direction was his erring force more felt than in the creation of holiday literature as we have known it for the last half-century. Creation, of course, is the wrong word; it says too much; but in default of a better word, it may stand. He did not make something out of nothing; the material was there

before him; the mood and even the need of his time contributed immensely to his success as the volition of the subject helps on the mesmerist; but it is within bounds to say that he was the chief agency in the development of holiday literature as we have known it, as he was the chief agency in universalizing the great Christian holiday as we now have it. Other agencies wrought with him and after him; but it was he who rescued Christmas from Puritan distrust, and humanized it and consecrated it to the hearts and homes of all.—HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN, 1891, *Criticism and Fiction*, p. 174.

The cheeriest of all humourists, Charles Dickens, whom the true Cockney is so fond of quoting and yet underrating, was awfully and hopelessly provincial, and was frequently reproached for the fact by the *Saturday Review*. An idealist and a dreamer he found in this great City, not Cockneydom, but Fairyland, and he was never tired of wondering at its piteous oddity and delightful quiddity.—BUCHANAN, ROBERT, 1891, *The Coming Terror*, p. 234.

His genius acted on the surface of English life as spilt water acts on the surface of unpolished marble. It suddenly made visible all its colors and veinings; and in this way he may be said to have revealed England to itself; and he still does so. It is true that this general statement must be made with one reservation. One part of English life was entirely beyond his grasp. He knew nothing of the highest class. He had no true knowledge even of the upper ranks of the middle class. His lords, his baronets, his majors, his ladies and gentlemen generally are not even like enough to reality to be called caricatures. But if we accept these classes and speak only of the bulk of the nation, no writer ever knew the English nation and represented the English nation so thoroughly and comprehensively as Dickens.—MALLOCK, WILLIAM HURREL, 1892, *Are Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray Obsolete? The Forum*, vol. 14, p. 510.

Why, if the public ceased to care for the books, they went on buying them, is a paradox which the critic did not explain. That the "increasing numbers" are a remarkable fact, even to this day, was proved beyond the possibility of doubt by the publication in a subsequent number of the

*Standard* of a letter from Mr. Frederick Chapman, which stated that the sale of Dickens's books by Messrs. Chapman and Hall during 1891 was four times greater than it had been in 1869, when the author was still living, and that in two and twenty years over five hundred and twenty thousand copies of "Pickwick" alone were sold. And these figures can only be properly appreciated when we remember that many of the books are out of copyright, and are being extensively sold by other publishers. If these books are not bought to be read what are they bought for? And if they are what becomes of the "waning popularity" of Dickens?—DICKENS, CHARLES, JR., 1892, *Pickwickian Topography, English Illustrated Magazine*, vol. 10, p. 186.

To tell the wealth of his imagination is beyond words, while no one has excelled him as a true painter of manners. . . . As a poet, little has been said of him, yet he wrote and published enough poems to fill a volume. The most important is "The Hymn of the Wiltshire Laborers." That song against oppression has found a loyal response in thousands of hearts. The "Ivy Green" and "A Word in Season" are also well known.—WARREN, INA RUSSELLE, 1893, *Charles Dickens, Magazine of Poetry*, vol. 5, p. 255.

A critical autocrat recently informed me that "Charles Dickens was going out of fashion;" whereupon I inquired as one profoundly impressed and gasping for more information, "whether he thought that Shakespeare would be *à la mode* this season, and what he considered the newest and sweetest thing in the *beau monde* of intellect?" "Pickwick," "Nicholas Nickleby," "Oliver Twist," "The Old Curiosity Shop," "David Copperfield," "A Tale of Two Cities," "A Christmas Carol," out of fashion! Not while the English language remains as now, and they who speak it have brains to appreciate humour, and hearts to sympathize with woe.—HOLE, SAMUEL REYNOLDS, 1893, *Memories*, p. 84.

Dickens has more than once been criticised for lack of powers of construction and arrangement. Such criticisms apply often to his large plans; but they are not just to his powers of analysis within the chapter. The unity of his narrative and descriptive paragraphs is organic and highly picturesque. There are slips at times, but again,

there are whole chapters of the most subtle paragraph-unity—of a kind that none but the great novelists can secure, a kind that no essayist dreams of. His coherence is the coherence of oral style. There are very few connectives; their place is taken by explanatory clauses and sentences. Occasionally we feel that the style is diffuse, but obscure never—some bad grammar notwithstanding. Next to his coherence the best paragraphic quality of Dickens is his emphasis. This arises largely from his skilful ordering of words and a keen eye for the point where he should stop his sentence. He rambles when ramb-ling is in order; but no man can make a shorter cut. The extent to which he uses the short sentence is not excessive for a novelist: in the "Old Curiosity Shop," with all the conversation included, the percentage of sentences of less than 15 words is 40 per cent. The melody of Dickens's prose is equable and flowing, with a tendency to metre now and then. He has no right feeling for the paragraph as a rhythmic whole.—LEWIS, EDWIN HERBERT, 1894, *The History of the English Paragraph*, p. 156.

Dickens was a humorist and nothing else; but Dickens took himself so seriously that he broke with *Punch* because that journal refused to publish his account of his quarrel with the wife he had promised to love, cherish, and protect. Probably, also, if the sense-of-humor had been more acutely developed in Dickens he would have spared us the blank-verse pathos of his dying children; he might even have refrained from out-heroding Herod in his massacre of the innocents.—MATTHEWS, BRANDER, 1894–1902, *Aspects of Fiction*, p. 47.

With the exception of William Cobbett, I doubt whether there has ever been, among modern English writers, a more thoroughly typical example of the plain, downright Englishman than Charles Dickens. One of the best characteristics of his simple, manly, ringing English prose is the entire absence of Gallicisms therefrom.—SALA, GEORGE AUGUSTUS, 1894, *Things I have Seen and People I have Known*, vol. 1, p. 103.

I think he never again wrote so felicitously as in "David Copperfield." No doubt he did many fine things afterwards in the way of genre painting. We may regard him as a literary Teniers. But as years went on

his manner seems to me to grow more unnatural, more stilted, more intolerable. The higher art which he tried to grasp, ever eluded him. There is an absence of composition in his work; there is no play of light and shade; there is no proportion, no perspective. His books cannot be said to be composed, they are improvised. . . . The ethical sentiment breathes throughout the pages of Dickens, and it may well cover a multitude of sins of taste. Whatever the judgment of posterity may be upon him, we may to-day take leave of him with that judgment of Carlyle, "Every inch of him an honest man."—LILLY, WILLIAM SAMUEL, 1895, *Four English Humourists of the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 15, 33.

True to his general character of independence, Dickens owes hardly anything to any predecessor except Smollett, to whom his debts are rather large, and perhaps to Theodore Hook, to whom, although the fact has not been generally recognised, they exist.—SAINTSBURY, GEORGE, 1896, *A History of Nineteenth Century Literature*, p. 146.

The people who censure Dickens are those for whom he has served a purpose and is of no further use. They are a mere drop in the ocean of readers. It is not easy to-day to gauge his precise position. The exhaustion of many of his copyrights has given up his work to a host of rival publishers. There are probably thousands of men and women now, as there were in the fifties and sixties, who have been stimulated by him, and who have found in his writings the aid to a cheery optimism which has made life more tolerable amid adverse conditions.—SHORTER, CLEMENT, 1897, *Victorian Literature, Sixty Years of Books and Bookmen*, p. 43.

A man of wonderful talents, but of no deep seriousness; a matchless mimic through and through, and nothing else.—BURROUGHS, JOHN, 1897, *On the Re-reading of Books, Century Magazine*, vol. 55, p. 149.

The reading of the novels of Dickens suggests to my mind a walk through the Midway Plaisance of the Chicago Exposition. That was a little world filled with people, scenes, and things of all sorts and varieties and degrees of usefulness, beauty, rarity, and oddity. The people were all alive, real action was going on on every side, the roar of the lions in the animal house was as true

to life as were the monotonous chants of the Javanese. Each separate building possessed its personages, its atmosphere, its peculiar characteristics, and its purpose, just as if it had been a novel distinct in itself, and yet owing its existence to the same originating brain.—STOCKTON, FRANK R., 1897, *My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book*, *Munsey's Magazine*, vol. 17, p. 354.

It is the language of a compliment and not of detraction to call him the Cockney's Shakespeare. In Shakespeare he was steeped. His favorite novelist was Smollett. But his art was all his own. He was the Hogarth of literature, painting with a broad brush, never ashamed of caricature, but always an artist, and not a dauber. There is little or no resemblance between Falstaff and Sam Weller. But they are the two comic figures which have most thoroughly seized upon the English mind. Touchstone and Mr. Micawber may be each a finer specimen of his creator's powers. They are not, however, quite so much to the taste of all readers. They require a little more fineness of palate.—PAUL, HERBERT, 1897, *The Apotheosis of the Novel*, *The Nineteenth Century*, vol. 41, p. 770.

Now, with the solitary exception of Sir Walter Scott, it is probable that no man ever inspired such a host of imitators as Charles Dickens. There is not a writer of fiction at this hour, in any land where fiction is a recognised trade or art, who is not, whether he knows it and owns it, or no, largely influenced by Dickens. . . . Dickens has a living part in the life of the whole wide world. He is on a hundred thousand magisterial benches every day. There is not a hospital patient in any country who has not at this minute a right to thank God that Dickens lived. What his blessed and bountiful hand has done for the poor and oppressed, and them that had no helper, no man knows. He made charity and good feeling a religion. Millions and millions of money have flowed from the coffers of the rich for the benefit of the poor because of his books. A great part of our daily life, and a good deal of the best of it, is of his making. No single man ever made such opportunities for himself. No single man was ever so widely and permanently useful. No single man ever sowed gentleness and mercy with so broad a sweep. . . . The new man says of Dickens that his sentiment rings false.

This is a mistake. It rings old-fashioned. No false note ever moved a world, and the world combined to love his very name. There were tears in thousands of households when he died, and they were as sincere and as real as if they had arisen at the loss of a personal friend.—MURRAY, DAVID CHRISTIE, 1897, *My Contemporaries in Fiction*, pp. 9, 10, 13.

It is immensely to the credit of the heart of the novelist, and will be a permanent addition to his fame, not only that he devoted fiction to the high end of exposing manifold social abuses, but even that, by the force of his genius, he contributed a material element to their correction. If cheap private schools are no longer what once they sometimes were, it is due in part to "Nicholas Nickleby." "Oliver Twist" helped to bring about the improvement of workhouses, and "Little Dorrit" of debtors' jails, and "Bleak House" of the Court of Chancery, and "David Copperfield" of Doctors' Commons. Fiction could have had no loftier aim than such an amelioration of social conditions.—FARRAR, FREDERICK W., 1897, *Men I have Known*, p. 265.

The characters of Dickens, then, are personified humours, his method is the method not of Shakespeare, but of Ben Jonson. Pecksniff is just another name for hypocrisy, Jonas Chuzzlewit for avarice, Quilp for cruelty. The result is excellent of its kind. The repetitions and catch-words are, within limits, highly effective. Sometimes they are genuinely illuminative; but sometimes, on the other hand, they reveal nothing and are used to weariness.—WALKER, HUGH, 1897, *The Age of Tennyson*, p. 87.

The greatest novelist since Scott, the earliest, and in some ways still the most typical of Victorian writers, was Charles Dickens.—GOSSE, EDMUND, 1897, *A Short History of Modern English Literature*, p. 341.

Realist as Dickens supposed himself to be, and in his descriptive method actually was, he is, dramatically speaking, an idealist pure and simple. He drew not individuals, but types; he dealt, not with concrete realities, but with abstract qualities; and strange as it may seem, the character of this prose humorist must be viewed as we view the purely ideal creations of the poet, if we would do justice either to him or to them. For it is only by studying these characters that we can fairly measure that

inexhaustible wealth of comic imagination, that unflagging zest and dexterity of humorous portrayal, which carries captive the reader's judgment, and compels him for the time to share their creator's belief in their existence.—TRAILL, HENRY DUFF, 1897, *Social England*, vol. VI, p. 163.

Dickens was an artist; this gave his work vogue. Dickens lacked some of the artistic powers; this renders his future uncertain. Whether the balance between his powers and his weaknesses is such as to relegate him to obscurity after the generation who remembered him as the delight of their youthful days has passed away, no one would dare to decide. But if he does take his place among the temporary authors who have no message for future generations, we may be sure that his lack of a broad, sane view of human society is one of the reasons why he enters the great company of the unread.—JOHNSON, CHARLES, 1898, *Elements of Literary Criticism*, p. 136.

He knew the heart of man to the very core, and could draw a picture of human suffering with a more loving hand than any other English writer. He also possessed now and then the grand style, and even in his pictures of still life the hand of the master can always be perceived.—MÜLLER, F. MAX., 1898, *Auld Lang Syne*, p. 126.

Some of the critics would have us believe that Dickens has had his day, but here the booksellers have a word. So long as Dickens is a delightful companion at our firesides, in whose presence children leave their play and listen, he need not fear the critic, for love will keep its own.—GEORGE, ANDREW J., 1898, *From Chaucer to Arnold*, *Types of Literary Art*, p. 658.

Dickens was not a church member, or what is called an Orthodox Christian; but he preached many a good sermon for all that; and his text was the Golden Rule, in all its various readings. In many wholesome, reverent ways does the Bible figure throughout his pages. One of the earliest recollections of David Copperfield was the story of the raising of Lazarus, as it was read to him and Peggotty by his mother one Sunday evening. Little Nell used to take her Bible with her to read in the quiet, lovely retreat of the old church.—HUTTON, LAURENCE, 1898, *Charles Dickens*, *The Outlook*, vol. 60, p. 322.

With him I was not disappointed, for be-

sides his humour, I found in him a style of phrase and epithet which gave me much satisfaction. When, for example, he describes an old-clothes shop as "one of those convenient emporiums where gentlemen's new and second-hand clothes are provided, and the troublesome and inconvenient formality of measurement dispensed with," or in speaking of Zephyr in the debtor's prison remarks that "Mr. Pickwick struck the Zephyr so smart a blow on the chest as to deprive him of a considerable portion of the commodity which sometimes bears his name," or in depicting the dispute at Bob Sawyer's party says that "one individual expressed his decided unwillingness to accept any 'sauce' on gratuitous terms either from the irascible young gentleman with the scorbutic countenance or any other person who was ornamented with a head," I was charmed, and thought it wonderfully clever, and the power of language it exhibited quite unique!—CROZIER, JOHN BEATTIE, 1898, *My Inner Life*, p. 216.

We have to go back to Shakspeare to find a writer who, through fiction, has so enriched the thought of the people. Admit all Dickens' faults twice over, we still have one of the greatest writers of modern times. Such people as these creations of Dickens never lived, says your little critic. Nor was Prometheus, type of the spirit of man, nor was Niobe, mother of all mothers, a truthful picture of the citizen one could meet a thousand times during an hour's march through Athens. Nor grew there ever a wood like to the Forest of Arden, though every *Rosalind* and *Orlando* knows the path to glades having much resemblance to it.—JEROME, JEROME K., 1898, *My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book*, *Munsey's Magazine*, vol. 19, p. 32.

Into Dickens' Land, therefore, my masters, as you will and when you will! The high-roads thither are always open, the lanes and by-paths are free for us to tread. He that found out this rare world has made it fully ours. Let us visit our inheritance, or revisit it, if that be the better word. Let us make real the scenes we have read of and dreamt of—peopling them with the folk of Dickens, so that familiar faces shall look upon us from familiar windows, familiar voices greet us as we pass.—BRENAN, GERALD, 1899, *Rambles in Dickens' Land* by Robert Allbut, *Introduction*, p. xxi.

The following pages are sufficient to establish the claim of Mr. Hughes for Dickens as an educational reformer—the greatest that England has produced. It will be admitted that he has done more than any one else to secure for the child a considerate treatment of his tender age. “It is a crime against a child to rob it of its childhood.” This principle was announced by Dickens, and it has come to be generally recognised and adopted. Gradually it is changing the methods of primary instruction and bringing into vogue a milder form of discipline and a more stimulative teaching—arousing the child’s self-activity instead of repressing it. . . . He stands apart and alone as one of the most potent influences of social reform in the nineteenth century, and therefore deserves to be read and studied by all who have to do with schools and by all parents everywhere in our day and generation.—HARRIS, WILLIAM T., 1900, *Dickens as an Educator by Hughes, Editor’s Preface*, pp. v, vii.

Dickens was England’s greatest educational reformer. . . . Was Dickens consciously and intentionally an educator? The prefaces to his novels; the preface to his *Household Words*; the educational articles he wrote; the prominence given in his books to child training in homes, institutions, and schools; the statements of the highest educational philosophy found in his writings; and especially the clearness of his insight and the profoundness of his educational thought, as shown by his condemnation of the wrong and his appreciation of the right in teaching and training the child, prove beyond question that he was not only broad and true in his sympathy with childhood, but that he was a careful and progressive student of the fundamental principles of education.—HUGHES, JAMES L., 1900, *Dickens as an Educator*, p. 1.

The first and the most widely popular of Victorian novelists was Dickens, whose work began less than five years after Scott’s ended. The contrast between them is among the most instructive in literary history. Scott’s ideal was always that of a gentleman; Dickens’s, with equal instinctive honesty of feeling, was that of the small trading classes. Whatever merits Dickens had, and these were great and lasting, he fatally lacked one grace which up to his time the literature of his country had gen-

erally preserved,—that of distinction.—WENDELL, BARRETT, 1900, *A Literary History of America*, p. 147.

Probably no writer ever appealed so strongly or so universally to the feelings of his readers. His material was almost exclusively drawn from middle-class life, but his words came home the nearer to the heart like a true touch of human nature. It was this that made him a favourite above all recent novelists.—ENGLE, EDWARD, 1902, *A History of English Literature, rev. Hamley Bent*, p. 449.

Is there any other maker of story in modern English literature—after all allowances have been made, and not forgetting that some criticism of the man of Gadshill will have it that he is for a more careless age—who has begun to furnish such a portrait-gallery of worthies and adorable grotesques—a motley crowd whom we all know and enjoy and love? I wot not. The fact that Dickens is at times a trifle inchoate or careless in his English, or allows his exuberance to lead him into exaggeration, or fails to blend perfectly the discordant elements of comedy and tragedy, sinks into insignificance when set over against such a faculty as this. He was a veritable giant here.—BURTON, RICHARD, 1902, *Forces in Fiction and Other Essays*, p. 7.

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. . . . 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. . . . These Christmas numbers are . . . gems as costly as any of the larger in his crown of fame.—SWINBURNE, A. C., 1902, *Charles Dickens, Quarterly Review*, vol. 196, pp. 20, 38.