

DICKENS CHARLES

THE LETTERS OF
CHARLES DICKENS. VOL.
1, 1833-1856

Чарльз Диккенс

**The Letters of Charles
Dickens. Vol. 1, 1833-1856**

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Charles Dickens
The Letters of Charles
Dickens / Vol. 1, 1833-1856

TO

KATE PERUGINI,

THIS MEMORIAL OF HER FATHER

IS LOVINGLY INSCRIBED

BY HER AUNT AND SISTER

PREFACE

We intend this Collection of Letters to be a Supplement to the "Life of Charles Dickens," by John Forster. That work, perfect and exhaustive as a biography, is only incomplete as regards correspondence; the scheme of the book having made it impossible to include in its space any letters, or hardly any, besides those addressed to Mr. Forster. As no man ever expressed *himself* more in his letters than Charles Dickens, we believe that in publishing this careful selection from his general correspondence we shall be supplying a want which has been universally felt.

Our request for the loan of letters was so promptly and fully responded to, that we have been provided with more than sufficient material for our work. By arranging the letters in chronological order, we find that they very frequently explain themselves and form a narrative of the events of each year. Our collection dates from 1833, the commencement of Charles Dickens's literary life, just before the starting of the "Pickwick Papers," and is carried on up to the day before his death, in 1870.

We find some difficulty in being quite accurate in the arrangements of letters up to the end of 1839, for he had a careless habit in those days about dating his letters, very frequently putting only the day of the week on which he wrote, curiously in contrast with the habit of his later life, when his dates were always of the very fullest.

A blank is made in Charles Dickens's correspondence with his family by the absence of any letter addressed to his daughter Kate (Mrs. Perugini), to her great regret and to ours. In 1873, her furniture and other possessions were stored in the warehouse of the Pantechnicon at the time of the great fire there. All her property was destroyed, and, among other things, a box of papers which included her letters from her father.

It was our intention as well as our desire to have thanked, individually, every one – both living friends and representatives of dead ones – for their readiness to give us every possible help to make our work complete. But the number of such friends, besides correspondents hitherto unknown, who have volunteered contributions of letters, make it impossible in our space to do otherwise than to express, collectively, our earnest and heartfelt thanks.

A separate word of gratitude, however, must be given by us to Mr. Wilkie Collins for the invaluable help which we have received from his great knowledge and experience, in the technical part of our work, and for the deep interest which he has shown from the beginning, in our undertaking.

It is a great pleasure to us to have the name of Henry Fielding Dickens associated with this book. To him, for the very important assistance he has given in making our Index, we return our loving thanks.

In writing our explanatory notes we have, we hope, left nothing out which in any way requires explanation from us. But we have purposely made them as short as possible; our great desire being to give to the public another book from Charles Dickens's own hands – as it were, a portrait of himself by himself.

Those letters which need no explanation – and of those we have many – we give without a word from us.

In publishing the more private letters, we do so with the view of showing him in his homely, domestic life – of showing how 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."

Mamie Dickens.

Georgina Hogarth.

London: *October*, 1879.

ERRATA

VOL. I

Page 111, line 6. For "because if I hear of you," *read* "because I hear of you."

" 114, line 24. For "any old end," *read* "or any old end."

" 137. First paragraph, second sentence, *should read*, "All the ancient part of Rome is wonderful and impressive in the extreme, far beyond the possibility of exaggeration. As to the," etc.

" 456, line 11. For "Mr." *read* "Mrs."

Book I

1833 to 1842

THE

LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

1833 or 1834, and 1835, 1836

NARRATIVE

We have been able to procure so few early letters of any general interest that we put these first years together. Charles Dickens was then living, as a bachelor, in Furnival's Inn, and was engaged as a parliamentary reporter on *The Morning Chronicle*. The "Sketches by Boz" were written during these years, published first in "The Monthly Magazine" and continued in *The Evening Chronicle*. He was engaged to be married to Catherine Hogarth in 1835 – the marriage took place on the 2nd April, 1836; and he continued to live in Furnival's Inn with his wife for more than a year after their marriage. They passed the summer months of that year in a lodging at Chalk, near Gravesend, in the neighbourhood associated with all his life, from his childhood to his death. The two letters which we publish, addressed to his wife as Miss Hogarth, have no date, but were written in 1835. The first of the two refers to the offer made to him by Chapman and Hall to edit a monthly periodical, the emolument (which he calls "too tempting to resist!") to be fourteen pounds a month. The bargain was concluded, and this was the starting of "The Pickwick Papers." The first number was published in March, 1836. The second letter to Miss Hogarth was written after he had completed three numbers of "Pickwick," and the character who is to "make a decided hit" is "Jingle."

The first letter of this book is addressed to Henry Austin, a friend from his boyhood, who afterwards married his second sister Letitia. It bears no date, but must have been written in 1833 or 1834, during the early days of his reporting for *The Morning Chronicle*; the journey on which he was "ordered" being for that paper.

Mr. Henry Austin

Furnivall's Inn, Wednesday Night, past 12.

Dear Henry,

I have just been ordered on a journey, the length of which is at present uncertain. I may be back on Sunday very probably, and start again on the following day. Should this be the case, you shall hear from me before.

Don't laugh. I am going (alone) in a gig; and, to quote the eloquent inducement which the proprietors of Hampstead *chays* hold out to Sunday riders – "the gen'l'm'n drives himself." I am going into Essex and Suffolk. It strikes me I shall be spilt before I pay a turnpike. I have a presentiment I shall run over an only child before I reach Chelmsford, my first stage.

Let the evident haste of this specimen of "The Polite Letter Writer" be its excuse, and Believe me, dear Henry, most sincerely yours,



Note. – To avoid the monotony of a constant repetition, we propose to dispense with the signature at the close of each letter, excepting to the first and last letters of our collection. Charles Dickens's handwriting altered so much during these years of his life, that we have thought it advisable to give a facsimile of his autograph to this our first letter; and we reproduce in the same way his latest autograph.

Miss Hogarth

Furnival's Inn, Wednesday Evening, 1835.

My dearest Kate,

The House is up; but I am very sorry to say that I must stay at home. I have had a visit from the publishers this morning, and the story cannot be any longer delayed; it must be done to-morrow, as there are more important considerations than the mere payment for the story involved too. I must exercise a little self-denial, and set to work.

They (Chapman and Hall) have made me an offer of fourteen pounds a month, to write and edit a new publication they contemplate, entirely by myself, to be published monthly, and each number to contain four woodcuts. I am to make my estimate and calculation, and to give them a decisive answer on Friday morning. The work will be no joke, but the emolument is too tempting to resist.

* * * * *

The same

Sunday Evening.

* * * * *

I have at this moment got Pickwick and his friends on the Rochester coach, and they are going on swimmingly, in company with a very different character from any I have yet described, who I flatter myself will make a decided hit. I want to get them from the ball to the inn before I go to bed; and I think that will take me until one or two o'clock at the earliest. The publishers will be here in the morning, so you will readily suppose I have no alternative but to stick at my desk.

* * * * *

1837

NARRATIVE

From the commencement of "The Pickwick Papers," and of Charles Dickens's married life, dates the commencement of his literary life and his sudden world-wide fame. And this year saw the beginning of many of those friendships which he most valued, and of which he had most reason to be proud, and which friendships were ended only by death.

The first letters which we have been able to procure to Mr. Macready and Mr. Harley will be found under this date. In January, 1837, he was living in Furnival's Inn, where his first child, a son, was born. It was an eventful year to him in many ways. He removed from Furnival's Inn to Doughty Street in March, and here he sustained the first great grief of his life. His young sister-in-law, Mary Hogarth, to whom he was devotedly attached, died very suddenly, at his house, on the 7th May. In the autumn of this year he took lodgings at Broadstairs. This was his first visit to that pleasant little watering-place, of which he became very fond, and whither he removed for the autumn months with all his household, for many years in succession.

Besides the monthly numbers of "Pickwick," which were going on through this year until November, when the last number appeared, he had commenced "Oliver Twist," which was appearing also monthly, in the magazine called "Bentley's Miscellany," long before "Pickwick" was completed. And during this year he had edited, for Mr. Bentley, "The Life of Grimaldi," the celebrated clown. To this book he wrote himself only the preface, and altered and rearranged the autobiographical MS. which was in Mr. Bentley's possession.

The letter to Mr. Harley, which bears no date, but must have been written either in 1836 or 1837, refers to a farce called "The Strange Gentleman" (founded on one of the "Sketches," called the "Great Winglebury Duel"), which he wrote expressly for Mr. Harley, and which was produced at the St. James's Theatre, under the management of Mr. Braham. The only other piece which he wrote for that theatre was the story of an operetta, called "The Village Coquettes," the music of which was composed by Mr. John Hullah.

Mr. J. P. Harley

48, Doughty Street, Saturday Morning.

My Dear Sir,

I have considered the terms on which I could afford just now to sell Mr. Braham the acting copyright in London of an entirely new piece for the St. James's Theatre; and I could not sit down to write one in a single act of about one hour long, under a hundred pounds. For a new piece in two acts, a hundred and fifty pounds would be the sum I should require.

I do not know whether, with reference to arrangements that were made with any other writers, this may or may not appear a large item. I state it merely with regard to the value of my own time and writings at this moment; and in so doing I assure you I place the remuneration below the mark rather than above it.

As you begged me to give you my reply upon this point, perhaps you will lay it before Mr. Braham. If these terms exceed his inclination or the ability of the theatre, there is an end of the matter, and no harm done.

Believe me ever faithfully yours.

Mr. W. C. Macready

48, Doughty Street, Wednesday Evening.

My Dear Sir,

There is a semi-business, semi-pleasure little dinner which I intend to give at The Prince of Wales, in Leicester Place, Leicester Square, on Saturday, at five for half-past precisely, at which only Talfourd, Forster, Ainsworth, Jerdan, and the publishers will be present. It is to celebrate (that is too great a word, but I can think of no better) the conclusion of my "Pickwick" labours; and so I intend, before you take that roll upon the grass you spoke of, to beg your acceptance of one of the first complete copies of the work. I shall be much delighted if you would join us.

I know too well the many anxieties that press upon you just now to seek to persuade you to come if you would prefer a night's repose and quiet. Let me assure you, notwithstanding, most honestly and heartily that there is no one I should be more happy or gratified to see, and that among your brilliant circle of well-wishers and admirers you number none more unaffectedly and faithfully yours than,

My dear Sir, yours most truly.

1838

NARRATIVE

In February of this year Charles Dickens made an expedition with his friend, and the illustrator of most of his books, Mr. Hablot K. Browne ("Phiz"), to investigate for himself the real facts as to the condition of the Yorkshire schools, and it may be observed that portions of a letter to his wife, dated Greta Bridge, Yorkshire, which will be found among the following letters, were reproduced in "Nicholas Nickleby." In the early summer he had a cottage at Twickenham Park. In August and September he was again at Broadstairs; and in the late autumn he made another bachelor excursion – Mr. Browne being again his companion – in England, which included his first visit to Stratford-on-Avon and Kenilworth. In February appeared the first number of "Nicholas Nickleby," on which work he was engaged all through the year, writing each number ready for the following month, and never being in advance, as was his habit with all his other periodical works, until his very latest ones.

The first letter which appears under this date, from Twickenham Park, is addressed to Mr. Thomas Mitton, a schoolfellow at one of his earliest schools, and afterwards for some years his solicitor. The letter contains instructions for his first will; the friend of almost his whole life, Mr. John Forster, being appointed executor to this will as he was to the last, to which he was "called upon to act" only three years before his own death.

The letter which we give in this year to Mr. Justice Talfourd is, unfortunately, the only one we have been able to procure to that friend, who was, however, one with whom he was most intimately associated, and with whom he maintained a constant correspondence.

The letter beginning "Respected Sir" was an answer to a little boy (Master Hastings Hughes), who had written to him as "Nicholas Nickleby" approached completion, stating his views and wishes as to the rewards and punishments to be bestowed on the various characters in the book. The letter was sent to him through the Rev. Thomas Barham, author of "The Ingoldsby Legends."

The two letters to Mr. Macready, at the end of this year, refer to a farce which Charles Dickens wrote, with an idea that it might be suitable for Covent Garden Theatre, then under Mr. Macready's management.

Mrs. Charles Dickens

Greta Bridge, Thursday, Feb. 1st, 1838.

My dearest Kate,

I am afraid you will receive this later than I could wish, as the mail does not come through this place until two o'clock to-morrow morning. However, I have availed myself of the very first opportunity of writing, so the fault is that mail's, and not this.

We reached Grantham between nine and ten on Thursday night, and found everything prepared for our reception in the very best inn I have ever put up at. It is odd enough that an old lady, who had been outside all day and came in towards dinner time, turned out to be the mistress of a Yorkshire school returning from the holiday stay in London. She was a very queer old lady, and showed us a long letter she was carrying to one of the boys from his father, containing a severe lecture (enforced and aided by many texts of Scripture) on his refusing to eat boiled meat. She was very communicative, drank a great deal of brandy and water, and towards evening became insensible, in which state we left her.

Yesterday we were up again shortly after seven a. m., came on upon our journey by the Glasgow mail, which charged us the remarkably low sum of six pounds fare for two places inside. We had a very droll male companion until seven o'clock in the evening, and a most delicious lady's-maid for twenty miles, who implored us to keep a sharp look-out at the coach-windows, as she expected the carriage was coming to meet her and she was afraid of missing it. We had many delightful vauntings of the same kind; but in the end it is scarcely necessary to say that the coach did not come, but a very dirty girl did.

As we came further north the mire grew deeper. About eight o'clock it began to fall heavily, and, as we crossed the wild heaths hereabout, there was no vestige of a track. The mail kept on well, however, and at eleven we reached a bare place with a house standing alone in the midst of a dreary moor, which the guard informed us was Greta Bridge. I was in a perfect agony of apprehension, for it was fearfully cold, and there were no outward signs of anybody being up in the house. But to our great joy we discovered a comfortable room, with drawn curtains and a most blazing fire. In half an hour they gave us a smoking supper and a bottle of mulled port (in which we drank your health), and then we retired to a couple of capital bedrooms, in each of which there was a rousing fire halfway up the chimney.

We have had for breakfast, toast, cakes, a Yorkshire pie, a piece of beef about the size and much the shape of my portmanteau, tea, coffee, ham, and eggs; and are now going to look about us. Having finished our discoveries, we start in a postchaise for Barnard Castle, which is only four miles off, and there I deliver the letter given me by Mitton's friend. All the schools are round about that place, and a dozen old abbeys besides, which we shall visit by some means or other to-morrow. We shall reach York on Saturday I hope, and (God willing) I trust I shall be at home on Wednesday morning.

I wish you would call on Mrs. Bentley and thank her for the letter; you can tell her when I expect to be in York.

A thousand loves and kisses to the darling boy, whom I see in my mind's eye crawling about the floor of this Yorkshire inn. Bless his heart, I would give two sovereigns for a kiss. Remember me too to Frederick, who I hope is attentive to you.

Is it not extraordinary that the same dreams which have constantly visited me since poor Mary died follow me everywhere? After all the change of scene and fatigue, I have dreamt of her ever since I left home, and no doubt shall till I return. I should be sorry to lose such visions, for they are very happy ones, if it be only the seeing her in one's sleep. I would fain believe, too, sometimes, that her spirit may have some influence over them, but their perpetual repetition is extraordinary.

Love to all friends.

*Ever, my dear Kate,
Your affectionate Husband.*

Mr. Thomas Mitton

Twickenham Park, Tuesday Night.

Dear Tom,

I sat down this morning and put on paper my testamentary meaning. Whether it is sufficiently legal or not is another question, but I hope it is. The rough draft of the clauses which I enclose will be preceded by as much of the fair copy as I send you, and followed by the usual clause about the receipts of the trustees being a sufficient discharge. I also wish to provide that if all our children should die before twenty-one, and Kate married again, half the surplus should go to her and half to my surviving brothers and sisters, share and share alike.

This will be all, except a few lines I wish to add which there will be no occasion to consult you about, as they will merely bear reference to a few tokens of remembrance and one or two slight funeral directions. And so pray God that you may be gray, and Forster bald, long before you are called upon to act as my executors.

I suppose I shall see you at the water-party on Thursday? We will then make an appointment for Saturday morning, and if you think my clauses will do, I will complete my copy, seal it up, and leave it in your hands. There are some other papers which you ought to have. We must get a box.

Ever yours.

Mr. Serjeant Talfourd, M.P

Twickenham Park, Sunday, July 15th, 1838.

My dear Talfourd,

I cannot tell you how much pleasure I have derived from the receipt of your letter. I have heard little of you, and seen less, for so long a time, that your handwriting came like the renewal of some old friendship, and gladdened my eyes like the face of some old friend.

If I hear from Lady Holland before you return, I shall, as in duty bound, present myself at her bidding; but between you and me and the general post, I hope she may not renew her invitation until I can visit her with you, as I would much rather avail myself of your personal introduction. However, whatever her ladyship may do I shall respond to, and anyway shall be only too happy to avail myself of what I am sure cannot fail to form a very pleasant and delightful introduction.

Your kind invitation and reminder of the subject of a pleasant conversation in one of our pleasant rides, has thrown a gloom over the brightness of Twickenham, for here I am chained. It is indispensably necessary that "Oliver Twist" should be published in three volumes, in September next. I have only just begun the last one, and, having the constant drawback of my monthly work, shall be sadly harassed to get it finished in time, especially as I have several very important scenes (important to the story I mean) yet to write. Nothing would give me so much pleasure as to be with you for a week or so. I can only imperfectly console myself with the hope that when you see "Oliver" you will like the close of the book, and approve my self-denial in staying here to write it. I should like to know your address in Scotland when you leave town, so that I may send you the earliest copy if it be produced in the vacation, which I pray Heaven it may.

Meanwhile, believe that though my body is on the banks of the Thames, half my heart is going the Oxford circuit.

Mrs. Dickens and Charley desire their best remembrances (the latter expresses some anxiety, not unmixed with apprehension, relative to the Copyright Bill, in which he conceives himself interested), with hearty wishes that you may have a fine autumn, which is all you want, being sure of all other means of enjoyment that a man can have.

*I am, my dear Talfourd,
Ever faithfully yours.*

P.S. – I hope you are able to spare a moment now and then to glance at "Nicholas Nickleby," and that you have as yet found no reason to alter the opinion you formed on the appearance of the first number.

You know, I suppose, that they elected me at the Athenæum? Pray thank Mr. Serjeant Storks for me.

Mrs. Charles Dickens

Lion Hotel, Shrewsbury, Thursday, Nov. 1st, 1838.

My dearest Love,

I received your welcome letter on arriving here last night, and am rejoiced to hear that the dear children are so much better. I hope that in your next, or your next but one, I shall learn that they are quite well. A thousand kisses to them. I wish I could convey them myself.

We found a roaring fire, an elegant dinner, a snug room, and capital beds all ready for us at Leamington, after a very agreeable (but very cold) ride. We started in a postchaise next morning for Kenilworth, with which we were both enraptured, and where I really think we MUST have lodgings next summer, please God that we are in good health and all goes well. You cannot conceive how delightful it is. To read among the ruins in fine weather would be perfect luxury. From here we went on to Warwick Castle, which is an ancient building, newly restored, and possessing no very great attraction beyond a fine view and some beautiful pictures; and thence to Stratford-upon-Avon, where we sat down in the room where Shakespeare was born, and left our autographs and read those of other people and so forth.

We remained at Stratford all night, and found to our unspeakable dismay that father's plan of proceeding by Bridgenorth was impracticable, as there were no coaches. So we were compelled to come here by way of Birmingham and Wolverhampton, starting at eight o'clock through a cold wet fog, and travelling, when the day had cleared up, through miles of cinder-paths and blazing furnaces, and roaring steam-engines, and such a mass of dirt, gloom, and misery as I never before witnessed. We got pretty well accommodated here when we arrived at half-past four, and are now going off in a postchaise to Llangollen – thirty miles – where we shall remain to-night, and where the Bangor mail will take us up to-morrow. Such are our movements up to this point, and when I have received your letter at Chester I shall write to you again and tell you when I shall be back. I can say positively that I shall not exceed the fortnight, and I think it very possible that I may return a day or two before it expires.

We were at the play last night. It was a bespeak – "The Love Chase," a ballet (with a phenomenon!), divers songs, and "A Roland for an Oliver." It is a good theatre, but the actors are very funny. Browne laughed with such indecent heartiness at one point of the entertainment, that an old gentleman in the next box suffered the most violent indignation. The bespeak party occupied two boxes, the ladies were full-dressed, and the gentlemen, to a man, in white gloves with flowers in their button-holes. It amused us mightily, and was really as like the Miss Snevellicci business as it could well be.

My side has been very bad since I left home, although I have been very careful not to drink much, remaining to the full as abstemious as usual, and have not eaten any great quantity, having no appetite. I suffered such an ecstasy of pain all night at Stratford that I was half dead yesterday, and was obliged last night to take a dose of henbane. The effect was most delicious. I slept soundly, and without feeling the least uneasiness, and am a great deal better this morning; neither do I find that the henbane has affected my head, which, from the great effect it had upon me – exhilarating me to the most extraordinary degree, and yet keeping me sleepy – I feared it would. If I had not got better I should have turned back to Birmingham, and come straight home by the railroad. As it is, I hope I shall make out the trip.

God bless you, my darling. I long to be back with you again and to see the sweet Babs.

Your faithful and most affectionate Husband.

Master Hastings Hughes

Doughty Street, London, Dec. 12th, 1838.

Respected Sir,

I have given Squeers one cut on the neck and two on the head, at which he appeared much surprised and began to cry, which, being a cowardly thing, is just what I should have expected from him – wouldn't you?

I have carefully done what you told me in your letter about the lamb and the two "sheeps" for the little boys. They have also had some good ale and porter, and some wine. I am sorry you didn't say *what* wine you would like them to have. I gave them some sherry, which they liked very much, except one boy, who was a little sick and choked a good deal. He was rather greedy, and that's the truth, and I believe it went the wrong way, which I say served him right, and I hope you will say so too.

Nicholas had his roast lamb, as you said he was to, but he could not eat it all, and says if you do not mind his doing so he should like to have the rest hashed to-morrow with some greens, which he is very fond of, and so am I. He said he did not like to have his porter hot, for he thought it spoilt the flavour, so I let him have it cold. You should have seen him drink it. I thought he never would have left off. I also gave him three pounds of money, all in sixpences, to make it seem more, and he said directly that he should give more than half to his mamma and sister, and divide the rest with poor Smike. And I say he is a good fellow for saying so; and if anybody says he isn't I am ready to fight him whenever they like – there!

Fanny Squeers shall be attended to, depend upon it. Your drawing of her is very like, except that I don't think the hair is quite curly enough. The nose is particularly like hers, and so are the legs. She is a nasty disagreeable thing, and I know it will make her very cross when she sees it; and what I say is that I hope it may. You will say the same I know – at least I think you will.

I meant to have written you a long letter, but I cannot write very fast when I like the person I am writing to, because that makes me think about them, and I like you, and so I tell you. Besides, it is just eight o'clock at night, and I always go to bed at eight o'clock, except when it is my birthday, and then I sit up to supper. So I will not say anything more besides this – and that is my love to you and Neptune; and if you will drink my health every Christmas Day I will drink yours – come.

I am,

Respected Sir,

Your affectionate Friend.

P.S. – I don't write my name very plain, but you know what it is you know, so never mind.

Mr. W. C. Macready

Doughty Street, Monday Morning.

My dear Macready,

I have not seen you for the past week, because I hoped when we next met to bring "The Lamplighter" in my hand. It would have been finished by this time, but I found myself compelled to set to work first at the "Nickleby" on which I am at present engaged, and which I regret to say – after my close and arduous application last month – I find I cannot write as quickly as usual. I must finish it, at latest, by the 24th (a doubtful comfort!), and the instant I have done so I will apply myself to the farce. I am afraid to name any particular day, but I pledge myself that you shall have it this month, and you may calculate on that promise. I send you with this a copy of a farce I wrote for Harley when

he left Drury Lane, and in which he acted for some seventy nights. It is the best thing he does. It is barely possible you might like to try it. Any local or temporary allusions could be easily altered.

Believe me that I only feel gratified and flattered by your inquiry after the farce, and that if I had as much time as I have inclination, I would write on and on and on, farce after farce and comedy after comedy, until I wrote you something that would run. You do me justice when you give me credit for good intentions; but the extent of my good-will and strong and warm interest in you personally and your great undertaking, you cannot fathom nor express.

*Believe me, my dear Macready,
Ever faithfully yours.*

P.S. – For Heaven's sake don't fancy that I hold "The Strange Gentleman" in any estimation, or have a wish upon the subject.

Mr. W. C Macready

48, Doughty Street, December 13th, 1838.

My dear Macready,

I can have but one opinion on the subject – withdraw the farce at once, by all means.

I perfectly concur in all you say, and thank you most heartily and cordially for your kind and manly conduct, which is only what I should have expected from you; though, under such circumstances, I sincerely believe there are few but you – if any – who would have adopted it.

Believe me that I have no other feeling of disappointment connected with this matter but that arising from the not having been able to be of some use to you. And trust me that, if the opportunity should ever arrive, my ardour will only be increased – not damped – by the result of this experiment.

*Believe me always, my dear Macready,
Faithfully yours.*

1839

NARRATIVE

Charles Dickens was still living in Doughty Street, but he removed at the end of this year to 1, Devonshire Terrace, Regent's Park. He hired a cottage at Petersham for the summer months, and in the autumn took lodgings at Broadstairs.

The cottage at Alphington, near Exeter, mentioned in the letter to Mr. Mitton, was hired by Charles Dickens for his parents.

He was at work all through this year on "Nicholas Nickleby."

We have now the commencement of his correspondence with Mr. George Cattermole. His first letter was written immediately after Mr. Cattermole's marriage with Miss Elderton, a distant connection of Charles Dickens; hence the allusions to "cousin," which will be found in many of his letters to Mr. Cattermole. The bride and bridegroom were passing their honeymoon in the neighbourhood of Petersham, and the letter refers to a request from them for the loan of some books, and also to his having lent them his pony carriage and groom, during their stay in this neighbourhood.

The first letter in this year to Mr. Macready is in answer to one from him, announcing his retirement from the management of Covent Garden Theatre.

The portrait by Mr. Maclise, mentioned to Mr. Harley, was the, now, well-known one, which appeared as a frontispiece to "Nicholas Nickleby."

Mr. W. C. Macready

Doughty Street, Sunday.

My dear Macready,

I will have, if you please, three dozen of the extraordinary champagne; and I am much obliged to you for recollecting me.

I ought not to be sorry to hear of your abdication, but I am, notwithstanding, most heartily and sincerely sorry, for my own sake and the sake of thousands, who may now go and whistle for a theatre – at least, such a theatre as you gave them; and I do now in my heart believe that for a long and dreary time that exquisite delight has passed away. If I may jest with my misfortunes, and quote the Portsmouth critic of Mr. Crummles's company, I say that: "As an exquisite embodiment of the poet's visions and a realisation of human intellectuality, gilding with refulgent light our dreamy moments, and laying open a new and magic world before the mental eye, the drama is gone – perfectly gone."

With the same perverse and unaccountable feeling which causes a heart-broken man at a dear friend's funeral to see something irresistibly comical in a red-nosed or one-eyed undertaker, I receive your communication with ghostly facetiousness; though on a moment's reflection I find better cause for consolation in the hope that, relieved from your most trying and painful duties, you will now have leisure to return to pursuits more congenial to your mind, and to move more easily and pleasantly among your friends. In the long catalogue of the latter, I believe that there is not one prouder of the name, or more grateful for the store of delightful recollections you have enabled him to heap up from boyhood, than,

My dear Macready,

Yours always faithfully.

Mr. Thomas Mitton

*New London Inn, Exeter,
Wednesday Morning, March 6th, 1839.*

Dear Tom,

Perhaps you have heard from Kate that I succeeded yesterday in the very first walk, and took a cottage at a place called Alphington, one mile from Exeter, which contains, on the ground-floor, a good parlour and kitchen, and above, a full-sized country drawing-room and three bedrooms; in the yard behind, coal-holes, fowl-houses, and meat-safes out of number; in the kitchen, a neat little range; in the other rooms, good stoves and cupboards; and all for twenty pounds a year, taxes included. There is a good garden at the side well stocked with cabbages, beans, onions, celery, and some flowers. The stock belonging to the landlady (who lives in the adjoining cottage), there was some question whether she was not entitled to half the produce, but I settled the point by paying five shillings, and becoming absolute master of the whole!

I do assure you that I am charmed with the place and the beauty of the country round about, though I have not seen it under very favourable circumstances, for it snowed when I was there this morning, and blew bitterly from the east yesterday. It is really delightful, and when the house is to rights and the furniture all in, I shall be quite sorry to leave it. I have had some few things second-hand, but I take it seventy pounds will be the mark, even taking this into consideration. I include in that estimate glass and crockery, garden tools, and such like little things. There is a spare bedroom of course. That I have furnished too.

I am on terms of the closest intimacy with Mrs. Samuell, the landlady, and her brother and sister-in-law, who have a little farm hard by. They are capital specimens of country folks, and I really think the old woman herself will be a great comfort to my mother. Coals are dear just now – twenty-six shillings a ton. They found me a boy to go two miles out and back again to order some this morning. I was debating in my mind whether I should give him eighteenpence or two shillings, when his fee was announced – twopence!

The house is on the high road to Plymouth, and, though in the very heart of Devonshire, there is as much long-stage and posting life as you would find in Piccadilly. The situation is charming. Meadows in front, an orchard running parallel to the garden hedge, richly-wooded hills closing in the prospect behind, and, away to the left, before a splendid view of the hill on which Exeter is situated, the cathedral towers rising up into the sky in the most picturesque manner possible. I don't think I ever saw so cheerful or pleasant a spot. The drawing-room is nearly, if not quite, as large as the outer room of my old chambers in Furnival's Inn. The paint and paper are new, and the place clean as the utmost excess of snowy cleanliness can be.

You would laugh if you could see me powdering away with the upholsterer, and endeavouring to bring about all sorts of impracticable reductions and wonderful arrangements. He has by him two second-hand carpets; the important ceremony of trying the same comes off at three this afternoon. I am perpetually going backwards and forwards. It is two miles from here, so I have plenty of exercise, which so occupies me and prevents my being lonely that I stopped at home to read last night, and shall to-night, although the theatre is open. Charles Kean has been the star for the last two evenings. He was stopping in this house, and went away this morning. I have got his sitting-room now, which is smaller and more comfortable than the one I had before.

You will have heard perhaps that I wrote to my mother to come down to-morrow. There are so many things she can make comfortable at a much less expense than I could, that I thought it best. If I had not, I could not have returned on Monday, which I now hope to do, and to be in town at half-past eight.

Will you tell my father that if he could devise any means of bringing him down, I think it would be a great thing for him to have Dash, if it be only to keep down the trampers and beggars. The cheque I send you below.

* * * * *

Mr. George Cattermole

Elm Cottage, Petersham, Wednesday Morning.

My dear Cattermole,

Why is "Peveril" lingering on my dusty shelves in town, while my fair cousin and your fair bride remains in blissful ignorance of his merits? There he is, I grieve to say, but there he shall not be long, for I shall be visiting my other home on Saturday morning, and will bring him bodily down and forward him the moment he arrives.

Not having many of my books here, I don't find any among them which I think more suitable to your purpose than a carpet-bagful sent herewith, containing the Italian and German novelists (convenient as being easily taken up and laid down again; and I suppose you won't read long at a sitting), Leigh Hunt's "Indicator" and "Companion" (which have the same merit), "Hood's Own" (complete), "A Legend of Montrose," and "Kenilworth," which I have just been reading with greater delight than ever, and so I suppose everybody else must be equally interested in. I have Goldsmith, Swift, Fielding, Smollett, and the British Essayists "handy;" and I need not say that you have them on hand too, if you like.

You know all I would say from my heart and soul on the auspicious event of yesterday; but you don't know what I could say about the delightful recollections I have of your "good lady's" charming looks and bearing, upon which I discoursed most eloquently here last evening, and at considerable length. As I am crippled in this respect, however, by the suspicion that possibly she may be looking over your shoulder while you read this note (I would lay a moderate wager that you have looked round twice or thrice already), I shall content myself with saying that I am ever heartily, my dear Cattermole,

Hers and yours.

P.S. – My man (who with his charge is your man while you stay here) waits to know if you have any orders for him.

Mr. J. P. Harley

*Elm Cottage, Petersham, near Richmond,
June 28th, 1839.*

My dear Harley,

I have "left my home," and been here ever since the end of April, and shall remain here most probably until the end of September, which is the reason that we have been such strangers of late.

I am very sorry that I cannot dine with you on Sunday, but some people are coming here, and I cannot get away. Better luck next time, I hope.

I was on the point of writing to you when your note came, to ask you if you would come down here next Saturday – to-morrow week, I mean – and stop till Monday. I will either call for you at the theatre, at any time you name, or send for you, "punctual," and have you brought down. Can you come if it's fine? Say yes, like a good fellow as you are, and say it per post.

I have countermanded that face. Maclise has made another face of me, which all people say is astonishing. The engraving will be ready soon, and I would rather you had that, as I am sure you would if you had seen it.

In great haste to save the post, I am, my dear Harley,

Faithfully yours.

Mr. William Longman

Doughty Street, Monday Morning.

My dear Sir,

On Friday I have a family dinner at home – uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, cousins – an annual gathering.

By what fatality is it that you always ask me to dine on the wrong day?

While you are tracing this non-consequence to its cause, I wish you would tell Mr. Sydney Smith that of all the men I ever heard of and never saw, I have the greatest curiosity to see and the greatest interest to know him.

Begging my best compliments at home,

I am, my dear Sir,

Faithfully yours.

Mr. W. C. Macready

Petersham, July 26th, 1839.

My dear Macready,

Fix your visit for whenever you please. It can never give us anything but delight to see you, and it is better to look forward to such a pleasure than to look back upon it, as the last gratification is enjoyable all our lives, and the first for a few short stages in the journey.

I feel more true and cordial pleasure than I can express to you in the request you have made. Anything which can serve to commemorate our friendship and to keep the recollection of it alive among our children is, believe me, and ever will be, most deeply prized by me. I accept the office with hearty and fervent satisfaction; and, to render this pleasant bond between us the more complete, I must solicit you to become godfather to the last and final branch of a genteel small family of three which I am told may be looked for in that auspicious month when Lord Mayors are born and guys prevail. This I look upon as a bargain between us, and I have shaken hands with you in spirit upon it. Family topics remind me of Mr. Kenwigs. As the weather is wet, and he is about to make his last appearance on my little stage, I send Mrs. Macready an early proof of the next number, containing an account of his baby's progress.

I am going to send you something else on Monday – a tragedy. Don't be alarmed. I didn't write it, nor do I want it acted. A young Scotch lady whom I don't know (but she is evidently very intelligent and accomplished) has sent me a translation of a German play, soliciting my aid and advice in the matter of its publication. Among a crowd of Germanisms, there are many things in it which are so very striking, that I am sure it will amuse you very much. At least I think it will; it has me. I am going to send it back to her – when I come to Elstree will be time enough; and meantime, if you bestow a couple of hours upon it, you will not think them thrown away.

It's a large parcel, and I must keep it here till somebody goes up to town and can book it by the coach. I warrant it, large as it looks, readable in two hours; and I very much want to know what

you think of the first act, and especially the opening, which seems to me quite famous. The metre is very odd and rough, but now and then there's a wildness in it which helps the thing very much; and altogether it has left a something on my mind which I can't get rid of.

Mrs. Dickens joins with me in kindest regards to yourself, Mrs., and Miss Macready. And I am always,

*My dear Macready,
Faithfully and truly yours.*

P.S. – A dreadful thought has just occurred to me – that this is a quadruple letter, and that Elstree may not be within the twopenny post. Pray Heaven my fears are unfounded.

Mr. W. C. Macready

*40, Albion Street, Broadstairs,
September 21st, 1839.*

My dear Macready,

I am so anxious to prefer a request to you which does not admit of delay that I send you a double letter, with the one redeeming point though of having very little in it.

Let me prefix to the last number of "Nickleby," and to the book, a duplicate of the leaf which I now send you. Believe me that there will be no leaf in the volume which will afford me in times to come more true pleasure and gratification, than that in which I have written your name as foremost among those of the friends whom I love and honour. Believe me, there will be no one line in it conveying a more honest truth or a more sincere feeling than that which describes its dedication to you as a slight token of my admiration and regard.

So let me tell the world by this frail record that I was a friend of yours, and interested to no ordinary extent in your proceedings at that interesting time when you showed them such noble truths in such noble forms, and gave me a new interest in, and associations with, the labours of so many months.

I write to you very hastily and crudely, for I have been very hard at work, having only finished to-day, and my head spins yet. But you know what I mean. I am then always,

*Believe me, my dear Macready,
Faithfully yours.*

P.S. – (Proof of Dedication enclosed): "To W. C. Macready, Esq., the following pages are inscribed, as a slight token of admiration and regard, by his friend, the Author."

Mr. W. C. Macready

Doughty Street, Friday Night, Oct. 25th, 1839.

My dear Macready,

The book, the whole book, and nothing but the book (except the binding, which is an important item), has arrived at last, and is forwarded herewith. The red represents my blushes at its gorgeous dress; the gilding, all those bright professions which I do not make to you; and the book itself, my whole heart for twenty months, which should be yours for so short a term, as you have it always.

With best regards to Mrs. and Miss Macready, always believe me,

*My dear Macready,
Your faithful Friend.*

The same

Doughty Street, Thursday, Nov. 14th, 1839.

My dear Macready,

Tom Landseer – that is, the deaf one, whom everybody quite loves for his sweet nature under a most deplorable infirmity – Tom Landseer asked me if I would present to you from him the accompanying engraving, which he has executed from a picture by his brother Edwin; submitting it to you as a little tribute from an unknown but ardent admirer of your genius, which speaks to his heart, although it does not find its way there through his ears. I readily undertook the task, and send it herewith.

I urged him to call upon you with me and proffer it boldly; but he is a very modest and delicately-minded creature, and was shy of intruding. If you thank him through me, perhaps you will say something about my bringing him to call, and so gladden the gentle artist and make him happy.

You must come and see my new house when we have it to rights. By Christmas Day we shall be, I hope, your neighbours.

Kate progresses splendidly, and, with me, sends her best remembrances to Mrs. Macready and all your house.

*Ever believe me,
Dear Macready,
Faithfully yours.*

1840

NARRATIVE

Charles Dickens was at Broadstairs with his family for the autumn months. During all this year he was busily engaged with the periodical entitled "Master Humphrey's Clock," in which the story of "The Old Curiosity Shop" subsequently appeared. Nearly all these letters to Mr. George Cattermole refer to the illustrations for this story.

The one dated March 9th alludes to short papers written for "Master Humphrey's Clock" prior to the commencement of "The Old Curiosity Shop."

We have in this year Charles Dickens's first letter to Mr. Daniel Maclise, this and one other being, unfortunately, the only letters we have been able to obtain addressed to this much-loved friend and most intimate companion.

Mr. George Cattermole

*1, Devonshire Terrace,
Monday, January 13th, 1840.*

My Dear Cattermole,

I am going to propound a mightily grave matter to you. My now periodical work appears – or I should rather say the first number does – on Saturday, the 28th of March; and as it has to be sent to America and Germany, and must therefore be considerably in advance, it is now in hand; I having in fact begun it on Saturday last. Instead of being published in monthly parts at a shilling each only, it will be published in weekly parts at threepence and monthly parts at a shilling; my object being to baffle the imitators and make it as novel as possible. The plan is a new one – I mean the plan of the fiction – and it will comprehend a great variety of tales. The title is: "Master Humphrey's Clock."

Now, among other improvements, I have turned my attention to the illustrations, meaning to have woodcuts dropped into the text and no separate plates. I want to know whether you would object to make me a little sketch for a woodcut – in indian-ink would be quite sufficient – about the size of the enclosed scrap; the subject, an old quaint room with antique Elizabethan furniture, and in the chimney-corner an extraordinary old clock – the clock belonging to Master Humphrey, in fact, and no figures. This I should drop into the text at the head of my opening page.

I want to know besides – as Chapman and Hall are my partners in the matter, there need be no delicacy about my asking or your answering the question – what would be your charge for such a thing, and whether (if the work answers our expectations) you would like to repeat the joke at regular intervals, and, if so, on what terms? I should tell you that I intend to ask Maclise to join me likewise, and that the copying the drawing on wood and the cutting will be done in first-rate style. We are justified by past experience in supposing that the sale would be enormous, and the popularity very great; and when I explain to you the notes I have in my head, I think you will see that it opens a vast number of very good subjects.

I want to talk the matter over with you, and wish you would fix your own time and place – either here or at your house or at the Athenæum, though this would be the best place, because I have my papers about me. If you would take a chop with me, for instance, on Tuesday or Wednesday, I could tell you more in two minutes than in twenty letters, albeit I have endeavoured to make this as businesslike and stupid as need be.

Of course all these tremendous arrangements are as yet a profound secret, or there would be fifty Humphreys in the field. So write me a line like a worthy gentleman, and convey my best remembrances to your worthy lady.

*Believe me always, my dear Cattermole,
Faithfully yours.*

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, Tuesday Afternoon.

My dear Cattermole,

I think the drawing most famous, and so do the publishers, to whom I sent it to-day. If Browne should suggest anything for the future which may enable him to do you justice in copying (on which point he is very anxious), I will communicate it to you. It has occurred to me that perhaps you will like to see his copy on the block before it is cut, and I have therefore told Chapman and Hall to forward it to you.

In future, I will take care that you have the number to choose your subject from. I ought to have done so, perhaps, in this case; but I was very anxious that you should do the room.

Perhaps the shortest plan will be for me to send you, as enclosed, regularly; but if you prefer keeping account with the publishers, they will be happy to enter upon it when, where, and how you please.

Faithfully yours always.

Mr. George Cattermole

*1, Devonshire Terrace,
Monday, March 9th, 1840.*

My dear Cattermole,

I have been induced, on looking over the works of the "Clock," to make a slight alteration in their disposal, by virtue of which the story about "John Podgers" will stand over for some little time, and that short tale will occupy its place which you have already by you, and which treats of the assassination of a young gentleman under circumstances of peculiar aggravation. I shall be greatly obliged to you if you will turn your attention to this last morsel as the feature of No. 3, and still more if you can stretch a point with regard to time (which is of the last importance just now), and make a subject out of it, rather than find one in it. I would neither have made this alteration nor have troubled you about it, but for weighty and cogent reasons which I feel very strongly, and into the composition of which caprice or fastidiousness has no part.

I should tell you perhaps, with reference to Chapman and Hall, that they will never trouble you (as they never trouble me) but when there is real and pressing occasion, and that their representations in this respect, unlike those of most men of business, are to be relied upon.

I cannot tell you how admirably I think Master Humphrey's room comes out, or what glowing accounts I hear of the second design you have done. I had not the faintest anticipation of anything so good – taking into account the material and the despatch.

With best regards at home,

*Believe me, dear Cattermole,
Heartily yours.*

P.S. – The new (No. 3) tale begins: "I hold a lieutenant's commission in his Majesty's army, and served abroad in the campaigns of 1677 and 1678." It has at present no title.

Mr. S. A. Diezman

*1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
London, 10th March, 1840.*

My dear Sir,

I will not attempt to tell you how much gratified I have been by the receipt of your first English letter; nor can I describe to you with what delight and gratification I learn that I am held in such high esteem by your great countrymen, whose favourable appreciation is flattering indeed.

To you, who have undertaken the laborious (and often, I fear, very irksome) task of clothing me in the German garb, I owe a long arrear of thanks. I wish you would come to England, and afford me an opportunity of slightly reducing the account.

It is with great regret that I have to inform you, in reply to the request contained in your pleasant communication, that my publishers have already made such arrangements and are in possession of such stipulations relative to the proof-sheets of my new works, that I have no power to send them out of England. If I had, I need not tell you what pleasure it would afford me to promote your views.

I am too sensible of the trouble you must have already had with my writings to impose upon you now a long letter. I will only add, therefore, that I am,

My dear Sir,

*With great sincerity,
Faithfully yours.*

Mr. Daniel Maclise

Broadstairs, June 2nd, 1840.

My dear Maclise,

My foot is in the house,
My bath is on the sea,
And, before I take a souse,
Here's a single note to thee.

It merely says that the sea is in a state of extraordinary sublimity; that this place is, as the Guide Book most justly observes, "unsurpassed for the salubrity of the refreshing breezes, which are wafted on the ocean's pinions from far-distant shores." That we are all right after the perils and voyages of yesterday. That the sea is rolling away in front of the window at which I indite this epistle, and that everything is as fresh and glorious as fine weather and a splendid coast can make it. Bear these recommendations in mind, and shunning Talfourdian pledges, come to the bower which is shaded for you in the one-pair front, where no chair or table has four legs of the same length, and where no drawers will open till you have pulled the pegs off, and then they keep open and won't shut again.

Come!

I can no more.

Always faithfully yours.

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, December 21st.

My dear George,

Kit, the single gentleman, and Mr. Garland go down to the place where the child is, and arrive there at night. There has been a fall of snow. Kit, leaving them behind, runs to the old house, and, with a lanthorn in one hand and the bird in its cage in the other, stops for a moment at a little distance with a natural hesitation before he goes up to make his presence known. In a window – supposed to be that of the child's little room – a light is burning, and in that room the child (unknown, of course, to her visitors, who are full of hope) lies dead.

If you have any difficulty about Kit, never mind about putting him in.

The two others to-morrow.

Faithfully always.

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, Friday Morning.

My dear Cattermole,

I sent the MS. of the enclosed proof, marked 2, up to Chapman and Hall, from Devonshire, mentioning a subject of an old gateway, which I had put in expressly with a view to your illustrious pencil. By a mistake, however, it went to Browne instead. Chapman is out of town, and such things have gone wrong in consequence.

The subject to which I wish to call your attention is in an unwritten number to follow this one, but it is a mere echo of what you will find at the conclusion of this proof marked 2. I want the cart, gaily decorated, going through the street of the old town with the wax brigand displayed to fierce advantage, and the child seated in it also dispersing bills. As many flags and inscriptions about Jarley's Wax Work fluttering from the cart as you please. You know the wax brigands, and how they contemplate small oval miniatures? That's the figure I want. I send you the scrap of MS. which contains the subject.

Will you, when you have done this, send it with all speed to Chapman and Hall, as we are mortally pressed for time, and I must go hard to work to make up for what I have lost by being dutiful and going to see my father.

I want to see you about a frontispiece to our first "Clock" volume, which will come out (I think) at the end of September, and about other matters. When shall we meet and where?

I say nothing about our cousin or the baby, for Kate bears this, and will make me a full report and convey all loves and congratulations.

Could you dine with us on Sunday, at six o'clock sharp? I'd come and fetch you in the morning, and we could take a ride and walk. We shall be quite alone, unless Macready comes. What say you?

Don't forget despatch, there's a dear fellow, and ever believe me,

Heartily yours.

Mr. George Cattermole

December 22nd, 1840.

Dear George,

The child lying dead in the little sleeping-room, which is behind the open screen. It is winter time, so there are no flowers; but upon her breast and pillow, and about her bed, there may be strips of holly and berries, and such free green things. Window overgrown with ivy. The little boy who had that talk with her about angels may be by the bedside, if you like it so; but I think it will be quieter and more peaceful if she is quite alone. I want it to express the most beautiful repose and tranquillity, and to have something of a happy look, if death can.

2.

The child has been buried inside the church, and the old man, who cannot be made to understand that she is dead, repairs to the grave and sits there all day long, waiting for her arrival, to begin another journey. His staff and knapsack, her little bonnet and basket, etc., lie beside him. "She'll come to-morrow," he says when it gets dark, and goes sorrowfully home. I think an hourglass running out would help the notion; perhaps her little tilings upon his knee, or in his hand.

I am breaking my heart over this story, and cannot bear to finish it.

Love to Missis.

Ever and always heartily.

1841

NARRATIVE

In the summer of this year Charles Dickens made, accompanied by Mrs. Dickens, his first visit to Scotland, and was received in Edinburgh with the greatest enthusiasm.

He was at Broadstairs with his family for the autumn, and at the close of the year he went to Windsor for change of air after a serious illness.

On the 17th January "The Old Curiosity Shop" was finished. In the following week the first number of his story of "Barnaby Rudge" appeared, in "Master Humphrey's Clock," and the last number of this story was written at Windsor, in November of this year.

We have the first letters to his dear and valued friends the Rev. William Harness and Mr. Harrison Ainsworth. Also his first letter to Mr. Monckton Milnes (now Lord Houghton).

Of the letter to Mr. John Tomlin we would only remark, that it was published in an American magazine, edited by Mr. E. A. Poe, in the year 1842.

"The New First Rate" (first letter to Mr. Harrison Ainsworth) must, we think, be an allusion to the outside cover of "Bentley's Miscellany," which first appeared in this year, and of which Mr. Ainsworth was editor.

The two letters to Mr. Lovejoy are in answer to a requisition from the people of Reading that he would represent them in Parliament.

The letter to Mr. George Cattermole (26th June) refers to a dinner given to Charles Dickens by the people of Edinburgh, on his first visit to that city.

The "poor Overs," mentioned in the letter to Mr. Macready of 24th August, was a carpenter dying of consumption, to whom Dr. Elliotson had shown extraordinary kindness. "When poor Overs was dying" (wrote Charles Dickens to Mr. Forster), "he suddenly asked for a pen and ink and some paper, and made up a little parcel for me, which it was his last conscious act to direct. She (his wife) told me this, and gave it me. I opened it last night. It was a copy of his little book, in which he had written my name, 'with his devotion.' I thought it simple and affecting of the poor fellow."

"The Saloon," alluded to in our last letter of this year, was an institution at Drury Lane Theatre during Mr. Macready's management. The original purpose for which this saloon was established having become perverted and degraded, Charles Dickens had it much at heart to remodel and improve it. Hence this letter to Mr. Macready.

Rev. William Harness

Devonshire Terrace, Saturday Morning, Jan. 2nd, 1841.

My dear Harness,

I should have been very glad to join your pleasant party, but all next week I shall be laid up with a broken heart, for I must occupy myself in finishing the "Curiosity Shop," and it is such a painful task to me that I must concentrate myself upon it tooth and nail, and go out nowhere until it is done.

I have delayed answering your kind note in a vague hope of being heart-whole again by the seventh. The present state of my work, however (Christmas not being a very favourable season for making progress in such doings), assures me that this cannot be, and that I must heroically deny myself the pleasure you offer.

*Always believe me,
Faithfully yours.*

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, Thursday, Jan. 14th, 1841.

My dear Cattermole,

I cannot tell you how much obliged I am to you for altering the child, or how much I hope that my wish in that respect didn't go greatly against the grain.

I saw the old inn this morning. Words cannot say how good it is. I can't bear the thought of its being cut, and should like to frame and glaze it in *statu quo* for ever and ever.

Will you do a little tail-piece for the "Curiosity" story? – only one figure if you like – giving some notion of the etherealised spirit of the child; something like those little figures in the frontispiece. If you will, and can despatch it at once, you will make me happy.

I am, for the time being, nearly dead with work and grief for the loss of my child.

*Always, my dear George,
Heartily yours.*

The same

Devonshire Terrace, Thursday Night, Jan. 28th, 1841.

My dear George,

I sent to Chapman and Hall yesterday morning about the second subject for No. 2 of "Barnaby," but found they had sent it to Browne.

The first subject of No. 3 I will either send to you on Saturday, or, at latest, on Sunday morning. I have also directed Chapman and Hall to send you proofs of what has gone before, for reference, if you need it.

I want to know whether you feel ravens in general and would fancy Barnaby's raven in particular. Barnaby being an idiot, my notion is to have him always in company with a pet raven, who is immeasurably more knowing than himself. To this end I have been studying my bird, and think I could make a very queer character of him. Should you like the subject when this raven makes his first appearance?

Faithfully always.

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, Saturday Evening, Jan. 30th, 1841.

My dear George,

I send you the first four slips of No. 48, containing the description of the locksmith's house, which I think will make a good subject, and one you will like. If you put the "prentice" in it, show nothing more than his paper cap, because he will be an important character in the story, and you will need to know more about him as he is minutely described. I may as well say that he is very short. Should you wish to put the locksmith in, you will find him described in No. 2 of "Barnaby" (which

I told Chapman and Hall to send you). Browne has done him in one little thing, but so very slightly that you will not require to see his sketch, I think.

Now, I must know what you think about the raven, my buck; I otherwise am in this fix. I have given Browne no subject for this number, and time is flying. If you would like to have the raven's first appearance, and don't object to having both subjects, so be it. I shall be delighted. If otherwise, I must feed that hero forthwith.

I cannot close this hasty note, my dear fellow, without saying that I have deeply felt your hearty and most invaluable co-operation in the beautiful illustrations you have made for the last story, that I look at them with a pleasure I cannot describe to you in words, and that it is impossible for me to say how sensible I am of your earnest and friendly aid. Believe me that this is the very first time any designs for what I have written have touched and moved me, and caused me to feel that they expressed the idea I had in my mind.

I am most sincerely and affectionately grateful to you, and am full of pleasure and delight.

*Believe me, my dear Cattermole,
Always heartily yours.*

Mr. John Tomlin

*1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
London, Tuesday, Feb. 23rd, 1841.*

Dear Sir,

You are quite right in feeling assured that I should answer the letter you have addressed to me. If you had entertained a presentiment that it would afford me sincere pleasure and delight to hear from a warm-hearted and admiring reader of my books in the backwoods of America, you would not have been far wrong.

I thank you cordially and heartily both for your letter and its kind and courteous terms. To think that I have awakened a fellow-feeling and sympathy with the creatures of many thoughtful hours among the vast solitudes in which you dwell, is a source of the purest delight and pride to me; and believe me that your expressions of affectionate remembrance and approval, sounding from the green forests on the banks of the Mississippi, sink deeper into my heart and gratify it more than all the honorary distinctions that all the courts in Europe could confer.

It is such things as these that make one hope one does not live in vain, and that are the highest reward of an author's life. To be numbered among the household gods of one's distant countrymen, and associated with their homes and quiet pleasures; to be told that in each nook and corner of the world's great mass there lives one well-wisher who holds communion with one in the spirit, is a worthy fame indeed, and one which I would not barter for a mine of wealth.

That I may be happy enough to cheer some of your leisure hours for a very long time to come, and to hold a place in your pleasant thoughts, is the earnest wish of "Boz."

And, with all good wishes for yourself, and with a sincere reciprocation of all your kindly feeling,

*I am, dear Sir,
Faithfully yours.*

Mr. R. Monckton Milnes

Devonshire Terrace, Wednesday, March 10th, 1841.

My dear Milnes,

I thank you very much for the "Nickleby" correspondence, which I will keep for a day or two, and return when I see you. Poor fellow! The long letter is quite admirable, and most affecting.

I am not quite sure either of Friday or Saturday, for, independently of the "Clock" (which for ever wants winding), I am getting a young brother off to New Zealand just now, and have my mornings sadly cut up in consequence. But, knowing your ways, I know I may say that I will come if I can; and that if I can't I won't.

That Nellicide was the act of Heaven, as you may see any of these fine mornings when you look about you. If you knew the pain it gave me – but what am I talking of? if you don't know, nobody does. I am glad to shake you by the hand again autographically,

*And am always,
Faithfully yours.*

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, Tuesday, February 9th.

My dear George,

My notes tread upon each other's heels. In my last I quite forgot business.

Will you, for No. 49, do the locksmith's house, which was described in No. 48? I mean the outside. If you can, without hurting the effect, shut up the shop as though it were night, so much the better. Should you want a figure, an ancient watchman in or out of his box, very sleepy, will be just the thing for me.

I have written to Chapman and requested him to send you a block of a long shape, so that the house may come upright as it were.

Faithfully ever.

The same

Old Ship Hotel, Brighton, Feb. 26th, 1841.

My dear Kittenmoles,

I passed your house on Wednesday, being then atop of the Brighton Era; but there was nobody at the door, saving a solitary poulterer, and all my warm-hearted aspirations lodged in the goods he was delivering. No doubt you observed a peculiar relish in your dinner. That was the cause.

I send you the MS. I fear you will have to read all the five slips; but the subject I think of is at the top of the last, when the guest, with his back towards the spectator, is looking out of window. I think, in your hands, it will be a very pretty one.

Then, my boy, when you have done it, turn your thoughts (as soon as other engagements will allow) first to the outside of The Warren – see No. 1; secondly, to the outside of the locksmith's house, by night – see No. 3. Put a penny pistol to Chapman's head and demand the blocks of him.

I have addled my head with writing all day, and have barely wit enough left to send my love to my cousin, and – there's a genealogical poser – what relation of mine may the dear little child be? At present, I desire to be commended to her clear blue eyes.

*Always, my dear George,
Faithfully yours,*



Mr. William Harrison Ainsworth

Devonshire Terrace, April 29th, 1841.

My dear Ainsworth,

With all imaginable pleasure. I quite look forward to the day. It is an age since we met, and it ought not to be.

The artist has just sent home your "Nickleby." He suggested variety, pleading his fancy and genius. As an artful binder must have his way, I put the best face on the matter, and gave him his. I will bring it together with the "Pickwick" to your house-warming with me.

The old *Royal George* went down in consequence of having too much weight on one side. I trust the new "First Rate" won't be heavy anywhere. There seems to me to be too much whisker for a shilling, but that's a matter of taste.

Faithfully yours always.

Mr. G. Lovejoy

*1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
Monday Evening, May 31st, 1841.*

Sir,

I am much obliged and flattered by the receipt of your letter, which I should have answered immediately on its arrival but for my absence from home at the moment.

My principles and inclinations would lead me to aspire to the distinction you invite me to seek, if there were any reasonable chance of success, and I hope I should do no discredit to such an honour if I won and wore it. But I am bound to add, and I have no hesitation in saying plainly, that I cannot afford the expense of a contested election. If I could, I would act on your suggestion instantly. I am not the less indebted to you and the friends to whom the thought occurred, for your good opinion and approval. I beg you to understand that I am restrained solely (and much against my will) by the consideration I have mentioned, and thank both you and them most warmly.

Yours faithfully.

The same

Devonshire Terrace, June 10th, 1841.

Dear Sir,

I am favoured with your note of yesterday's date, and lose no time in replying to it.

The sum you mention, though small I am aware in the abstract, is greater than I could afford for such a purpose; as the mere sitting in the House and attending to my duties, if I were a member, would oblige me to make many pecuniary sacrifices, consequent upon the very nature of my pursuits.

The course you suggest did occur to me when I received your first letter, and I have very little doubt indeed that the Government would support me – perhaps to the whole extent. But I cannot satisfy myself that to enter Parliament under such circumstances would enable me to pursue that

honourable independence without which I could neither preserve my own respect nor that of my constituents. I confess therefore (it may be from not having considered the points sufficiently, or in the right light) that I cannot bring myself to propound the subject to any member of the administration whom I know. I am truly obliged to you nevertheless, and am,

*Dear Sir,
Faithfully yours.*

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, Wednesday Evening, July 28th, 1841.

My dear George,

Can you do for me by Saturday evening – I know the time is short, but I think the subject will suit you, and I am greatly pressed – a party of rioters (with Hugh and Simon Tappertit conspicuous among them) in old John Willet's bar, turning the liquor taps to their own advantage, smashing bottles, cutting down the grove of lemons, sitting astride on casks, drinking out of the best punch-bowls, eating the great cheese, smoking sacred pipes, etc. etc.; John Willet, fallen backward in his chair, regarding them with a stupid horror, and quite alone among them, with none of The Maypole customers at his back.

It's in your way, and you'll do it a hundred times better than I can suggest it to you, I know.

Faithfully always.

Mr. George Cattermole

Broadstairs, Friday, August 6th, 1841.

My dear George,

Here is a subject for the next number; the next to that I hope to send you the MS. of very early in the week, as the best opportunities of illustration are all coming off now, and we are in the thick of the story.

The rioters went, sir, from John Willet's bar (where you saw them to such good purpose) straight to The Warren, which house they plundered, sacked, burned, pulled down as much of as they could, and greatly damaged and destroyed. They are supposed to have left it about half an hour. It is night, and the ruins are here and there flaming and smoking. I want – if you understand – to show one of the turrets laid open – the turret where the alarm-bell is, mentioned in No. 1; and among the ruins (at some height if possible) Mr. Haredale just clutching our friend, the mysterious file, who is passing over them like a spirit; Solomon Daisy, if you can introduce him, looking on from the ground below.

Please to observe that the M. F. wears a large cloak and a slouched hat. This is important, because Browne will have him in the same number, and he has not changed his dress meanwhile. Mr. Haredale is supposed to have come down here on horseback, pell-mell; to be excited to the last degree. I think it will make a queer picturesque thing in your hands. I have told Chapman and Hall that you may like to have a block of a peculiar shape for it. One of them will be with you almost as soon as you receive this.

We are very anxious to know that our cousin is out of her trouble, and you free from your anxiety. Mind you write when it comes off. And when she is quite comfortable come down here for a day or two, like a bachelor, as you will be. It will do you a world of good. Think of that.

*Always, dear Cattermole,
Heartily yours.*

P.S. – When you have done the subject, I wish you'd write me one line and tell me how, that I may be sure we agree. Loves from Kate.

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, Thursday, August 13th.

My dear Cattermole,

Will you turn your attention to a frontispiece for our first volume, to come upon the left-hand side of the book as you open it, and to face a plain printed title? My idea is, some scene from the "Curiosity Shop," in a pretty border, or scroll-work, or architectural device; it matters not what, so that it be pretty. The scene even might be a fanciful thing, partaking of the character of the story, but not reproducing any particular passage in it, if you thought that better for the effect.

I ask you to think of this, because, although the volume is not published until the end of September, there is no time to lose. We wish to have it engraved with great care, and worked very skilfully; and this cannot be done unless we get it on the stocks soon.

They will give you every opportunity of correction, alteration, revision, and all other actions and revisions connected with the fine arts.

*Always believe me,
Faithfully yours.*

Mr. George Cattermole

Broadstairs, August 19th, 1841.

My dear George,

When Hugh and a small body of the rioters cut off from The Warren beckoned to their pals, they forced into a very remarkable postchaise Dolly Varden and Emma Haredale, and bore them away with all possible rapidity; one of their company driving, and the rest running beside the chaise, climbing up behind, sitting on the top, lighting the way with their torches, etc. etc. If you can express the women inside without showing them – as by a fluttering veil, a delicate arm, or so forth appearing at the half-closed window – so much the better. Mr. Tappertit stands on the steps, which are partly down, and, hanging on to the window with one hand and extending the other with great majesty, addresses a few words of encouragement to the driver and attendants. Hugh sits upon the bar in front; the driver sitting postilion-wise, and turns round to look through the window behind him at the little doves within. The gentlemen behind are also anxious to catch a glimpse of the ladies. One of those who are running at the side may be gently rebuked for his curiosity by the cudgel of Hugh. So they cut away, sir, as fast as they can.

Always faithfully.

P.S. – John Willet's bar is noble.

We take it for granted that cousin and baby are hearty. Our loves to them.

Mr. W. C. Macready

Broadstairs, Tuesday, August 24th, 1841.

My dear Macready,

I must thank you, most heartily and cordially, for your kind note relative to poor Overs. I can't tell you how glad I am to know that he thoroughly deserves such kindness.

What a good fellow Elliotson is. He kept him in his room a whole hour, and has gone into his case as if he were Prince Albert; laying down all manner of elaborate projects and determining to leave his friend Wood in town when he himself goes away, on purpose to attend to him. Then he writes me four sides of paper about the man, and says he can't go back to his old work, for that requires muscular exertion (and muscular exertion he mustn't make), what are we to do with him? He says: "Here's five pounds for the present."

I declare before God that I could almost bear the Jones's for five years out of the pleasure I feel in knowing such things, and when I think that every dirty speck upon the fair face of the Almighty's creation, who writes in a filthy, beastly newspaper; every rotten-hearted pander who has been beaten, kicked, and rolled in the kennel, yet struts it in the editorial "We," once a week; every vagabond that an honest man's gorge must rise at; every live emetic in that noxious drug-shop the press, can have his fling at such men and call them knaves and fools and thieves, I grow so vicious that, with bearing hard upon my pen, I break the nib down, and, with keeping my teeth set, make my jaws ache.

I have put myself out of sorts for the day, and shall go and walk, unless the direction of this sets me up again. On second thoughts I think it will.

*Always, my dear Macready,
Your faithful Friend.*

Mr. George Cattermole

Broadstairs, Sunday, September 12th, 1841.

My dear George,

Here is a business letter, written in a scramble just before post time, whereby I dispose of loves to cousin in a line.

Firstly. Will you design, upon a block of wood, Lord George Gordon, alone and very solitary, in his prison in the Tower? The chamber as ancient as you please, and after your own fancy; the time, evening; the season, summer.

Secondly. Will you ditto upon a ditto, a sword duel between Mr. Haredale and Mr. Chester, in a grove of trees? No one close by. Mr. Haredale has just pierced his adversary, who has fallen, dying, on the grass. He (that is, Chester) tries to staunch the wound in his breast with his handkerchief; has his snuffbox on the earth beside him, and looks at Mr. Haredale (who stands with his sword in his hand, looking down on him) with most supercilious hatred, but polite to the last. Mr. Haredale is more sorry than triumphant.

Thirdly. Will you conceive and execute, after your own fashion, a frontispiece for "Barnaby"?

Fourthly. Will you also devise a subject representing "Master Humphrey's Clock" as stopped; his chair by the fireside, empty; his crutch against the wall; his slippers on the cold hearth; his hat upon the chair-back; the MSS. of "Barnaby" and "The Curiosity Shop" heaped upon the table; and the flowers you introduced in the first subject of all withered and dead? Master Humphrey being supposed to be no more.

I have a fifthly, sixthly, seventhly, and eighthly; for I sorely want you, as I approach the close of the tale, but I won't frighten you, so we'll take breath.

*Always, my dear Cattermole,
Heartily yours.*

P.S. – I have been waiting until I got to subjects of this nature, thinking you would like them best.

Mr. George Cattermole

Broadstairs, September 21st, 1841.

My dear George,

Will you, before you go on with the other subjects I gave you, do one of Hugh, bareheaded, bound, tied on a horse, and escorted by horse-soldiers to jail? If you can add an indication of old Fleet Market, and bodies of foot soldiers firing at people who have taken refuge on the tops of stalls, bulk-heads, etc., it will be all the better.

Faithfully yours always.

Miss Mary Talfourd

Devonshire Terrace, December 16th, 1841.

My dear Mary,

I should be delighted to come and dine with you on your birthday, and to be as merry as I wish you to be always; but as I am going, within a very few days afterwards, a very long distance from home, and shall not see any of my children for six long months, I have made up my mind to pass all that week at home for their sakes; just as you would like your papa and mamma to spend all the time they possibly could spare with you if they were about to make a dreary voyage to America; which is what I am going to do myself.

But although I cannot come to see you on that day, you may be sure I shall not forget that it is your birthday, and that I shall drink your health and many happy returns, in a glass of wine, filled as full as it will hold. And I shall dine at half-past five myself, so that we may both be drinking our wine at the same time; and I shall tell my Mary (for I have got a daughter of that name but she is a very small one as yet) to drink your health too; and we shall try and make believe that you are here, or that we are in Russell Square, which is the best thing we can do, I think, under the circumstances.

You are growing up so fast that by the time I come home again I expect you will be almost a woman; and in a very few years we shall be saying to each other: "Don't you remember what the birthdays used to be in Russell Square?" and "How strange it seems!" and "How quickly time passes!" and all that sort of thing, you know. But I shall always be very glad to be asked on your birthday, and to come if you will let me, and to send my love to you, and to wish that you may live to be very old and very happy, which I do now with all my heart.

Believe me always,

My dear Mary,

Yours affectionately.

Mr. W. C. Macready

Devonshire Terrace, Tuesday, Dec. 28th, 1841.

My dear Macready,

This note is about the saloon. I make it as brief as possible. Read it when you have time. As we were the first experimentalists last night you will be glad to know what it wants.

First, the refreshments are preposterously dear. A glass of wine is a shilling, and it ought to be sixpence.

Secondly, they were served out by the wrong sort of people – two most uncomfortable drabs of women, and a dirty man with his hat on.

Thirdly, there ought to be a box-keeper to ring a bell or give some other notice of the commencement of the overture to the after-piece. The promenaders were in a perpetual fret and worry to get back again.

And fourthly, and most important of all – if the plan is ever to succeed – you must have some notice up to the effect that as it is now a place of resort for ladies, gentlemen are requested not to lounge there in their hats and greatcoats. No ladies will go there, though the conveniences should be ten thousand times greater, while the sort of swells who have been used to kick their heels there do so in the old sort of way. I saw this expressed last night more strongly than I can tell you.

Hearty congratulations on the brilliant triumph. I have always expected one, as you know, but nobody could have imagined the reality.

*Always, my dear Macready,
Affectionately yours.*

1842

NARRATIVE

In January of this year Charles Dickens went, with his wife, to America, the house in Devonshire Terrace being let for the term of their absence (six months), and the four children left in a furnished house in Osnaburgh Street, Regent's Park, under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Macready. They returned from America in July, and in August went to Broadstairs for the autumn months as usual, and in October Charles Dickens made an expedition to Cornwall, with Mr. Forster, Mr. Maclise, and Mr. Stanfield for his companions.

During his stay at Broadstairs he was engaged in writing his "American Notes," which book was published in October. At the end of the year he had written the first number of "Martin Chuzzlewit," which appeared in January, 1843.

An extract from a letter, addressed to Messrs. Chapman and Hall before his departure for America, is given as a testimony of the estimation in which Charles Dickens held the firm with whom he was connected for so many years.

His letters to Mr. H. P. Smith, for many years actuary of the Eagle Insurance Office, are a combination of business and friendship. Mr. Smith gives us, as an explanation of a note to him, dated 14th July, that he alluded to the stamp of the office upon the cheque, which was, as he described it, "almost a work of art" – a truculent-looking eagle seated on a rock and scattering rays over the whole sheet.

Of letters written by Charles Dickens in America we have been able to obtain very few. One, to Dr. F. H. Deane, Cincinnati, complying with his request to write him an epitaph for the tombstone of his little child, has been kindly copied for us from an album, by Mrs. Fields, of Boston. Therefore, it is not directly received, but as we have no doubt of its authenticity, we give it here; and there is one to Mr. Halleck, the American poet.

At the close of the voyage to America (a very bad and dangerous one), a meeting of the passengers, with Lord Mulgrave in the chair, took place, and a piece of plate and thanks were voted to the captain of the *Britannia*, Captain Hewett. The vote of thanks, being drawn up by Charles Dickens, is given here. We have letters in this year to Mr. Thomas Hood, Miss Pardoe, Mrs. Trollope, and Mr. W. P. Frith. The last-named artist – then a very young man – had made great success with several charming pictures of Dolly Varden. One of these was bought by Charles Dickens, who ordered a companion picture of Kate Nickleby, from the young painter, whose acquaintance he made at the same time; and the two letters to Mr. Frith have reference to the purchase of the one picture and the commission for the other.

The letter to Mr. Cattermole is an acknowledgment also of a completed commission of two water-colour drawings, from the subjects of two of Mr. Cattermole's illustrations to "The Old Curiosity Shop."

A note to Mr. Macready, at the close of this year, refers to the first representation of Mr. Westland Marston's play, "The Patrician's Daughter." Charles Dickens took great interest in the production of this work at Drury Lane. It was, to a certain extent, an experiment of the effect of a tragedy of modern times and in modern dress; and the prologue, which Charles Dickens wrote and which we give, was intended to show that there need be no incongruity between plain clothes of this century and high tragedy. The play was quite successful.

Messrs. Chapman and Hall

* * * * *

Having disposed of the business part of this letter, I should not feel at ease on leaving England if I did not tell you once more with my whole heart that your conduct to me on this and all other occasions has been honourable, manly, and generous, and that I have felt it a solemn duty, in the event of any accident happening to me while I am away, to place this testimony upon record. It forms part of a will I have made for the security of my children; for I wish them to know it when they are capable of understanding your worth and my appreciation of it.

*Always believe me,
Faithfully and truly yours.*

Mr. Thomas Mitton

Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, Monday, Jan. 3rd, 1842.

My dear Mitton,

This is a short note, but I will fulfil the adage and make it a merry one.

We came down in great comfort. Our luggage is now aboard. Anything so utterly and monstrously absurd as the size of our cabin, no "gentleman of England who lives at home at ease" can for a moment imagine. Neither of the portmanteaus would go into it. There!

These Cunard packets are not very big you know actually, but the quantity of sleeping-berths makes them much smaller, so that the saloon is not nearly as large as in one of the Ramsgate boats. The ladies' cabin is so close to ours that I could knock the door open without getting off something they call my bed, but which I believe to be a muffin beaten flat. This is a great comfort, for it is an excellent room (the only good one in the ship); and if there be only one other lady besides Kate, as the stewardess thinks, I hope I shall be able to sit there very often.

They talk of seventy passengers, but I can't think there will be so many; they talk besides (which is even more to the purpose) of a very fine passage, having had a noble one this time last year. God send it so! We are in the best spirits, and full of hope. I was dashed for a moment when I saw our "cabin," but I got over that directly, and laughed so much at its ludicrous proportions, that you might have heard me all over the ship.

God bless you! Write to me by the first opportunity. I will do the like to you. And always believe me,

Your old and faithful Friend.

NARRATIVE

At a meeting of the passengers on board the *Britannia* steam-ship, travelling from Liverpool to Boston, held in the saloon of that vessel, on Friday, the 21st January, 1842, it was moved and seconded:

"That the Earl of Mulgrave do take the chair."

The motion having been carried unanimously, the Earl of Mulgrave took the chair accordingly. It was also moved and seconded, and carried unanimously:

"That Charles Dickens, Esq., be appointed secretary and treasurer to the meeting."

The three following resolutions were then proposed and carried *nem. con.*:

"First. That, gratefully recognising the blessing of Divine Providence by which we are brought nearly to the termination of our voyage, we have great pleasure in expressing our high appreciation of Captain Hewett's nautical skill and of his indefatigable attention to the management and safe conduct of the ship, during a more than ordinarily tempestuous passage.

"Secondly. That a subscription be opened for the purchase of a piece of silver plate, and that Captain Hewett be respectfully requested to accept it, as a sincere expression of the sentiments embodied in the foregoing resolution.

"Thirdly. That a committee be appointed to carry these resolutions into effect; and that the committee be composed of the following gentlemen: Charles Dickens, Esq., E. Dunbar, Esq., and Solomon Hopkins, Esq."

The committee having withdrawn and conferred with Captain Hewett, returned, and informed the meeting that Captain Hewett desired to attend and express his thanks, which he did.

The amount of the subscription was reported at fifty pounds, and the list was closed. It was then agreed that the following inscription should be placed upon the testimonial to Captain Hewett:

This Piece of Plate

was presented to

CAPTAIN JOHN HEWETT,

of the Britannia Steam-ship,

By the Passengers on board that vessel in a voyage from Liverpool

to Boston, in the month of January, 1842,

As a slight acknowledgment of his great ability and skill

under circumstances of much difficulty and danger,

And as a feeble token of their lasting gratitude

Thanks were then voted to the chairman and to the secretary, and the meeting separated.

Mr. Thomas Mitton

Tremont House, Boston, January 31st, 1842.

My dear Mitton,

I am so exhausted with the life I am obliged to lead here, that I have had time to write but one letter which is at all deserving of the name, as giving any account of our movements. Forster has it, in trust, to tell you all its news; and he has also some newspapers which I had an opportunity of sending him, in which you will find further particulars of our progress.

We had a dreadful passage, the worst, the officers all concur in saying, that they have ever known. We were eighteen days coming; experienced a dreadful storm which swept away our paddle-boxes and stove our lifeboats; and ran aground besides, near Halifax, among rocks and breakers, where we lay at anchor all night. After we left the English Channel we had only one fine day. And we had the additional discomfort of being eighty-six passengers. I was ill five days, Kate six; though, indeed, she had a swelled face and suffered the utmost terror all the way.

I can give you no conception of my welcome here. There never was a king or emperor upon the earth so cheered and followed by crowds, and entertained in public at splendid balls and dinners,

and waited on by public bodies and deputations of all kinds. I have had one from the Far West – a journey of two thousand miles! If I go out in a carriage, the crowd surround it and escort me home; if I go to the theatre, the whole house (crowded to the roof) rises as one man, and the timbers ring again. You cannot imagine what it is. I have five great public dinners on hand at this moment, and invitations from every town and village and city in the States.

There is a great deal afloat here in the way of subjects for description. I keep my eyes open pretty wide, and hope to have done so to some purpose by the time I come home.

When you write to me again – I say again, hoping that your first letter will be soon upon its way here – direct to me to the care of David Colden, Esq., New York. He will forward all communications by the quickest conveyance and will be perfectly acquainted with all my movements.

Always your faithful Friend.

Mr. Fitz-Greene Halleck

Carlton House, February 14th, 1842.

My dear Sir,

Will you come and breakfast with me on Tuesday, the 22nd, at half-past ten? Say yes. I should have been truly delighted to have a talk with you to-night (being quite alone), but the doctor says that if I talk to man, woman, or child this evening I shall be dumb to-morrow.

*Believe me, with true regard,
Faithfully your Friend.*

Mr. W. C. Macready

Baltimore, March 22nd, 1842.

My dear Friend,

I beg your pardon, but you were speaking of rash leaps at hasty conclusions. Are you quite sure you designed that remark for me? Have you not, in the hurry of correspondence, slipped a paragraph into my letter which belongs of right to somebody else? When did you ever find me leap at wrong conclusions? I pause for a reply.

Pray, sir, did you ever find me admiring Mr. – ? On the contrary, did you never hear of my protesting through good, better, and best report that he was not an open or a candid man, and would one day, beyond all doubt, displease you by not being so? I pause again for a reply.

Are you quite sure, Mr. Macready – and I address myself to you with the sternness of a man in the pit – are you quite sure, sir, that you do not view America through the pleasant mirage which often surrounds a thing that has been, but not a thing that is? Are you quite sure that when you were here you relished it as well as you do now when you look back upon it. The early spring birds, Mr. Macready, *do* sing in the groves that you were, very often, not over well pleased with many of the new country's social aspects. Are the birds to be trusted? Again I pause for a reply.

My dear Macready, I desire to be so honest and just to those who have so enthusiastically and earnestly welcomed me, that I burned the last letter I wrote to you – even to you to whom I would speak as to myself – rather than let it come with anything that might seem like an ill-considered word of disappointment. I preferred that you should think me neglectful (if you could imagine anything so wild) rather than I should do wrong in this respect. Still it is of no use. I *am* disappointed. This is not the republic I came to see; this is not the republic of my imagination. I infinitely prefer a liberal monarchy – even with its sickening accompaniments of court circulars – to such a government as

this. The more I think of its youth and strength, the poorer and more trifling in a thousand aspects it appears in my eyes. In everything of which it has made a boast – excepting its education of the people and its care for poor children – it sinks immeasurably below the level I had placed it upon; and England, even England, bad and faulty as the old land is, and miserable as millions of her people are, rises in the comparison.

You live here, Macready, as I have sometimes heard you imagining! *You!* Loving you with all my heart and soul, and knowing what your disposition really is, I would not condemn you to a year's residence on this side of the Atlantic for any money. Freedom of opinion! Where is it? I see a press more mean, and paltry, and silly, and disgraceful than any country I ever knew. If that is its standard, here it is. But I speak of Bancroft, and am advised to be silent on that subject, for he is "a black sheep – a Democrat." I speak of Bryant, and am entreated to be more careful, for the same reason. I speak of international copyright, and am implored not to ruin myself outright. I speak of Miss Martineau, and all parties – Slave Upholders and Abolitionists, Whigs, Tyler Whigs, and Democrats, shower down upon me a perfect cataract of abuse. "But what has she done? Surely she praised America enough!" "Yes, but she told us of some of our faults, and Americans can't bear to be told of their faults. Don't split on that rock, Mr. Dickens, don't write about America; we are so very suspicious."

Freedom of opinion! Macready, if I had been born here and had written my books in this country, producing them with no stamp of approval from any other land, it is my solemn belief that I should have lived and died poor, unnoticed, and a "black sheep" to boot. I never was more convinced of anything than I am of that.

The people are affectionate, generous, open-hearted, hospitable, enthusiastic, good-humoured, polite to women, frank and candid to all strangers, anxious to oblige, far less prejudiced than they have been described to be, frequently polished and refined, very seldom rude or disagreeable. I have made a great many friends here, even in public conveyances, whom I have been truly sorry to part from. In the towns I have formed perfect attachments. I have seen none of that greediness and indecorousness on which travellers have laid so much emphasis. I have returned frankness with frankness; met questions not intended to be rude, with answers meant to be satisfactory; and have not spoken to one man, woman, or child of any degree who has not grown positively affectionate before we parted. In the respects of not being left alone, and of being horribly disgusted by tobacco chewing and tobacco spittle, I have suffered considerably. The sight of slavery in Virginia, the hatred of British feeling upon the subject, and the miserable hints of the impotent indignation of the South, have pained me very much; on the last head, of course, I have felt nothing but a mingled pity and amusement; on the other, sheer distress. But however much I like the ingredients of this great dish, I cannot but come back to the point upon which I started, and say that the dish itself goes against the grain with me, and that I don't like it.

You know that I am truly a Liberal. I believe I have as little pride as most men, and I am conscious of not the smallest annoyance from being "hail fellow well met" with everybody. I have not had greater pleasure in the company of any set of men among the thousands I have received (I hold a regular levée every day, you know, which is duly heralded and proclaimed in the newspapers) than in that of the carmen of Hertford, who presented themselves in a body in their blue frocks, among a crowd of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, and bade me welcome through their spokesman. They had all read my books, and all perfectly understood them. It is not these things I have in my mind when I say that the man who comes to this country a Radical and goes home again with his opinions unchanged, must be a Radical on reason, sympathy, and reflection, and one who has so well considered the subject that he has no chance of wavering.

We have been to Boston, Worcester, Hertford, New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Fredericksburgh, Richmond, and back to Washington again. The premature heat of the weather (it was eighty yesterday in the shade) and Clay's advice – how you would like Clay! – have made us determine not to go to Charleston; but having got to Richmond, I think I should have turned

back under any circumstances. We remain at Baltimore for two days, of which this is one; then we go to Harrisburgh. Then by the canal boat and the railroad over the Alleghany Mountains to Pittsburgh, then down the Ohio to Cincinnati, then to Louisville, and then to St. Louis. I have been invited to a public entertainment in every town I have entered, and have refused them; but I have excepted St. Louis as the farthest point of my travels. My friends there have passed some resolutions which Forster has, and will show you. From St. Louis we cross to Chicago, traversing immense prairies. Thence by the lakes and Detroit to Buffalo, and so to Niagara. A run into Canada follows of course, and then – let me write the blessed word in capitals – we turn towards home.

Kate has written to Mrs. Macready, and it is useless for me to thank you, my dearest friend, or her, for your care of our dear children, which is our constant theme of discourse. Forster has gladdened our hearts with his account of the triumph of "Acis and Galatea," and I am anxiously looking for news of the tragedy. Forrest breakfasted with us at Richmond last Saturday – he was acting there, and I invited him – and he spoke very gratefully, and very like a man, of your kindness to him when he was in London.

David Colden is as good a fellow as ever lived; and I am deeply in love with his wife. Indeed we have received the greatest and most earnest and zealous kindness from the whole family, and quite love them all. Do you remember one Greenhow, whom you invited to pass some days with you at the hotel on the Kaatskill Mountains? He is translator to the State Office at Washington, has a very pretty wife, and a little girl of five years old. We dined with them, and had a very pleasant day. The President invited me to dinner, but I couldn't stay for it. I had a private audience, however, and we attended the public drawing-room besides.

Now, don't you rush at the quick conclusion that I have rushed at a quick conclusion. Pray, be upon your guard. If you can by any process estimate the extent of my affectionate regard for you, and the rush I shall make when I reach London to take you by your true right hand, I don't object. But let me entreat you to be very careful how you come down upon the sharp-sighted individual who pens these words, which you seem to me to have done in what Willmott would call "one of Mr. Macready's rushes." As my pen is getting past its work, I have taken a new one to say that

*I am ever, my dear Macready,
Your faithful Friend.*

Mr. Thomas Mitton

Baltimore, United States, March 22nd, 1842.

My dear Friend,

We have been as far south as Richmond in Virginia (where they grow and manufacture tobacco, and where the labour is all performed by slaves), but the season in those latitudes is so intensely and prematurely hot, that it was considered a matter of doubtful expediency to go on to Charleston. For this unexpected reason, and because the country between Richmond and Charleston is but a desolate swamp the whole way, and because slavery is anything but a cheerful thing to live amidst, I have altered my route by the advice of Mr. Clay (the great political leader in this country), and have returned here previous to diving into the far West. We start for that part of the country – which includes mountain travelling, and lake travelling, and prairie travelling – the day after to-morrow, at eight o'clock in the morning; and shall be in the West, and from there going northward again, until the 30th of April or 1st of May, when we shall halt for a week at Niagara, before going further into Canada. We have taken our passage home (God bless the word) in the *George Washington* packet-ship from New York. She sails on the 7th of June.

I have departed from my resolution not to accept any more public entertainments; they have been proposed in every town I have visited – in favour of the people of St. Louis, my utmost western point. That town is on the borders of the Indian territory, a trifling distance from this place – only two thousand miles! At my second halting-place I shall be able to write to fix the day; I suppose it will be somewhere about the 12th of April. Think of my going so far towards the setting sun to dinner!

In every town where we stay, though it be only for a day, we hold a regular levée or drawing-room, where I shake hands on an average with five or six hundred people, who pass on from me to Kate, and are shaken again by her. Maclise's picture of our darlings stands upon a table or sideboard the while; and my travelling secretary, assisted very often by a committee belonging to the place, presents the people in due form. Think of two hours of this every day, and the people coming in by hundreds, all fresh, and piping hot, and full of questions, when we are literally exhausted and can hardly stand. I really do believe that if I had not a lady with me, I should have been obliged to leave the country and go back to England. But for her they never would leave me alone by day or night, and as it is, a slave comes to me now and then in the middle of the night with a letter, and waits at the bedroom door for an answer.

It was so hot at Richmond that we could scarcely breathe, and the peach and other fruit trees were in full blossom; it was so cold at Washington next day that we were shivering; but even in the same town you might often wear nothing but a shirt and trousers in the morning, and two greatcoats at night, the thermometer very frequently taking a little trip of thirty degrees between sunrise and sunset.

They do lay it on at the hotels in such style! They charge by the day, so that whether one dines out or dines at home makes no manner of difference. T'other day I wrote to order our rooms at Philadelphia to be ready on a certain day, and was detained a week longer than I expected in New York. The Philadelphia landlord not only charged me half rent for the rooms during the whole of that time, but board for myself and Kate and Anne during the whole time too, though we were actually boarding at the same expense during the same time in New York! What do you say to that? If I remonstrated, the whole virtue of the newspapers would be aroused directly.

We were at the President's drawing-room while we were in Washington. I had a private audience besides, and was asked to dinner, but couldn't stay.

Parties – parties – parties – of course, every day and night. But it's not all parties. I go into the prisons, the police-offices, the watch-houses, the hospitals, the workhouses. I was out half the night in New York with two of their most famous constables; started at midnight, and went into every brothel, thieves' house, murdering hovel, sailors' dancing-place, and abode of villany, both black and white, in the town. I went *incog.* behind the scenes to the little theatre where Mitchell is making a fortune. He has been rearing a little dog for me, and has called him "Boz."¹ I am going to bring him home. In a word I go everywhere, and a hard life it is. But I am careful to drink hardly anything, and not to smoke at all. I have recourse to my medicine-chest whenever I feel at all bilious, and am, thank God, thoroughly well.

When I next write to you, I shall have begun, I hope, to turn my face homeward. I have a great store of oddity and whimsicality, and am going now into the oddest and most characteristic part of this most queer country.

Always direct to the care of David Colden, Esq., 28, Laight Street, Hudson Square, New York. I received your Caledonia letter with the greatest joy.

Kate sends her best remembrances.

And I am always.

¹ The little dog – a white Havana spaniel —*was* brought home and renamed, after an incidental character in "Nicholas Nickleby," "Mr. Snittle Timbery." This was shortened to "Timber," and under that name the little dog lived to be very old, and accompanied the family in all its migrations, including the visits to Italy and Switzerland.

P.S. – Richmond was my extreme southern point, and I turn from the South altogether the day after to-morrow. Will you let the Britannia² know of this change – if needful?

Dr. F. H. Deane

Cincinnati, Ohio, April 4th, 1842.

My dear Sir,

I have not been unmindful of your request for a moment, but have not been able to think of it until now. I hope my good friends (for whose christian-names I have left blanks in the epitaph) may like what I have written, and that they will take comfort and be happy again. I sail on the 7th of June, and purpose being at the Carlton House, New York, about the 1st. It will make me easy to know that this letter has reached you.

Faithfully yours.

² Life Insurance Office.

**This is the Grave of a Little Child,
WHOM GOD IN HIS GOODNESS CALLED TO A BRIGHT ETERNITY
WHEN HE WAS VERY YOUNG
HARD AS IT IS FOR HUMAN AFFECTION
TO RECONCILE ITSELF TO DEATH IN ANY
SHAPE (AND MOST OF ALL, PERHAPS, AT FIRST IN THIS),
HIS PARENTS CAN EVEN NOW BELIEVE
THAT IT WILL BE A CONSOLATION
TO THEM THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES,
AND WHEN THEY SHALL HAVE GROWN OLD AND GRAY,
Always to think of him as a Child in Heaven**

"And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them."

He was the Son of Q – and M – THORNTON, christened

CHARLES JERKING

HE WAS BORN ON THE 20TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1841,

AND HE DIED ON THE 12TH DAY OF MARCH, 1842,

having lived only thirteen months and twenty days

My dear Henry,

Although I date this letter as above, it will not be so old a one as at first sight it would appear to be when it reaches you. I shall carry it on with me to Montreal, and despatch it from there by the steamer which goes to Halifax, to meet the Cunard boat at that place, with Canadian letters and passengers. Before I finally close it, I will add a short postscript, so that it will contain the latest intelligence.

We have had a blessed interval of quiet in this beautiful place, of which, as you may suppose, we stood greatly in need, not only by reason of our hard travelling for a long time, but on account of the incessant persecutions of the people, by land and water, on stage coach, railway car, and steamer, which exceeds anything you can picture to yourself by the utmost stretch of your imagination. So far we have had this hotel nearly to ourselves. It is a large square house, standing on a bold height, with overhanging eaves like a Swiss cottage, and a wide handsome gallery outside every story. These colonnades make it look so very light, that it has exactly the appearance of a house built with a pack of cards; and I live in bodily terror lest any man should venture to step out of a little observatory on the roof, and crush the whole structure with one stamp of his foot.

Our sitting-room (which is large and low like a nursery) is on the second floor, and is so close to the Falls that the windows are always wet and dim with spray. Two bedrooms open out of it – one our own; one Anne's. The secretary slumbers near at hand, but without these sacred precincts. From the three chambers, or any part of them, you can see the Falls rolling and tumbling, and roaring and leaping, all day long, with bright rainbows making fiery arches down a hundred feet below us. When the sun is on them, they shine and glow like molten gold. When the day is gloomy, the water falls like snow, or sometimes it seems to crumble away like the face of a great chalk cliff, or sometimes again to roll along the front of the rock like white smoke. But it all seems gay or gloomy, dark or light, by sun or moon. From the bottom of both Falls, there is always rising up a solemn ghostly cloud, which hides the boiling cauldron from human sight, and makes it in its mystery a hundred times more grand than if you could see all the secrets that lie hidden in its tremendous depth. One Fall is as close to us as York Gate is to No. 1, Devonshire Terrace. The other (the great Horse-shoe Fall) may be, perhaps, about half as far off as "Creedy's."³ One circumstance in connection with them is, in all the accounts, greatly exaggerated – I mean the noise. Last night was perfectly still. Kate and I could just hear them, at the quiet time of sunset, a mile off. Whereas, believing the statements I had heard I began putting my ear to the ground, like a savage or a bandit in a ballet, thirty miles off, when we were coming here from Buffalo.

I was delighted to receive your famous letter, and to read your account of our darlings, whom we long to see with an intensity it is impossible to shadow forth, ever so faintly. I do believe, though I say it as shouldn't, that they are good 'uns – both to look at and to go. I roared out this morning, as soon as I was awake, "Next month," which we have been longing to be able to say ever since we have been here. I really do not know how we shall ever knock at the door, when that slowest of all impossibly slow hackney-coaches shall pull up – at home.

I am glad you exult in the fight I have had about the copyright. If you knew how they tried to stop me, you would have a still greater interest in it. The greatest men in England have sent me out, through Forster, a very manly, and becoming, and spirited memorial and address, backing me in all I have done. I have despatched it to Boston for publication, and am coolly prepared for the storm it will raise. But my best rod is in pickle.

Is it not a horrible thing that scoundrel booksellers should grow rich here from publishing books, the authors of which do not reap one farthing from their issue by scores of thousands; and that every vile, blackguard, and detestable newspaper, so filthy and bestial that no honest man would admit one into his house for a scullery door-mat, should be able to publish those same writings side by

³ Mr. Macready's – so pronounced by one of Charles Dickens's little children.

side, cheek by jowl, with the coarsest and most obscene companions with which they must become connected, in course of time, in people's minds? Is it tolerable that besides being robbed and rifled an author should be forced to appear in any form, in any vulgar dress, in any atrocious company; that he should have no choice of his audience, no control over his own distorted text, and that he should be compelled to jostle out of the course the best men in this country who only ask to live by writing? I vow before high heaven that my blood so boils at these enormities, that when I speak about them I seem to grow twenty feet high, and to swell out in proportion. "Robbers that ye are," I think to myself when I get upon my legs, "here goes!"

The places we have lodged in, the roads we have gone over, the company we have been among, the tobacco-spittle we have wallowed in, the strange customs we have complied with, the packing-cases in which we have travelled, the woods, swamps, rivers, prairies, lakes, and mountains we have crossed, are all subjects for legends and tales at home; quires, reams, wouldn't hold them. I don't think Anne has so much as seen an American tree. She never looks at a prospect by any chance, or displays the smallest emotion at any sight whatever. She objects to Niagara that "it's nothing but water," and considers that "there is too much of that."

I suppose you have heard that I am going to act at the Montreal theatre with the officers? Farce-books being scarce, and the choice consequently limited, I have selected Keeley's part in "Two o'Clock in the Morning." I wrote yesterday to Mitchell, the actor and manager at New York, to get and send me a comic wig, light flaxen, with a small whisker halfway down the cheek; over this I mean to wear two night-caps, one with a tassel and one of flannel; a flannel wrapper, drab tights and slippers, will complete the costume.

I am very sorry to hear that business is so flat, but the proverb says it never rains but it pours, and it may be remarked with equal truth upon the other side, that it never *don't* rain but it holds up very much indeed. You will be busy again long before I come home, I have no doubt.

We purpose leaving this on Wednesday morning. Give my love to Letitia and to mother, and always believe me, my dear Henry,

Affectionately yours.

Mr. Henry Austin

Montreal, Canada, May 12th, 1842.

All well, though (with the exception of one from Fred) we have received no letters whatever by the *Caledonia*. We have experienced impossible-to-be-described attentions in Canada. Everybody's carriage and horses are at our disposal, and everybody's servants; and all the Government boats and boats' crews. We shall play, between the 20th and the 25th, "A Roland for an Oliver," "Two o'Clock in the Morning," and "Deaf as a Post."

Mr. Thomas Longman

Athenæum, Friday Afternoon.

My dear Sir,

If I could possibly have attended the meeting yesterday I would most gladly have done so. But I have been up the whole night, and was too much exhausted even to write and say so before the proceedings came on.

I have fought the fight across the Atlantic with the utmost energy I could command; have never been turned aside by any consideration for an instant; am fresher for the fray than ever; will battle it to the death, and die game to the last.

I am happy to say that my boy is quite well again. From being in perfect health he fell into alarming convulsions with the surprise and joy of our return.

I beg my regards to Mrs. Longman,

*And am always,
Faithfully yours.*

Miss Pardoe

*Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
July 19th, 1842.*

Dear Madam,

I beg to set you right on one point in reference to the American robbers, which perhaps you do not quite understand.

The existing law allows them to reprint any English book, without any communication whatever with the author or anybody else. My books have all been reprinted on these agreeable terms.

But sometimes, when expectation is awakened there about a book before its publication, one firm of pirates will pay a trifle to procure early proofs of it, and get so much the start of the rest as they can obtain by the time necessarily consumed in printing it. Directly it is printed it is common property, and may be reprinted a thousand times. My circular only referred to such bargains as these.

I should add that I have no hope of the States doing justice in this dishonest respect, and therefore do not expect to overtake these fellows, but we may cry "Stop thief!" nevertheless, especially as they wince and smart under it.

Faithfully yours always.

Mr. H. P. Smith

Devonshire Terrace, Thursday, July 14th, 1842.

My dear Smith,

The cheque safely received. As you say, it would be cheap at any money. My devotion to the fine arts renders it impossible for me to cash it. I have therefore ordered it to be framed and glazed.

I am really grateful to you for the interest you take in my proceedings. Next time I come into the City I will show you my introductory chapter to the American book. It may seem to prepare the reader for a much greater amount of slaughter than he will meet with; but it is honest and true. Therefore my hand does not shake.

Best love and regards. "Certainly" to the Richmondian intentions.

Always faithfully your Friend.

Mr. Harrison Ainsworth

Broadstairs, Kent, September 14th, 1842.

My dear Ainsworth,

The enclosed has been sent to me by a young gentleman in Devonshire (of whom I know no more than that I have occasionally, at his request, read and suggested amendments in some of his writings), with a special petition that I would recommend it to you for insertion in your magazine.

I think it very pretty, and I have no doubt you will also. But it is poetry, and may be too long. He is a very modest young fellow, and has decided ability.

I hope when I come home at the end of the month, we shall foregather more frequently. Of course you are working, tooth and nail; and of course I am.

Kate joins me in best regards to yourself and all your house (not forgetting, but especially remembering, my old friend, Mrs. Touchet), and I am always,

*My dear Ainsworth,
Heartily yours.*

Mr. Henry Austin

Broadstairs, Sunday, September 25th, 1842.

My dear Henry,

I enclose you the Niagara letter, with many thanks for the loan of it.

Pray tell Mr. Chadwick that I am greatly obliged to him for his remembrance of me, and I heartily concur with him in the great importance and interest of the subject, though I do differ from him, to the death, on his crack topic – the New Poor-Law.

I have been turning my thoughts to this very item in the condition of American towns, and had put their present aspects strongly before the American people; therefore I shall read his report with the greater interest and attention.

We return next Saturday night.

If you will dine with us next day or any day in the week, we shall be truly glad and delighted to see you. Let me know, then, what day you will come.

I need scarcely say that I shall joyfully talk with you about the Metropolitan Improvement Society, then or at any time; and with love to Letitia, in which Kate and the babies join, I am always, my dear Henry,

Affectionately yours.

P.S. – The children's present names are as follows:

Katey (from a lurking propensity to fieryness), Lucifer Box.

Mamey (as generally descriptive of her bearing), Mild Glo'ster.

Charley (as a corruption of Master Toby), Flaster Floby.

Walter (suggested by his high cheek-bones), Young Skull.

Each is pronounced with a peculiar howl, which I shall have great pleasure in illustrating.

Rev. William Harness

Devonshire Terrace, November 8th, 1842.

My dear Harness,

Some time ago, you sent me a note from a friend of yours, a barrister, I think, begging me to forward to him any letters I might receive from a deranged nephew of his, at Newcastle. In the midst of a most bewildering correspondence with unknown people, on every possible and impossible subject, I have forgotten this gentleman's name, though I have a kind of hazy remembrance that he lived near Russell Square. As the Post Office would be rather puzzled, perhaps, to identify him by such an address, may I ask the favour of you to hand him the enclosed, and to say that it is the second I have received since I returned from America? The last, I think, was a defiance to mortal combat. With best remembrances to your sister, in which Mrs. Dickens joins, believe me, my dear Harness,

Always faithfully yours.

Mr. W. C. Macready

Devonshire Terrace, Saturday, Nov. 12th, 1842.

My dear Macready,

You pass this house every day on your way to or from the theatre. I wish you would call once as you go by, and soon, that you may have plenty of time to deliberate on what I wish to suggest to you. The more I think of Marston's play, the more sure I feel that a prologue to the purpose would help it materially, and almost decide the fate of any ticklish point on the first night. Now I have an idea (not easily explainable in writing but told in five words), that would take the prologue out of the conventional dress of prologues, quite. Get the curtain up with a dash, and begin the play with a sledge-hammer blow. If on consideration, you should think with me, I will write the prologue heartily.

Faithfully yours ever.

PROLOGUE

To Mr. Marston's Play of "The Patrician's Daughter."

No tale of streaming plumes and harness bright
Dwells on the poet's maiden harp to-night;
No trumpet's clamour and no battle's fire
Breathes in the trembling accents of his lyre;
Enough for him, if in his lowly strain
He wakes one household echo not in vain;
Enough for him, if in his boldest word
The beating heart of man be dimly heard.
Its solemn music which, like strains that sigh
Through charmèd gardens, all who hearing die;

Its solemn music he does not pursue
To distant ages out of human view;
Nor listen to its wild and mournful chime
In the dead caverns on the shore of Time;
But musing with a calm and steady gaze
Before the crackling flames of living days,
He hears it whisper through the busy roar
Of what shall be and what has been before.
Awake the Present! shall no scene display
The tragic passion of the passing day?
Is it with Man, as with some meaner things,
That out of death his single purpose springs?
Can his eventful life no moral teach
Until he be, for aye, beyond its reach?

Obscurely shall he suffer, act, and fade,
Dubb'd noble only by the sexton's spade?
Awake the Present! Though the steel-clad age
Find life alone within the storied page,
Iron is worn, at heart, by many still —
The tyrant Custom binds the serf-like will;
If the sharp rack, and screw, and chain be gone,
These later days have tortures of their own;
The guiltless writhe, while Guilt is stretched in sleep,
And Virtue lies, too often, dungeon deep.
Awake the Present! what the Past has sown
Be in its harvest garner'd, reap'd, and grown!
How pride breeds pride, and wrong engenders wrong,
Read in the volume Truth has held so long,
Assured that where life's flowers freshest blow,
The sharpest thorns and keenest briars grow,
How social usage has the pow'r to change
Good thoughts to evil; in its highest range
To cramp the noble soul, and turn to ruth
The kindling impulse of our glorious youth,
Crushing the spirit in its house of clay,
Learn from the lessons of the present day.
Not light its import and not poor its mien;
Yourselves the actors, and your homes the scene.

Mr. W. C. Macready

Saturday Morning.

My dear Macready,

One suggestion, though it be a late one. Do have upon the table, in the opening scene of the second act, something in a velvet case, or frame, that may look like a large miniature of Mabel, such as one of Ross's, and eschew that picture. It haunts me with a sense of danger. Even a titter at that critical time, with the whole of that act before you, would be a fatal thing. The picture is bad in itself, bad in its effect upon the beautiful room, bad in all its associations with the house. In case of your having nothing at hand, I send you by bearer what would be a million times better. Always, my dear Macready,

Faithfully yours.

P.S. – I need not remind you how common it is to have such pictures in cases lying about elegant rooms.

Mr. W. P. Frith

*1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
November 15th, 1842.*

My dear Sir,

I shall be very glad if you will do me the favour to paint me two little companion pictures; one, a Dolly Varden (whom you have so exquisitely done already), the other, a Kate Nickleby.

Faithfully yours always.

P.S. – I take it for granted that the original picture of Dolly with the bracelet is sold?

The same

Devonshire Terrace, November 17th, 1842.

My dear Sir,

Pray consult your own convenience in the matter of my little commission; whatever suits your engagements and prospects will best suit me.

I saw an unfinished proof of Dolly at Mitchell's some two or three months ago; I thought it was proceeding excellently well then. It will give me great pleasure to see her when completed.

Faithfully yours.

Mr. Thomas Hood

Devonshire Terrace, November 30th, 1842.

My dear Hood,

In asking your and Mrs. Hood's leave to bring Mrs. D.'s sister (who stays with us) on Tuesday, let me add that I should very much like to bring at the same time a very unaffected and ardent admirer of your genius, who has no small portion of that commodity in his own right, and is a very dear friend of mine and a very famous fellow; to wit, Maclise, the painter, who would be glad (as he has often told me) to know you better, and would be much pleased, I know, if I could say to him, "Hood wants me to bring you."

I use so little ceremony with you, in the conviction that you will use as little with me, and say, "My dear D. – Convenient;" or, "My dear D. – Ill-convenient," (as the popular phrase is), just as the case may be. Of course, I have said nothing to him.

*Always heartily yours,
Boz.*

Mrs. Trollope

*1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
December 16th, 1842.*

My dear Mrs. Trollope,

Let me thank you most cordially for your kind note, in reference to my Notes, which has given me true pleasure and gratification.

As I never scrupled to say in America, so I can have no delicacy in saying to you, that, allowing for the change you worked in many social features of American society, and for the time that has passed since you wrote of the country, I am convinced that there is no writer who has so well and accurately (I need not add so entertainingly) described it, in many of its aspects, as you have done; and this renders your praise the more valuable to me. I do not recollect ever to have heard or seen the charge of exaggeration made against a feeble performance, though, in its feebleness, it may have

been most untrue. It seems to me essentially natural, and quite inevitable, that common observers should accuse an uncommon one of this fault, and I have no doubt that you were long ago of this opinion; very much to your own comfort.

Mrs. Dickens begs me to thank you for your kind remembrance of her, and to convey to you her best regards. Always believe me,

Faithfully yours.

Mr. George Cattermole

Devonshire Terrace, December 20th, 1842.

My dear George,

It is impossible for me to tell you how greatly I am charmed with those beautiful pictures, in which the whole feeling, and thought, and expression of the little story is rendered to the gratification of my inmost heart; and on which you have lavished those amazing resources of yours with a power at which I fairly wondered when I sat down yesterday before them.

I took them to Mac, straightway, in a cab, and it would have done you good if you could have seen and heard him. You can't think how moved he was by the old man in the church, or how pleased I was to have chosen it before he saw the drawings.

You are such a queer fellow and hold yourself so much aloof, that I am afraid to say half I would say touching my grateful admiration; so you shall imagine the rest. I enclose a note from Kate, to which I hope you will bring the only one acceptable reply. Always, my dear Cattermole,

Faithfully yours.

Book II

1843 TO 1857

1843

NARRATIVE

We have, unfortunately, very few letters of interest in this year. But we are able to give the commencement of Charles Dickens's correspondence with his beloved friends, Mr. Douglas Jerrold and Mr. Clarkson Stanfield; with Lord Morpeth (afterwards Lord Carlisle), for whom he always entertained the highest regard; and with Mr. Charles Babbage.

He was at work upon "Martin Chuzzlewit" until the end of the year, when he also wrote and published the first of his Christmas stories – "The Christmas Carol."

He was much distressed by the sad fate of Mr. Elton (a respected actor), who was lost in the wreck of the *Pegasus*, and was very eager and earnest in his endeavours to raise a fund on behalf of Mr. Elton's children.

We are sorry to be unable to give any explanation as to the nature of the Cockspur Street Society, mentioned in this first letter to Mr. Charles Babbage. But we publish it notwithstanding, considering it to be one of general interest.

The "Little History of England" was never finished – not, that is to say, the one alluded to in the letter to Mr. Jerrold.

Mr. David Dickson kindly furnishes us with an explanation of the letter dated 10th May. "It was," he says, "in answer to a letter from me, pointing out that the 'Shepherd' in 'Pickwick' was apparently reflecting on the scriptural doctrine of the new birth."

The beginning of the letter to Mr. Jerrold (15th June) is, as will be readily understood, an imaginary cast of a purely imaginary play. A portion of this letter has already been published, in Mr. Blanchard Jerrold's life of his father. It originated in a proposal of Mr. Webster's – the manager of the Haymarket Theatre – to give five hundred pounds for a prize comedy by an English author.

The opera referred to in the letter to Mr. R. H. Horne was called "The Village Coquettes," and the farce was "The Strange Gentleman," already alluded to by us, in connection with a letter to Mr. Harley.

Mr. Charles Babbage

Devonshire Terrace, April 27th, 1843.

My dear Sir,

I write to you, *confidentially*, in answer to your note of last night, and the tenor of mine will tell you why.

You may suppose, from seeing my name in the printed letter you have received, that I am favourable to the proposed society. I am decidedly opposed to it. I went there on the day I was in the chair, after much solicitation; and being put into it, opened the proceedings by telling the meeting that I approved of the design in theory, but in practice considered it hopeless. I may tell you – I did not tell them – that the nature of the meeting, and the character and position of many of the men attending it, cried "Failure" trumpet-tongued in my ears. To quote an expression from Tennyson, I may say that if it were the best society in the world, the grossness of some natures in it would have weight to drag it down.

In the wisdom of all you urge in the notes you have sent me, taking them as statements of theory, I entirely concur. But in practice, I feel sure that the present publishing system cannot be upset until authors are different men. The first step to be taken is to move as a body in the question

of copyright, enforce the existing laws, and try to obtain better. For that purpose I hold that the authors and publishers must unite, as the wealth, business habits, and interest of that latter class are of great importance to such an end. The Longmans and Murray have been with me proposing such an association. That I shall support. But having seen the Cockspur Street Society, I am as well convinced of its invincible hopelessness as if I saw it written by a celestial penman in the Book of Fate.

*My dear Sir,
Always faithfully yours.*

Mr. Douglas Jerrold

Devonshire Terrace, May 3rd, 1843.

My dear Jerrold,

Let me thank you most cordially for your books, not only for their own sakes (and I have read them with perfect delight), but also for this hearty and most welcome mark of your recollection of the friendship we have established; in which light I know I may regard and prize them.

I am greatly pleased with your opening paper in the *Illuminated*. It is very wise, and capital; written with the finest end of that iron pen of yours; witty, much needed, and full of truth. I vow to God that I think the parrots of society are more intolerable and mischievous than its birds of prey. If ever I destroy myself, it will be in the bitterness of hearing those infernal and damnably good old times extolled. Once, in a fit of madness, after having been to a public dinner which took place just as this Ministry came in, I wrote the parody I send you enclosed, for Fonblanque. There is nothing in it but wrath; but that's wholesome, so I send it you.

I am writing a little history of England for my boy, which I will send you when it is printed for him, though your boys are too old to profit by it. It is curious that I have tried to impress upon him (writing, I daresay, at the same moment with you) the exact spirit of your paper, for I don't know what I should do if he were to get hold of any Conservative or High Church notions; and the best way of guarding against any such horrible result is, I take it, to wring the parrots' necks in his very cradle.

Oh Heaven, if you could have been with me at a hospital dinner last Monday! There were men there who made such speeches and expressed such sentiments as any moderately intelligent dustman would have blushed through his cindery bloom to have thought of. Sleek, slobbering, bow-paunched, over-fed, apoplectic, snorting cattle, and the auditory leaping up in their delight! I never saw such an illustration of the power of purse, or felt so degraded and debased by its contemplation, since I have had eyes and ears. The absurdity of the thing was too horrible to laugh at. It was perfectly overwhelming. But if I could have partaken it with anybody who would have felt it as you would have done, it would have had quite another aspect; or would at least, like a "classic mask" (oh d – that word!) have had one funny side to relieve its dismal features.

Supposing fifty families were to emigrate into the wilds of North America – yours, mine, and forty-eight others – picked for their concurrence of opinion on all important subjects and for their resolution to found a colony of common-sense, how soon would that devil, Cant, present itself among them in one shape or other? The day they landed, do you say, or the day after?

That is a great mistake (almost the only one I know) in the "Arabian Nights," when the princess restores people to their original beauty by sprinkling them with the golden water. It is quite clear that she must have made monsters of them by such a christening as that.

*My dear Jerrold,
Faithfully your Friend.*

Mr. David Dickson

*1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
May 10th, 1843.*

Sir,

Permit me to say, in reply to your letter, that you do not understand the intention (I daresay the fault is mine) of that passage in the "Pickwick Papers" which has given you offence. The design of "the Shepherd" and of this and every other allusion to him is, to show how sacred things are degraded, vulgarised, and rendered absurd when persons who are utterly incompetent to teach the commonest things take upon themselves to expound such mysteries, and how, in making mere cant phrases of divine words, these persons miss the spirit in which they had their origin. I have seen a great deal of this sort of thing in many parts of England, and I never knew it lead to charity or good deeds.

Whether the great Creator of the world and the creature of his hands, moulded in his own image, be quite so opposite in character as you believe, is a question which it would profit us little to discuss. I like the frankness and candour of your letter, and thank you for it. That every man who seeks heaven must be born again, in good thoughts of his Maker, I sincerely believe. That it is expedient for every hound to say so in a certain snuffling form of words, to which he attaches no good meaning, I do not believe. I take it there is no difference between us.

Faithfully yours.

Mr. Douglas Jerrold

Devonshire Terrace, June 13th, 1843.

My dear Jerrold,

Yes, you have anticipated my occupation. Chuzzlewit be d – d. High comedy and five hundred pounds are the only matters I can think of. I call it "The One Thing Needful; or, A Part is Better than the Whole." Here are the characters:

Old Febrile	Mr. Farren.
Young Febrile (his Son)	Mr. Howe.
Jack Hessians (his Friend)	Mr. W. Lacy.
Chalks (a Landlord)	Mr. Gough.
Hon. Harry Staggers	Mr. Mellon.
Sir Thomas Tip	Mr. Buckstone.
Swig	Mr. Webster.
The Duke of Leeds	Mr. Coutts.
Sir Smilin Gowler	Mr. Macready.
Servants, Gamblers, Visitors, etc.	
Mrs. Febrile	Mrs. Gallot.
Lady Tip	Mrs. Humby.
Mrs. Sour	Mrs. W. Clifford.
Fanny	Miss A. Smith.

One scene, where Old Febrile tickles Lady Tip in the ribs, and afterwards dances out with his hat behind him, his stick before, and his eye on the pit, I expect will bring the house down. There is also another point, where Old Febrile, at the conclusion of his disclosure to Swig, rises and says:

"And now, Swig, tell me, have I acted well?" And Swig says: "Well, Mr. Febrile, have you ever acted ill?" which will carry off the piece.

Herne Bay. Hum. I suppose it's no worse than any other place in this weather, but it is watery rather – isn't it? In my mind's eye, I have the sea in a perpetual state of smallpox; and the chalk running downhill like town milk. But I know the comfort of getting to work in a fresh place, and proposing pious projects to one's self, and having the more substantial advantage of going to bed early and getting up ditto, and walking about alone. I should like to deprive you of the last-named happiness, and to take a good long stroll, terminating in a public-house, and whatever they chanced to have in it. But fine days are over, I think. The horrible misery of London in this weather, with not even a fire to make it cheerful, is hideous.

But I have my comedy to fly to. My only comfort! I walk up and down the street at the back of the theatre every night, and peep in at the green-room window, thinking of the time when "Dick – ins" will be called for by excited hundreds, and won't come till Mr. Webster (half Swig and half himself) shall enter from his dressing-room, and quelling the tempest with a smile, beseech that wizard, if he be in the house (here he looks up at my box), to accept the congratulations of the audience, and indulge them with a sight of the man who has got five hundred pounds in money, and it's impossible to say how much in laurel. Then I shall come forward, and bow once – twice – thrice – roars of approbation – Brayvo – brarvo – hooray – hoorar – hooroar – one cheer more; and asking Webster home to supper, shall declare eternal friendship for that public-spirited individual.

They have not sent me the "Illustrated Magazine." What do they mean by that? You don't say your daughter is better, so I hope you mean that she is quite well. My wife desires her best regards.

*I am always, my dear Jerrold,
Faithfully your Friend,
The Congreve of the Nineteenth Century
(which I mean to be called in the Sunday papers).*

P.S. – I shall dedicate it to Webster, beginning: "My dear Sir, – When you first proposed to stimulate the slumbering dramatic talent of England, I assure you I had not the least idea" – etc. etc. etc.

Mr. Clarkson Stanfield

1, Devonshire Terrace, July 26th, 1843.

My dear Stanfield,

I am chairman of a committee, whose object is to open a subscription, and arrange a benefit for the relief of the seven destitute children of poor Elton the actor, who was drowned in the *Pegasus*. They are exceedingly anxious to have the great assistance of your name; and if you will allow yourself to be announced as one of the body, I do assure you you will help a very melancholy and distressful cause.

Faithfully always.

P.S. – The committee meet to-night at the Freemasons', at eight o'clock.

Lord Morpeth

*1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
August 3rd, 1843.*

Dear Lord Morpeth,

In acknowledging the safe receipt of your kind donation in behalf of poor Mr. Elton's orphan children, I hope you will suffer me to address you with little ceremony, as the best proof I can give you of my cordial reciprocation of all you say in your most welcome note. I have long esteemed you and been your distant but very truthful admirer; and trust me that it is a real pleasure and happiness to me to anticipate the time when we shall have a nearer intercourse.

*Believe me, with sincere regard,
Faithfully your Servant.*

Mr. William Harrison Ainsworth

Devonshire Terrace, October 13th, 1843.

My dear Ainsworth,

I want very much to see you, not having had that old pleasure for a long time. I am at this moment deaf in the ears, hoarse in the throat, red in the nose, green in the gills, damp in the eyes, twitchy in the joints, and fractious in the temper from a most intolerable and oppressive cold, caught the other day, I suspect, at Liverpool, where I got exceedingly wet; but I will make prodigious efforts to get the better of it to-night by resorting to all conceivable remedies, and if I succeed so as to be only negatively disgusting to-morrow, I will joyfully present myself at six, and bring my womankind along with me.

Cordially yours.

Mr. R. H. Horne

Devonshire Terrace, November 13th, 1843.

* * * * *

Pray tell that besotted – to let the opera sink into its native obscurity. I did it in a fit of d – ble good nature long ago, for Hullah, who wrote some very pretty music to it. I just put down for everybody what everybody at the St. James's Theatre wanted to say and do, and that they could say and do best, and I have been most sincerely repentant ever since. The farce I also did as a sort of practical joke, for Harley, whom I have known a long time. It was funny – adapted from one of the published sketches called the "Great Winglebury Duel," and was published by Chapman and Hall. But I have no copy of it now, nor should I think they have. But both these things were done without the least consideration or regard to reputation.

I wouldn't repeat them for a thousand pounds apiece, and devoutly wish them to be forgotten. If you will impress this on the waxy mind of – I shall be truly and unaffectedly obliged to you.

Always faithfully yours.

1844

NARRATIVE

In the summer of this year the house in Devonshire Terrace was let, and Charles Dickens started with his family for Italy, going first to a villa at Albaro, near Genoa, for a few months, and afterwards to the Palazzo Peschiere, Genoa. Towards the end of this year he made excursions to the many places of interest in this country, and was joined at Milan by his wife and sister-in-law, previous to his own departure alone on a business visit to England. He had written his Christmas story, "The Chimes," and was anxious to take it himself to England, and to read it to some of his most intimate friends there.

Mr. Macready went to America and returned in the autumn, and towards the end of the year he paid a professional visit to Paris.

Charles Dickens's letter to his wife (26th February) treats of a visit to Liverpool, where he went to take the chair on the opening of the Mechanics' Institution and to make a speech on education. The "Fanny" alluded to was his sister, Mrs. Burnett; the *Britannia*, the ship in which he and Mrs. Dickens made their outward trip to America; the "Mrs. Bean," the stewardess, and "Hewett," the captain, of that same vessel.

The letter to Mr. Charles Knight was in acknowledgment of the receipt of a prospectus entitled "Book Clubs for all readers." The attempt, which fortunately proved completely successful, was to establish a cheap book club. The scheme was, that a number of families should combine together, each contributing about three halfpennies a week; which contribution would enable them, by exchanging the volumes among them, to have sufficient reading to last the year. The publications, which were to be made as cheap as possible, could be purchased by families at the end of the year, on consideration of their putting by an extra penny a week for that purpose. Charles Dickens, who always had the comfort and happiness of the working-classes greatly at heart, was much interested in this scheme of Mr. Charles Knight's, and highly approved of it. Charles Dickens and this new correspondent became subsequently true and fast friends.

"Martin Chuzzlewit" was dramatised in the early autumn of this year, at the Lyceum Theatre, which was then under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Keeley. Charles Dickens superintended some rehearsals, but had left England before the play was acted in public.

The man "Roche," alluded to in his letter to Mr. Maclise, was the French courier engaged to go with the family to Italy. He remained as servant there, and was with Charles Dickens through all his foreign travels. His many excellent qualities endeared him to the whole family, and his master never lost sight of this faithful servant until poor Roche's untimely death in 1849.

The Rev. Edward Tagart was a celebrated Unitarian minister, and a very highly esteemed and valued friend.

The "Chickenstalker" (letter to Mrs. Dickens, November 8th), is an instance of the eccentric names he was constantly giving to his children, and these names he frequently made use of in his books.

In this year we have our first letter to Mr. (afterwards Sir Edwin) Landseer, for whom Charles Dickens had the highest admiration and personal regard.

Mr. W. C. Macready

Devonshire Terrace, January 3rd, 1844.

My very dear Macready,

You know all the news, and you know I love you; so I no more know why I write than I do why I "come round" after the play to shake hands with you in your dressing-room. I say come, as if you were at this present moment the lessee of Drury Lane, and had – with a long face on one hand, – elaborately explaining that everything in creation is a joint-stock company on the other, the inimitable B. by the fire, in conversation with – . Well-a-day! I see it all, and smell that extraordinary compound of odd scents peculiar to a theatre, which bursts upon me when I swing open the little door in the hall, accompanies me as I meet perspiring supers in the narrow passage, goes with me up the two steps, crosses the stage, winds round the third entrance P.S. as I wind, and escorts me safely into your presence, where I find you unwinding something slowly round and round your chest, which is so long that no man can see the end of it.

Oh that you had been at Clarence Terrace on Nina's birthday! Good God, how we missed you, talked of you, drank your health, and wondered what you were doing! Perhaps you are Falkland enough (I swear I suspect you of it) to feel rather sore – just a little bit, you know, the merest trifle in the world – on hearing that Mrs. Macready looked brilliant, blooming, young, and handsome, and that she danced a country dance with the writer hereof (Acres to your Falkland) in a thorough spirit of becoming good humour and enjoyment. Now you don't like to be told that? Nor do you quite like to hear that Forster and I conjured bravely; that a plum-pudding was produced from an empty saucepan, held over a blazing fire kindled in Stanfield's hat without damage to the lining; that a box of bran was changed into a live guinea-pig, which ran between my godchild's feet, and was the cause of such a shrill uproar and clapping of hands that you might have heard it (and I daresay did) in America; that three half-crowns being taken from Major Burns and put into a tumbler-glass before his eyes, did then and there give jingling answers to the questions asked of them by me, and knew where you were and what you were doing, to the unspeakable admiration of the whole assembly. Neither do you quite like to be told that we are going to do it again next Saturday, with the addition of demoniacal dresses from the masquerade shop; nor that Mrs. Macready, for her gallant bearing always, and her best sort of best affection, is the best creature I know. Never mind; no man shall gag me, and those are my opinions.

My dear Macready, the lecturing proposition is not to be thought of. I have not the slightest doubt or hesitation in giving you my most strenuous and decided advice against it. Looking only to its effect at home, I am immovable in my conviction that the impression it would produce would be one of failure, and a reduction of yourself to the level of those who do the like here. To us who know the Boston names and honour them, and who know Boston and like it (Boston is what I would have the whole United States to be), the Boston requisition would be a valuable document, of which you and your friends might be proud. But those names are perfectly unknown to the public here, and would produce not the least effect. The only thing known to the public here is, that they ask (when I say "they" I mean the people) everybody to lecture. It is one of the things I have ridiculed in "Chuzzlewit." Lecture you, and you fall into the roll of Lardners, Vandenhoffs, Eltons, Knowleses, Buckinghamhs. You are off your pedestal, have flung away your glass slipper, and changed your triumphal coach into a seedy old pumpkin. I am quite sure of it, and cannot express my strong conviction in language of sufficient force.

"Puff-ridden!" why to be sure they are. The nation is a miserable Sindbad, and its boasted press the loathsome, foul old man upon his back, and yet they will tell you, and proclaim to the four winds for repetition here, that they don't need their ignorant and brutal papers, as if the papers could exist if they didn't need them! Let any two of these vagabonds, in any town you go to, take it into their heads to make you an object of attack, or to direct the general attention elsewhere, and what avail those wonderful images of passion which you have been all your life perfecting!

I have sent you, to the charge of our trusty and well-beloved Colden, a little book I published on the 17th of December, and which has been a most prodigious success – the greatest, I think, I have ever achieved. It pleases me to think that it will bring you home for an hour or two, and I long

to hear you have read it on some quiet morning. Do they allow you to be quiet, by-the-way? "Some of our most fashionable people, sir," denounced me awfully for liking to be alone sometimes.

Now that we have turned Christmas, I feel as if your face were directed homewards, Macready. The downhill part of the road is before us now, and we shall travel on to midsummer at a dashing pace; and, please Heaven, I will be at Liverpool when you come steaming up the Mersey, with that red funnel smoking out unutterable things, and your heart much fuller than your trunks, though something lighter! If I be not the first Englishman to shake hands with you on English ground, the man who gets before me will be a brisk and active fellow, and even then need put his best leg foremost. So I warn Forster to keep in the rear, or he'll be blown.

If you shall have any leisure to project and put on paper the outline of a scheme for opening any theatre on your return, upon a certain list subscribed, and on certain understandings with the actors, it strikes me that it would be wise to break ground while you are still away. Of course I need not say that I will see anybody or do anything – even to the calling together of the actors – if you should ever deem it desirable. My opinion is that our respected and valued friend Mr. – will stagger through another season, if he don't rot first. I understand he is in a partial state of decomposition at this minute. He was very ill, but got better. How is it that – always do get better, and strong hearts are so easy to die?

Kate sends her tender love; so does Georgy, so does Charlie, so does Mamey, so does Katey, so does Walter, so does the other one who is to be born next week. Look homeward always, as we look abroad to you. God bless you, my dear Macready.

Ever your affectionate Friend.

Mr. Laman Blanchard

Devonshire Terrace, January 4th, 1844.

My dear Blanchard,

I cannot thank you enough for the beautiful manner and the true spirit of friendship in which you have noticed my "Carol." But I *must* thank you because you have filled my heart up to the brim, and it is running over.

You meant to give me great pleasure, my dear fellow, and you have done it. The tone of your elegant and fervent praise has touched me in the tenderest place. I cannot write about it, and as to talking of it, I could no more do that than a dumb man. I have derived inexpressible gratification from what I know was a labour of love on your part. And I can never forget it.

When I think it likely that I may meet you (perhaps at Ainsworth's on Friday?) I shall slip a "Carol" into my pocket and ask you to put it among your books for my sake. You will never like it the less for having made it the means of so much happiness to me.

*Always, my dear Blanchard,
Faithfully your Friend.*

Mrs. Charles Dickens

Liverpool, Radley's Hotel, Monday, Feb. 26th, 1844.

My dear Kate,

I got down here last night (after a most intolerably wet journey) before seven, and found Thompson sitting by my fire. He had ordered dinner, and we ate it pleasantly enough, and went to bed in good time. This morning, Mr. Yates, the great man connected with the Institution (and a brother of Ashton Yates's), called. I went to look at it with him. It is an enormous place, and the tickets have

been selling at two and even three guineas apiece. The lecture-room, in which the celebration is held, will accommodate over thirteen hundred people. It was being fitted with gas after the manner of the ring at Astley's. I should think it an easy place to speak in, being a semicircle with seats rising one above another to the ceiling, and will have eight hundred ladies to-night, in full dress. I am rayther shaky just now, but shall pull up, I have no doubt. At dinner-time to-morrow you will receive, I hope, a facetious document hastily penned after I return to-night, telling you how it all went off.

When I came back here, I found Fanny and Hewett had picked me up just before. We all went off straight to the *Britannia*, which lay where she did when we went on board. We went into the old little cabin and the ladies' cabin, but Mrs. Bean had gone to Scotland, as the ship does not sail again before May. In the saloon we had some champagne and biscuits, and Hewett had set out upon the table a block of Boston ice, weighing fifty pounds. Scott, of the *Caledonia*, lunched with us – a very nice fellow. He saw Macready play *Macbeth* in Boston, and gave me a tremendous account of the effect. Poor Burroughs, of the *George Washington*, died on board, on his last passage home. His little wife was with him.

Hewett dines with us to-day, and I have procured him admission to-night. I am very sorry indeed (and so was he), that you didn't see the old ship. It was the strangest thing in the world to go on board again.

I had Bacon with me as far as Watford yesterday, and very pleasant. Sheil was also in the train, on his way to Ireland.

Give my best love to Georgy, and kisses to the darlings. Also affectionate regards to Mac and Forster.

Ever affectionately.

OUT OF THE COMMON – PLEASE

Dickens *against* The World

Charles Dickens, of No. 1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park, in the county of Middlesex, gentleman, the successful plaintiff in the above cause, maketh oath and saith: That on the day and date hereof, to wit at seven o'clock in the evening, he, this deponent, took the chair at a large assembly of the Mechanics' Institution at Liverpool, and that having been received with tremendous and enthusiastic plaudits, he, this deponent, did immediately dash into a vigorous, brilliant, humorous, pathetic, eloquent, fervid, and impassioned speech. That the said speech was enlivened by thirteen hundred persons, with frequent, vehement, uproarious, and deafening cheers, and to the best of this deponent's knowledge and belief, he, this deponent, did speak up like a man, and did, to the best of his knowledge and belief, considerably distinguish himself. That after the proceedings of the opening were over, and a vote of thanks was proposed to this deponent, he, this deponent, did again distinguish himself, and that the cheering at that time, accompanied with clapping of hands and stamping of feet, was in this deponent's case thundering and awful. And this deponent further saith, that his white-and-black or magpie waistcoat, did create a strong sensation, and that during the hours of promenading, this deponent heard from persons surrounding him such exclamations as, "What is it! *Is* it a waistcoat? No, it's a shirt" – and the like – all of which this deponent believes to have been complimentary and gratifying; but this deponent further saith that he is now going to supper, and wishes he may have an appetite to eat it.

Charles Dickens.

Sworn before me, at the Adelphi
Hotel, Liverpool, on the 26th
of February, 1844.
S. RADLEY.

Mr. Clarkson Stanfield

Devonshire Terrace, April 30th, 1844.

My dear Stanfield,

The Sanatorium, or sick house for students, governesses, clerks, young artists, and so forth, who are above hospitals, and not rich enough to be well attended in illness in their own lodgings (you know its objects), is going to have a dinner at the London Tavern, on Tuesday, the 5th of June.

The Committee are very anxious to have you for a steward, as one of the heads of a large class; and I have told them that I have no doubt you will act. There is no steward's fee or collection whatever.

They are particularly anxious also to have Mr. Etty and Edwin Landseer. As you see them daily at the Academy, will you ask them or show them this note? Sir Martin became one of the Committee some few years ago, at my solicitation, as recommending young artists, struggling alone in London, to the better knowledge of this establishment.

The dinner is to comprise the new feature of ladies dining at the tables with the gentlemen – not looking down upon them from the gallery. I hope in your reply you will not only book yourself, but Mrs. Stanfield and Mary. It will be very brilliant and cheerful I hope. Dick in the chair. Gentlemen's dinner-tickets a guinea, as usual; ladies', twelve shillings. I think this is all I have to say, except (which is nonsensical and needless) that I am always,

Affectionately yours.

Mr. Edwin Landseer

Athenæum, Monday Morning, May 27th, 1844.

My dear Landseer,

I have let my house with such delicious promptitude, or, as the Americans would say, "with sich everlass'in slickness and al-mity sprydom," that we turn out to-night! in favour of a widow lady, who keeps it all the time we are away!

Wherefore if you, looking up into the sky this evening between five and six (as possibly you may be, in search of the spring), should see a speck in the air – a mere dot – which, growing larger and larger by degrees, appears in course of time to be an eagle (chain and all) in a light cart, accompanied by a raven of uncommon sagacity, curse that good-nature which prompted you to say it – that you would give them house-room. And do it for the love of

Boz.

P.S. – The writer hereof may be heard on by personal enquiry at No. 9, Osnaburgh Terrace, New Road.

Mr. Charles Knight

Devonshire Terrace, June 4th, 1844.

My dear Sir,

Many thanks for your proof, and for your truly gratifying mention of my name. I think the subject excellently chosen, the introduction exactly what it should be, the allusion to the International Copyright question most honourable and manly, and the whole scheme full of the highest interest. I had already seen your prospectus, and if I can be of the feeblest use in advancing a project so intimately connected with an end on which my heart is set – the liberal education of the people – I shall be sincerely glad. All good wishes and success attend you!

*Believe me always,
Faithfully yours.*

Mr. Dudley Costello

June 7th, 1844.

Dear Sir,

Mrs. Harris, being in that delicate state (just confined, and "made comfortable," in fact), hears some sounds below, which she fancies may be the owls (or howls) of the husband to whom she is devoted. They ease her mind by informing her that these sounds are only organs. By "they" I mean the gossips and attendants. By "organs" I mean instrumental boxes with barrels in them, which are commonly played by foreigners under the windows of people of sedentary pursuits, on a speculation of being bribed to leave the street. Mrs. Harris, being of a confiding nature, believed in this pious fraud, and was fully satisfied "that his owls was organs."

Faithfully yours.

Mr. Robert Keeley

9, Osnaburgh Terrace, Monday Evening, June 24th, 1844.

My Dear Sir,

I have been out yachting for two or three days; and consequently could not answer your letter in due course.

I cannot, consistently with the opinion I hold and have always held, in reference to the principle of adapting novels for the stage, give you a prologue to "Chuzzlewit." But believe me to be quite sincere in saying that if I felt I could reasonably do such a thing for anyone, I would do it for you.

I start for Italy on Monday next, but if you have the piece on the stage, and rehearse on Friday, I will gladly come down at any time you may appoint on that morning, and go through it with you all. If you be not in a sufficiently forward state to render this proposal convenient to you, or likely to assist your preparations, do not take the trouble to answer this note.

I presume Mrs. Keeley will do Ruth Pinch. If so, I feel secure about her, and of Mrs. Gamp I am certain. But a queer sensation begins in my legs, and comes upward to my forehead, when I think of Tom.

Faithfully yours always.

Mr. Daniel Maclise

Villa Di Bagnarello, Albaro, Monday, July 22nd, 1844.

My very dear Mac,

I address you with something of the lofty spirit of an exile – a banished commoner – a sort of Anglo-Pole. I don't exactly know what I have done for my country in coming away from it; but I feel it is something – something great – something virtuous and heroic. Lofty emotions rise within me, when I see the sun set on the blue Mediterranean. I am the limpet on the rock. My father's name is Turner and my boots are green.

Apropos of blue. In a certain picture, called "The Serenade," you painted a sky. If you ever have occasion to paint the Mediterranean, let it be exactly of that colour. It lies before me now, as deeply and intensely blue. But no such colour is above me. Nothing like it. In the South of France – at Avignon, at Aix, at Marseilles – I saw deep blue skies (not *so* deep though – oh Lord, no!), and also in America; but the sky above me is familiar to my sight. Is it heresy to say that I have seen its twin-brother shining through the window of Jack Straw's – that down in Devonshire I have seen a better sky? I daresay it is; but like a great many other heresies, it is true.

But such green – green – green – as flutters in the vineyard down below the windows, *that* I never saw; nor yet such lilac, and such purple as float between me and the distant hills; nor yet – in anything – picture, book, or verbal boredom – such awful, solemn, impenetrable blue, as is that same sea. It has such an absorbing, silent, deep, profound effect, that I can't help thinking it suggested the idea of Styx. It looks as if a draught of it – only so much as you could scoop up on the beach, in the hollow of your hand – would wash out everything else, and make a great blue blank of your intellect.

When the sun sets clearly, then, by Heaven, it is majestic! From any one of eleven windows here, or from a terrace overgrown with grapes, you may behold the broad sea; villas, houses, mountains, forts, strewn with rose leaves – strewn with thorns – stifled in thorns! Dyed through and through and through. For a moment. No more. The sun is impatient and fierce, like everything else in these parts, and goes down headlong. Run to fetch your hat – and it's night. Wink at the right time of black night – and it's morning. Everything is in extremes. There is an insect here (I forget its name, and Fletcher and Roche are both out) that chirps all day. There is one outside the window now. The chirp is very loud, something like a Brobdingnagian grasshopper. The creature is born to chirp – to progress in chirping – to chirp louder, louder, louder – till it gives one tremendous chirp, and bursts itself. That is its life and death. Everything "is in a concatenation accordingly." The day gets brighter, brighter, brighter, till it's night. The summer gets hotter, hotter, hotter, till it bursts. The fruit gets riper, riper, riper, till it tumbles down and rots.

Ask me a question or two about fresco – will you be so good? All the houses are painted in fresco hereabout – the outside walls I mean; the fronts, and backs, and sides – and all the colour has run into damp and green seediness, and the very design has struggled away into the component atoms of the plaster. Sometimes (but not often) I can make out a Virgin with a mildewed glory round her head; holding nothing, in an indiscernible lap, with invisible arms; and occasionally the leg or arms of a cherub, but it is very melancholy and dim. There are two old fresco-painted vases outside my own gate – one on either hand – which are so faint, that I never saw them till last night; and only then because I was looking over the wall after a lizard, who had come upon me while I was smoking a cigar above, and crawled over one of these embellishments to his retreat. There is a church here – the Church of the Annunciation – which they are now (by "they" I mean certain noble families) restoring at a vast expense, as a work of piety. It is a large church, with a great many little chapels in it, and a very high dome. Every inch of this edifice is painted, and every design is set in a great gold frame or border elaborately wrought. You can imagine nothing so splendid. It is worth coming the whole distance to see. But every sort of splendour is in perpetual enactment through the means of these churches. Gorgeous processions in the streets, illuminations of windows on festa nights; lighting up of lamps and clustering of flowers before the shrines of saints; all manner of show and display. The doors of the churches stand wide open; and in this hot weather great red curtains flutter and wave in their palaces; and if you go and sit in one of these to get out of the sun, you see the queerest figures kneeling against pillars, and the strangest people passing in and out, and vast streams of women in

veils (they don't wear bonnets), with great fans in their hands, coming and going, that you are never tired of looking on. Except in the churches, you would suppose the city (at this time of year) to be deserted, the people keep so close within doors. Indeed it is next to impossible to go out into the heat. I have only been into Genoa twice myself. We are deliciously cool here, by comparison; being high, and having the sea breeze. There is always some shade in the vineyard, too; and underneath the rocks on the sea-shore, so if I choose to saunter I can do it easily, even in the hot time of the day. I am as lazy, however, as – as you are, and do little but eat and drink and read.

As I am going to transmit regular accounts of all sight-seeings and journeyings to Forster, who will show them to you, I will not bore you with descriptions, however. I hardly think you allow enough for the great brightness and brilliancy of colour which is commonly achieved on the Continent, in that same fresco painting. I saw some – by a French artist and his pupil – in progress at the cathedral at Avignon, which was as bright and airy as anything can be, – nothing dull or dead about it; and I have observed quite fierce and glaring colours elsewhere.

We have a piano now (there was none in the house), and have fallen into a pretty settled easy track. We breakfast about half-past nine or ten, dine about four, and go to bed about eleven. We are much courted by the visiting people, of course, and I very much resort to my old habit of bolting from callers, and leaving their reception to Kate. Green figs I have already learnt to like. Green almonds (we have them at dessert every day) are the most delicious fruit in the world. And green lemons, combined with some rare hollands that is to be got here, make prodigious punch, I assure you. You ought to come over, Mac; but I don't expect you, though I am sure it would be a very good move for you. I have not the smallest doubt of that. Fletcher has made a sketch of the house, and will copy it in pen-and-ink for transmission to you in my next letter. I shall look out for a place in Genoa, between this and the winter time. In the meantime, the people who come out here breathe delightedly, as if they had got into another climate. Landing in the city, you would hardly suppose it possible that there could be such an air within two miles.

Write to me as often as you can, like a dear good fellow, and rely upon the punctuality of my correspondence. Losing you and Forster is like losing my arms and legs, and dull and lame I am without you. But at Broadstairs next year, please God, when it is all over, I shall be very glad to have laid up such a store of recollections and improvement.

I don't know what to do with Timber. He is as ill-adapted to the climate at this time of year as a suit of fur. I have had him made a lion dog; but the fleas flock in such crowds into the hair he has left, that they drive him nearly frantic, and renders it absolutely necessary that he should be kept by himself. Of all the miserable hideous little frights you ever saw, you never beheld such a devil. Apropos, as we were crossing the Seine within two stages of Paris, Roche suddenly said to me, sitting by me on the box: "The littel dog 'ave got a great lip!" I was thinking of things remote and very different, and couldn't comprehend why any peculiarity in this feature on the part of the dog should excite a man so much. As I was musing upon it, my ears were attracted by shouts of "Helo! hola! Hi, hi, hi! Le voilà! Regardez!" and the like. And looking down among the oxen – we were in the centre of a numerous drove – I saw him, Timber, lying in the road, curled up – you know his way – like a lobster, only not so stiff, yelping dismally in the pain of his "lip" from the roof of the carriage; and between the aching of his bones, his horror of the oxen, and his dread of me (who he evidently took to be the immediate agent in and cause of the damage), singing out to an extent which I believe to be perfectly unprecedented; while every Frenchman and French boy within sight roared for company. He wasn't hurt.

Kate and Georgina send their best loves; and the children add "theirs." Katey, in particular, desires to be commended to "Mr. Teese." She has a sore throat; from sitting in constant draughts, I suppose; but with that exception, we are all quite well. Ever believe me, my dear Mac,

Your affectionate Friend.

Rev. Edward Tagart

Albaro, Near Genoa, Friday, August 9th, 1844.

My dear Sir,

I find that if I wait to write you a long letter (which has been the cause of my procrastination in fulfilling my part of our agreement), I am likely to wait some time longer. And as I am very anxious to hear from you; not the less so, because if I hear of you through my brother, who usually sees you once a week in my absence; I take pen in hand and stop a messenger who is going to Genoa. For my main object being to qualify myself for the receipt of a letter from you, I don't see why a ten-line qualification is not as good as one of a hundred lines.

You told me it was possible that you and Mrs. Tagart might wander into these latitudes in the autumn. I wish you would carry out that infant intention to the utmost. It would afford us the truest delight and pleasure to receive you. If you come in October, you will find us in the Palazzo Peschiere, in Genoa, which is surrounded by a delicious garden, and is a most charming habitation in all respects. If you come in September, you will find us less splendidly lodged, but on the margin of the sea, and in the midst of vineyards. The climate is delightful even now; the heat being not at all oppressive, except in the actual city, which is what the Americans would call considerable fiery, in the middle of the day. But the sea-breezes out here are refreshing and cool every day, and the bathing in the early morning is something more agreeable than you can easily imagine. The orange trees of the Peschiere shall give you their most fragrant salutations if you come to us at that time, and we have a dozen spare beds in that house that I know of; to say nothing of some vast chambers here and there with ancient iron chests in them, where Mrs. Tagart might enact Ginevra to perfection, and never be found out. To prevent which, I will engage to watch her closely, if she will only come and see us.

The flies are incredibly numerous just now. The unsightly blot a little higher up was occasioned by a very fine one who fell into the inkstand, and came out, unexpectedly, on the nib of my pen. We are all quite well, thank Heaven, and had a very interesting journey here, of which, as well as of this place, I will not write a word, lest I should take the edge off those agreeable conversations with which we will beguile our walks.

Pray tell me about the presentation of the plate, and whether – was very slow, or trotted at all, and if so, when. He is an excellent creature, and I respect him very much, so I don't mind smiling when I think of him as he appeared when addressing you and pointing to the plate, with his head a little on one side, and one of his eyes turned up languidly.

Also let me know exactly how you are travelling, and when, and all about it; that I may meet you with open arms on the threshold of the city, if happily you bend your steps this way. You had better address me, "Poste Restante, Genoa," as the Albaro postman gets drunk, and when he has lost letters, and is sober, sheds tears – which is affecting, but hardly satisfactory.

Kate and her sister send their best regards to yourself, and Mrs. and Miss Tagart, and all your family. I heartily join them in all kind remembrances and good wishes. As the messenger has just looked in at the door, and shedding on me a balmy gale of onions, has protested against being detained any longer, I will only say (which is not at all necessary) that I am ever,

Faithfully yours.

P.S. – There is a little to see here, in the church way, I assure you.

Mr. Clarkson Stanfield

Albaro, Saturday Night, August 24th, 1844.

My dear Stanfield,

I love you so truly, and have such pride and joy of heart in your friendship, that I don't know how to begin writing to you. When I think how you are walking up and down London in that portly surtout, and can't receive proposals from Dick to go to the theatre, I fall into a state between laughing and crying, and want some friendly back to smite. "Je-im!" "Aye, aye, your honour," is in my ears every time I walk upon the sea-shore here; and the number of expeditions I make into Cornwall in my sleep, the springs of Flys I break, the songs I sing, and the bowls of punch I drink, would soften a heart of stone.

We have had weather here, since five o'clock this morning, after your own heart. Suppose yourself the Admiral in "Black-eyed Susan" after the acquittal of William, and when it was possible to be on friendly terms with him. I am T. P.⁴ My trousers are very full at the ankles, my black neckerchief is tied in the regular style, the name of my ship is painted round my glazed hat, I have a red waistcoat on, and the seams of my blue jacket are "paid" – permit me to dig you in the ribs when I make use of this nautical expression – with white. In my hand I hold the very box connected with the story of Sandomingerbilly. I lift up my eyebrows as far as I can (on the T. P. model), take a quid from the box, screw the lid on again (chewing at the same time, and looking pleasantly at the pit), brush it with my right elbow, take up my right leg, scrape my right foot on the ground, hitch up my trousers, and in reply to a question of yours, namely, "Indeed, what weather, William?" I deliver myself as follows:

Lord love your honour! Weather! Such weather as would set all hands to the pumps aboard one of your fresh-water cockboats, and set the purser to his wits' ends to stow away, for the use of the ship's company, the casks and casks full of blue water as would come powering in over the gunnel! The dirtiest night, your honour, as ever you see 'atween Spithead at gun-fire and the Bay of Biscay! The wind sou'-west, and your house dead in the wind's eye; the breakers running up high upon the rocky beads, the light'us no more looking through the fog than Davy Jones's sarser eye through the blue sky of heaven in a calm, or the blue toplights of your honour's lady cast down in a modest overhauling of her catheads: avast! (*whistling*) my dear eyes; here am I a-goin' head on to the breakers (*bowing*).

Admiral (smiling). No, William! I admire plain speaking, as you know, and so does old England, William, and old England's Queen. But you were saying —

William. Aye, aye, your honour (*scratching his head*). I've lost my reckoning. Damme! – I ast pardon – but won't your honour throw a hencoop or any old end of towline to a man as is overboard?

Admiral (smiling still). You were saying, William, that the wind —

William (again cocking his leg, and slapping the thighs very hard). Avast heaving, your honour! I see your honour's signal fluttering in the breeze, without a glass. As I was a-saying, your honour, the wind was blowin' from the sou'-west, due sou'-west, your honour, not a pint to larboard nor a pint to starboard; the clouds a-gatherin' in the distance for all the world like Beachy Head in a fog, the sea a-rowling in, in heaps of foam, and making higher than the mainyard arm, the craft a-scuddin' by all taught and under storms'ils for the harbour; not a blessed star a-twinklin' out aloft – aloft, your honour, in the little cherubs' native country – and the spray is flying like the white foam from the Jolly's lips when Poll of Portsea took him for a tailor! (*laughs*.)

⁴ T. P. Cooke, the celebrated actor of "William" in Douglas Jerrold's play of "Black-eyed Susan."

Admiral (laughing also). You have described it well, William, and I thank you. But who are these?

Enter Supers in calico jackets to look like cloth, some in brown holland petticoat-trousers and big boots, all with very large buckles. Last Super rolls on a cask, and pretends to keep it. Other Supers apply their mugs to the bunghole and drink, previously holding them upside down.

William (after shaking hands with everybody). Who are these, your honour! Messmates as staunch and true as ever broke biscuit. Ain't you, my lads?

All. Aye, aye, William. That we are! that we are!

Admiral (much affected). Oh, England, what wonder that – ! But I will no longer detain you from your sports, my humble friends (*Admiral speaks very low, and looks hard at the orchestra, this being the cue for the dance*) – from your sports, my humble friends. Farewell!

All. Hurrah! hurrah! [*Exit Admiral.*]

Voice behind. Suppose the dance, Mr. Stanfield. Are you all ready? Go then!

My dear Stanfield, I wish you would come this way and see me in that Palazzo Peschiere! Was ever man so welcome as I would make you! What a truly gentlemanly action it would be to bring Mrs. Stanfield and the baby. And how Kate and her sister would wave pocket-handkerchiefs from the wharf in joyful welcome! Ah, what a glorious proceeding!

Do you know this place? Of course you do. I won't bore you with anything about it, for I know Forster reads my letters to you; but what a place it is. The views from the hills here, and the immense variety of prospects of the sea, are as striking, I think, as such scenery can be. Above all, the approach to Genoa, by sea from Marseilles, constitutes a picture which you ought to paint, for nobody else can ever do it! William, you made that bridge at Avignon better than it is. Beautiful as it undoubtedly is, you made it fifty times better. And if I were Morrison, or one of that school (bless the dear fellows one and all!), I wouldn't stand it, but would insist on having another picture gratis, to atone for the imposition.

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