The Letters of Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens

In Three Volumes

VOLUME III - (1836-1870)

Edited by Mamie Dickens and Georgina Hogarth

Chapman & Hall, London, 1880

THE LETTERS

OF

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OF

CHARLES DICKENS.

EDITED BY

HIS SISTER-IN-LAW AND HIS ELDEST DAUGHTER.

In Three Volumes.

VOL. III.
1836 TO 1870.

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CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
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PREFACE.

SINCE our publication of “The Letters of Charles Dickens” we have received the letters addressed to the late Lord Lytton, which we were unable to procure in time for our first two volumes in consequence of his son’s absence in India. We thank the Earl of Lytton cordially for his kindness in sending them to us very soon after his return. We also offer our sincere thanks to Sir Austen H. Layard, and to the senders of many other letters, which we now publish for the first time.

With a view to making our selection as complete as possible, we have collected together the letters from Charles Dickens which have already been published in various Biographies, and have chosen and placed in chronological order among our new letters those which we consider to be of the greatest interest.

As our Narrative was finished in our second volume, this volume consists of Letters *only*, with occasional foot-notes wherever there are allusions requiring explanation.

MAMIE DICKENS.
GEORGINA HOGARTH.

LONDON: *September, 1881.*

ERRATA.

VOL. III.

Page 87, line 5. For “J. W. Leigh Murray,” *read* “Mr. Leigh Murray.”
“ 111, line 8. For “annoying,” *read* “amazing.”
“ 243, line 10. For “Tarass Boulla,” *read* “Tarass Boulba.”
“ 259, line 6, and in footnote. For “Hazlett,” *read* “Hazlitt.”
“ 261, line 2. For “procters,” *read* “proctors.”

THE
LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS.

1836 TO 1839.

Mr. John Hullah.

FURNIVAL'S INN, *Sunday Evening (1836)* (?).

MY DEAR HULLAH,

Have you seen *The Examiner?* It is rather depreciatory of the opera; but, like all inveterate critiques against Braham, so well done that I cannot help laughing at it, for the life and soul of me. I have seen *The Sunday Times*, *The Dispatch*, and *The Satirist*, all of which blow their critic trumpets against unhappy me most lustily. Either I must have grievously awakened the ire of all the "adapters" and their friends, or the drama must be decidedly bad. I haven't made up my mind yet which of the two is the fact.

I have not seen the *John Bull* or any of the Sunday papers except *The Spectator*. If you have any of them, bring 'em with you on Tuesday. I am afraid that for "dirty Cummins'" allusion to Hogarth I shall be reduced to the necessity of being valorous the next time I meet him.

Believe me, most faithfully yours.

The same.

FURNIVAL'S INN, *Monday Afternoon, 7 o'clock (1836).*

MY DEAR HULLAH,

Mr. Hogarth has just been here, with news which I think you will be glad to hear. He was with Braham yesterday, who was *far more full* of the opera[1] than he was; speaking highly of my works and "fame" (!), and expressing an earnest desire to be the first to introduce me to the public as a dramatic writer. He said that he intended opening at Michaelmas; and added (unasked) that it was his intention to produce the opera within *one month* of his first night. He wants a low comedy part introduced—without singing—thinking it will take with the audience; but he is desirous of explaining to me what he means and who he intends to play it. I am to see him on Sunday morning. Full particulars of the interview shall be duly announced.

Perhaps I shall see you meanwhile. I have only time to add that I am

Most faithfully yours.

The same.

PETERSHAM, *Monday Evening (1836).*

DEAR HULLAH,

Since I called on you this morning I have not had time to look over the words of “The Child and the Old Man.” It occurs to me, as I shall see you on Wednesday morning, that the best plan will be for you to bring the music (if you possibly can) without the words, and we can put them in then. Of course this observation applies only to that particular song.

Braham having sent to me about the farce, I called on him this morning. Harley wrote, when he had read the whole of the opera, saying: “It’s a sure card—nothing wrong there. Bet you ten pound it runs fifty nights. Come; don’t be afraid. You’ll be the gainer by it, and you mustn’t mind betting; it’s a capital custom.” They tell the story with infinite relish. I saw the fair manageress,[2] who is fully of Harley’s opinion, so is Braham. The only difference is, that they are far more enthusiastic than Harley—far more enthusiastic than ourselves even. That is a bold word, isn’t it? It is a true one, nevertheless.

“Depend upon it, sir,” said Braham to Hogarth yesterday, when he went there to say I should be in town to-day, “depend upon it, sir, that there has been no such music since the days of Sheil, and no such piece since “The Duenna.”” “Everybody is delighted with it,” he added, to me to-day. “I played it to Stansbury, who is by no means an excitable person, and he was charmed.” This was said with great emphasis, but I have forgotten the grand point. It was not, “I played it to Stansbury,” but, “I sang it—*all through!!!*”

I begged him, as the choruses are to be put into rehearsal directly the company get together, to let us have, through Mrs. Braham, the necessary passports to the stage, which will be forwarded. He leaves town on the *8th of September*. He will be absent a month, and the first rehearsal will take place immediately on his return; previous to it (I mean the first rehearsal—not the return) I am to read the piece. His only remaining suggestion is, that Miss Rainforth will want another song when the piece is in rehearsal—“a bravura—something in the ‘Soldier Tired’ way.” We must have a confab about this on Wednesday morning.

Harley called in Furnival’s Inn, to express his high delight and gratification, but unfortunately we had left town. I shall be at head-quarters by 12 Wednesday noon.

Believe me, dear Hullah,
Most faithfully yours.

P.S.—Tell me on Wednesday when you can come down here, for a day or two. Beautiful place—meadow for exercise, horse for your riding, boat for your rowing, room for your studying—anything you like.

Mr. George Hogarth.

[3]13, Furnival’s Inn, *Tuesday Evening, January 20th, 1837.*

My dear Sir,

As you have begged me to write an original sketch for the first number of the new evening paper, and as I trust to your kindness to refer my application to the proper quarter, should I be unreasonably or improperly trespassing upon you, I beg to ask whether it is probable that if I commenced a series of articles, written under some attractive title, for

The Evening Chronicle, its conductors would think I had any claim to some additional remuneration (of course, of no great amount) for doing so?

Let me beg of you not to misunderstand my meaning. Whatever the reply may be, I promised you an article, and shall supply it with the utmost readiness, and with an anxious desire to do my best, which I honestly assure you would be the feeling with which I should always receive any request coming personally from yourself. I merely wish to put it to the proprietors, first, whether a continuation of light papers in the style of my "Street Sketches" would be considered of use to the new paper; and, secondly, if so, whether they do not think it fair and reasonable that, taking my share of the ordinary reporting business of *The Chronicle* besides, I should receive something for the papers beyond my ordinary salary as a reporter.

Begging you to excuse my troubling you, and taking this opportunity of acknowledging the numerous kindnesses I have already received at your hands since I have had the pleasure of acting under you,

I am, my dear Sir, very sincerely yours.

Mrs. Hogarth.

DOUGHTY STREET, *Thursday Night, October 26th, 1837.*

MY DEAR MRS. HOGARTH,

I need not thank you for your present[4] of yesterday, for you know the sorrowful pleasure I shall take in wearing it, and the care with which I shall prize it, until—so far as relates to this life—I am like her.

I have never had her ring off my finger by day or night, except for an instant at a time, to wash my hands, since she died. I have never had her sweetness and excellence absent from my mind so long. I can solemnly say that, waking or sleeping, I have never lost the recollection of our hard trial and sorrow, and I feel that I never shall.

It will be a great relief to my heart when I find you sufficiently calm upon this sad subject to claim the promise I made you when she lay dead in this house, never to shrink from speaking of her, as if her memory must be avoided, but rather to take a melancholy pleasure in recalling the times when we were all so happy—so happy that increase of fame and prosperity has only widened the gap in my affections, by causing me to think how she would have shared and enhanced all our joys, and how proud I should have been (as God knows I always was) to possess the affections of the gentlest and purest creature that ever shed a light on earth. I wish you could know how I weary now for the three rooms in Furnival's Inn, and how I miss that pleasant smile and those sweet words which, bestowed upon our evening's work, in our merry banterings round the fire, were more precious to me than the applause of a whole world would be. I can recall everything she said and did in those happy days, and could show you every passage and line we read together.

I see *now* how you are capable of making great efforts, even against the afflictions you have to deplore, and I hope that, soon, our words may be where our thoughts are, and that we may call up those old memories, not as shadows of the bitter past, but as lights upon a

happier future.

Believe me, my dear Mrs. Hogarth,
Ever truly and affectionately yours.

[5] DIARY—1838.

Monday, January 1st, 1838.

A sad New Year's Day in one respect, for at the opening of last year poor Mary was with us. Very many things to be grateful for since then, however. Increased reputation and means—good health and prospects. We never know the full value of blessings till we lose them (we were not ignorant of this one when we had it, I hope). But if she were with us now, the same winning, happy, amiable companion, sympathising with all my thoughts and feelings more than anyone I knew ever did or will, I think I should have nothing to wish for, but a continuance of such happiness. But she is gone, and pray God I may one day, through his mercy, rejoin her. I wrote to Mrs. Hogarth yesterday, taking advantage of the opportunity afforded me by her sending, as a New Year's token, a pen-wiper of poor Mary's, imploring her, as strongly as I could, to think of the many remaining claims upon her affection and exertions, and not to give way to unavailing grief. Her answer came to-night, and she seems hurt at my doing so—protesting that in all useful respects she is the same as ever. Meant it for the best, and still hope I did right.

Saturday, January 6th, 1838.

Our boy's birthday—one year old. A few people at night—only Forster, the De Gex's, John Ross, Mitton, and the Beards, besides our families—to twelfth-cake and forfeits.

This day last year, Mary and I wandered up and down Holborn and the streets about for hours, looking after a little table for Kate's bedroom, which we bought at last at the very first broker's which we had looked into, and which we had passed half-a-dozen times because I *didn't like* to ask the price. I took her out to Brompton at night, as we had no place for her to sleep in (the two mothers being with us); she came back again next day to keep house for me, and stopped nearly the rest of the month. I shall never be so happy again as in those chambers three storeys high—never if I roll in wealth and fame. I would hire them to keep empty, if I could afford it.

Monday, January 8th, 1838.

I began the "Sketches of Young Gentlemen" to-day. One hundred and twenty-five pounds for such a little book, without my name to it, is pretty well. This and the "Sunday"[6] by-the-bye, are the only two things I have not done as Boz.

Tuesday, January 9th, 1838.

Went to the Sun office to insure my life, where the Board seemed disposed to think I work too much. Made Forster and Pickthorn, my Doctor, the references—and after an interesting interview with the Board and the Board's Doctor, came away to work again.

Wednesday, January 10th, 1838.

At work all day, and to a quadrille party at night. City people and rather dull. Intensely cold coming home, and vague reports of a fire somewhere. Frederick says the Royal Exchange, at which I sneer most sagely; for——

Thursday, January 11th, 1838.

To-day the papers are full of it, and it *was* the Royal Exchange, Lloyd's, and all the shops round the building. Called on Browne and went with him to see the ruins, of which we saw as much as we should have done if we had stopped at home.

Sunday, January 14th, 1838.

To church in the morning, and when I came home I wrote the preceding portion of this diary, which henceforth I make a steadfast resolution not to neglect, or *paint*. I have not done it yet, nor will I; but say what rises to my lips—my mental lips at least—without reserve. No other eyes will see it, while mine are open in life, and although I daresay I shall be ashamed of a good deal in it, I should like to look over it at the year's end.

In Scott's diary, which I have been looking at this morning, there are thoughts which have been mine by day and by night, in good spirits and bad, since Mary died.

"Another day, and a bright one to the external world again opens on us; the air soft, and the flowers smiling, and the leaves glittering. They cannot refresh her to whom mild weather was a natural enjoyment. Cerements of lead and of wood already hold her; cold earth must have her soon. But it is not . . . . (she) who will be laid among the ruins. . . . . She is sentient and conscious of my emotions *somewhere*—where, we cannot tell, how, we cannot tell; yet would I not at this moment renounce the mysterious yet certain hope that I shall see her in a better world, for all that this world can give me.

* * * * * *

"I have seen her. There is the same symmetry of form, though those limbs are rigid which were once so gracefully elastic; but that yellow masque with pinched features, which seems to mock life rather than emulate it, can it be the face that was once so full of lively expression? I will not look upon it again."

I know but too well how true all this is.

Monday, January 15th, 1838.

Here ends this brief attempt at a diary. I grow sad over this checking off of days, and can't do it.

* * * * * *

Mr. W. L. Sammins.

48, DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON, *January 31st, 1839.*

SIR,

Circumstances have enabled me to relinquish my old connection with the "Miscellany"[7] at an earlier period than I had expected. I am no longer its editor, but I have referred your paper to my successor, and marked it as one "requiring attention." I have no doubt it will receive it.

With reference to your letter bearing date on the 8th of last October, let me assure you that I have delayed answering it—not because a constant stream of similar epistles has rendered me callous to the anxieties of a beginner, in those doubtful paths in which I walk myself—but because you ask me to do that which I would scarce do, of my own unsupported opinion, for my own child, supposing I had one old enough to require such a service. To suppose that I could gravely take upon myself the responsibility of withdrawing you from pursuits you have already undertaken, or urging you on in a most uncertain and hazardous course of life, is really a compliment to my judgment and inflexibility which I cannot recognize and do not deserve (or desire). I hoped that a little reflection would show you how impossible it is that I could be expected to enter upon a task of so much delicacy, but as you have written to me since, and called (unfortunately at a period when I am obliged to seclude myself from all comers), I am compelled at last to tell you that I can do nothing of the kind.

If it be any satisfaction to you to know that I have read what you sent me, and read it with great pleasure, though, as you treat of local matters, I am necessarily in the dark here and there, I can give you the assurance very sincerely. With this, and many thanks to you for your obliging expressions towards myself,

I am, Sir,
Your very obedient Servant.

Mr. J. P. Harley.

DOUGHTY STREET, *Thursday Morning.*[8]

MY DEAR HARLEY,

This is my birthday. Many happy returns of the day to you and me.

I took it into my head yesterday to get up an impromptu dinner on this auspicious occasion—only my own folks, Leigh Hunt, Ainsworth, and Forster. I know you can't dine here in consequence of the tempestuous weather on the Covent Garden shores, but if you will come in when you have done Trinculizing, you will delight me greatly, and add in no inconsiderable degree to the "conviviality" of the meeting.

Lord bless my soul! Twenty-seven years old. Who'd have thought it? I *never* did!

But I grow sentimental.

Always yours truly.

Mr. Edward Chapman.

1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *27th December, 1839.*

MY DEAR SIR,

The place where you pledge yourself to pay for my beef and mutton when I eat it, and my ale and wine when I drink it, is the Treasurer's Office of the Middle Temple, the new building at the bottom of Middle Temple Lane on the right-hand side. You walk up into the first-floor and say (boldly) that you come to sign Mr. Charles Dickens's bond—which is already signed by Mr. Sergeant Talfourd. I suppose I should formally acquaint you that I have paid the fees, and that the responsibility you incur is a very slight one—extending very little beyond my good behaviour, and honourable intentions to pay for all wine-glasses, tumblers, or other dinner-furniture that I may break or damage.

I wish you would do me another service, and that is to choose, at the place you told me of, a reasonable copy of "The Beauties of England and Wales." You can choose it quite as well as I can, or better, and I shall be much obliged to you. I should like you to send it at once, as I am diving into all kinds of matters at odd minutes with a view to our forthcoming operations.

Faithfully yours.

1840.

Mr. H. G. Adams.[9]

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
Saturday, Jan. 18th, 1840.

Dear Sir,

The pressure of other engagements will, I am compelled to say, prevent me from contributing a paper to your new local magazine.[10] But I beg you to set me down as a subscriber to it, and foremost among those whose best wishes are enlisted in your cause. It will afford me real pleasure to hear of your success, for I have many happy recollections connected with Kent, and am scarcely less interested in it than if I had been a Kentish man bred and born, and had resided in the county all my life.

Faithfully yours.

Mr. Thompson.[11]

Devonshire Terrace, *Tuesday, 15th December, 1840.*

My dear Thompson,

I have received a most flattering message from the head turnkey of the jail this morning, intimating that "there warn't a genelman in all London he'd be gladder to show his babies to, than Muster Dickins, and let him come wenever he would to that shop he wos welcome." But as the Governor (who is a very nice fellow and a gentleman) is not at home this morning, and furthermore as the morning itself has rather gone out of town in respect of its poetical allurements, I think we had best postpone our visit for a day or two.

Faithfully yours.

1841.

Rev. Thomas Robinson.[12]

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
Thursday, April 8th, 1841.

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for your interesting letter. Nor am I the less pleased to receive it, by reason that I cannot find it in my conscience to agree in many important respects with the body to which you belong.

In the love of virtue and hatred of vice, in the detestation of cruelty and encouragement of gentleness and mercy, all men who endeavour to be acceptable to their Creator in any way, may freely agree. There are more roads to Heaven, I am inclined to think, than any sect believes; but there can be none which have not these flowers garnishing the way.

I feel it a great tribute, therefore, to receive your letter. It is most welcome and acceptable to me. I thank you for it heartily, and am proud of the approval of one who suffered in his youth, even more than my poor child.

While you teach in your walk of life the lessons of tenderness you have learnt in sorrow, trust me that in mine, I will pursue cruelty and oppression, the enemies of all God's creatures of all codes and creeds, so long as I have the energy of thought and the power of giving it utterance.

Faithfully yours.

The Countess of Blessington.

[13] Devonshire Terrace, *June 2nd, 1841.*

Dear Lady Blessington,

The year goes round so fast, that when anything occurs to remind me of its whirling, I lose my breath, and am bewildered. So your handwriting last night had as startling an effect upon me, as though you had sealed your note with one of your own eyes.

I remember my promise, as in cheerful duty bound, and with Heaven's grace will redeem it. At this moment, I have not the faintest idea how, but I am going into Scotland on the 19th to see Jeffrey, and while I am away (I shall return, please God, in about three weeks) will look out for some accident, incident, or subject for small description, to send you when I come home. You will take the will for the deed, I know; and, remembering that I have a "Clock" which always wants winding up, will not quarrel with me for being brief.

Have you seen Townshend's magnetic boy? You heard of him, no doubt, from Count

D’Orsay. If you get him to Gore House, don’t, I entreat you, have more than eight people —four is a better number—to see him. He fails in a crowd, and is *marvellous* before a few.

I am told that down in Devonshire there are young ladies innumerable, who read crabbed manuscripts with the palms of their hands, and newspapers with their ankles, and so forth; and who are, so to speak, literary all over. I begin to understand what a blue-stocking means, and have not the smallest doubt that Lady —— (for instance) could write quite as entertaining a book with the sole of her foot as ever she did with her head. I am a believer in earnest, and I am sure you would be if you saw this boy, under moderately favourable circumstances, as I hope you will, before he leaves England.

Believe me, dear Lady Blessington,
Faithfully yours.

Mr. L. Gaylord Clark.

September 28th, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,

I condole with you from my heart on the loss[14] you have sustained, and I feel proud of your permitting me to sympathise with your affliction. It is a great satisfaction to me to have been addressed, under similar circumstances, by many of your countrymen since the “Curiosity Shop” came to a close. Some simple and honest hearts in the remote wilds of America have written me letters on the loss of children—so numbering my little book, or rather heroine, with their household gods; and so pouring out their trials and sources of comfort in them, before me as a friend, that I have been inexpressibly moved, and am whenever I think of them, I do assure you. You have already all the comfort, that I could lay before you; all, I hope, that the affectionate spirit of your brother, now in happiness, can shed into your soul.

On the 4th of next January, if it please God, I am coming with my wife on a three or four months’ visit to America. The British and North American packet will bring me, I hope, to Boston, and enable me, in the third week of the new year, to set my foot upon the soil I have trodden in my day-dreams many times, and whose sons (and daughters) I yearn to know and to be among.

I hope you are surprised, and I hope not unpleasantly.

Faithfully yours.

Mrs. Hogarth.

[15]DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sunday, October 24th, 1841.*

MY DEAR MRS. HOGARTH,

For God’s sake be comforted, and bear this well, for the love of your remaining children.

I had always intended to keep poor Mary’s grave for us and our dear children, and for you. But if it will be any comfort to you to have poor George buried there, I will cheerfully arrange to place the ground at your entire disposal. Do not consider me in any way. Consult only your own heart. Mine seems to tell me that as they both died so young and so suddenly, they ought both to be buried together.

Try—do try—to think that they have but preceded you to happiness, and will meet you with joy in heaven. There *is* consolation in the knowledge that you have treasure there, and that while you live on earth, there are creatures among the angels, who owed their being to you.

Always yours with true affection.

Mr. Washington Irving.

MY DEAR SIR,[16]

There is no man in the world who could have given me the heartfelt pleasure you have, by your kind note of the 13th of last month. There is no living writer, and there are very few among the dead, whose approbation I should feel so proud to earn. And with everything you have written upon my shelves, and in my thoughts, and in my heart of hearts, I may honestly and truly say so. If you could know how earnestly I write this, you would be glad to read it—as I hope you will be, faintly guessing at the warmth of the hand I autobiographically hold out to you over the broad Atlantic.

I wish I could find in your welcome letter some hint of an intention to visit England. I can’t. I have held it at arm’s length, and taken a bird’s-eye view of it, after reading it a great many times, but there is no greater encouragement in it this way than on a microscopic inspection. I should love to go with you—as I have gone, God knows how often—into Little Britain, and Eastcheap, and Green Arbour Court, and Westminster Abbey. I should like to travel with you, outside the last of the coaches down to Bracebridge Hall. It would make my heart glad to compare notes with you about that shabby gentleman in the oilcloth hat and red nose, who sat in the nine-cornered back-parlour of the Masons’ Arms; and about Robert Preston and the tallow-chandler’s widow, whose sitting-room is second nature to me; and about all those delightful places and people that I used to walk about and dream of in the daytime, when a very small and not over-particularly-taken-care-of boy. I have a good deal to say, too, about that dashing Alonzo de Ojeda, that you can’t help being fonder of than you ought to be; and much to hear concerning Moorish legend, and poor unhappy Boabdil. Diedrich Knickerbocker I have worn to death in my pocket, and yet I should show you his mutilated carcass with a joy past all expression.

I have been so accustomed to associate you with my pleasantest and happiest thoughts, and with my leisure hours, that I rush at once into full confidence with you, and fall, as it were naturally, and by the very laws of gravity, into your open arms. Questions come thronging to my pen as to the lips of people who meet after long hoping to do so. I don’t know what to say first or what to leave unsaid, and am constantly disposed to break off and tell you again how glad I am this moment has arrived.

My dear Washington Irving, I cannot thank you enough for your cordial and generous praise, or tell you what deep and lasting gratification it has given me. I hope to have many letters from you, and to exchange a frequent correspondence. I send this to say so. After the first two or three I shall settle down into a connected style, and become gradually rational.

You know what the feeling is, after having written a letter, sealed it, and sent it off. I shall picture your reading this, and answering it before it has lain one night in the post-office. Ten to one that before the fastest packet could reach New York I shall be writing again.

Do you suppose the post-office clerks care to receive letters? I have my doubts. They get into a dreadful habit of indifference. A postman, I imagine, is quite callous. Conceive his delivering one to himself, without being startled by a preliminary double knock!

Always your faithful Friend.

1842.

Professor Felton.

FULLER'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON, *Monday, March 14th, 1842.*

MY DEAR FELTON,[17]

I was more delighted than I can possibly tell you, to receive (last Saturday night) your welcome letter. We and the oysters missed you terribly in New York. You carried away with you more than half the delight and pleasure of my New World; and I heartily wish you could bring it back again.

There are very interesting men in this place—highly interesting, of course—but it's not a comfortable place; is it? If spittle could wait at table we should be nobly attended, but as that property has not been imparted to it in the present state of mechanical science, we are rather lonely and orphan-like, in respect of "being looked arter." A blithe black was introduced on our arrival, as our peculiar and especial attendant. He is the only gentleman in the town who has a peculiar delicacy in intruding upon my valuable time. It usually takes seven rings and a threatening message from —— to produce him; and when he comes he goes to fetch something, and, forgetting it by the way, comes back no more.

We have been in great distress, really in distress, at the non-arrival of the *Caledonia*. You may conceive what our joy was, when, while we were dining out yesterday, H. arrived with the joyful intelligence of her safety. The very news of her having really arrived seemed to diminish the distance between ourselves and home, by one half at least.

And this morning (though we have not yet received our heap of despatches, for which we are looking eagerly forward to this night's mail)—this morning there reached us unexpectedly, through the Government bag (Heaven knows how they came there!), two of our many and long-looked-for letters, wherein was a circumstantial account of the whole conduct and behaviour of our pets; with marvellous narrations of Charley's precocity at a Twelfth Night juvenile party at Macready's; and tremendous predictions of the governess, dimly suggesting his having got out of pot-hooks and hangers, and darkly insinuating the possibility of his writing us a letter before long; and many other workings of the same prophetic spirit, in reference to him and his sisters, very gladdening to their mother's heart, and not at all depressing to their father's. There was, also, the doctor's report, which was a clean bill; and the nurse's report, which was perfectly electrifying; showing as it did how Master Walter had been weaned, and had cut a double tooth, and done many other extraordinary things, quite worthy of his high descent. In short, we were made very happy and grateful; and felt as if the prodigal father and mother had got home again.

What do you think of this incendiary card being left at my door last night? "General G. sends compliments to Mr. Dickens, and called with two literary ladies. As the two L. L.'s are ambitious of the honour of a personal introduction to Mr. D., General G. requests the honour of an appointment for to-morrow." I draw a veil over my sufferings. They are sacred. We shall be in Buffalo, please Heaven, on the 30th of April. If I don't find a letter

from you in the care of the postmaster at that place, I'll never write to you from England.

But if I *do* find one, my right hand shall forget its cunning, before I forget to be your truthful and constant correspondent; not, dear Felton, because I promised it, nor because I have a natural tendency to correspond (which is far from being the case), nor because I am truly grateful to you for, and have been made truly proud by, that affectionate and elegant tribute which —— sent me, but because you are a man after my own heart, and I love you *well*. And for the love I bear you, and the pleasure with which I shall always think of you, and the glow I shall feel when I see your handwriting in my own home, I hereby enter into a solemn league and covenant to write as many letters to you as you write to me, at least. Amen.

Come to England! Come to England! Our oysters are small, I know; they are said by Americans to be coppery; but our hearts are of the largest size. We are thought to excel in shrimps, to be far from despicable in point of lobsters, and in periwinkles are considered to challenge the universe. Our oysters, small though they be, are not devoid of the refreshing influence which that species of fish is supposed to exercise in these latitudes. Try them and compare.

Affectionately yours.

Mr. Washington Irving.

WASHINGTON, *Monday Afternoon, March 21st, 1842.*

MY DEAR IRVING,

We passed through—literally passed through—this place again to-day. I did not come to see you, for I really have not the heart to say “good-bye” again, and felt more than I can tell you when we shook hands last Wednesday.

You will not be at Baltimore, I fear? I thought, at the time, that you only said you might be there, to make our parting the gayer.

Wherever you go, God bless you! What pleasure I have had in seeing and talking with you, I will not attempt to say. I shall never forget it as long as I live. What would I give, if we could have but a quiet week together! Spain is a lazy place, and its climate an indolent one. But if you have ever leisure under its sunny skies to think of a man who loves you, and holds communion with your spirit oftener, perhaps, than any other person alive—leisure from listlessness, I mean—and will write to me in London, you will give me an inexpressible amount of pleasure.

Your affectionate friend.

Professor Felton.

MONTREAL, *Saturday, 21st May, 1842.*

MY DEAR FELTON,

I was delighted to receive your letter yesterday, and was well pleased with its contents. I anticipated objection to Carlyle’s[18] letter. I called particular attention to it for three reasons. Firstly, because he boldly *said* what all the others *think*, and therefore deserved to be manfully supported. Secondly, because it is my deliberate opinion that I have been assailed on this subject in a manner in which no man with any pretensions to public respect or with the remotest right to express an opinion on a subject of universal literary interest would be assailed in any other country. . . . .

I really cannot sufficiently thank you, dear Felton, for your warm and hearty interest in these proceedings. But it would be idle to pursue that theme, so let it pass.

The wig and whiskers are in a state of the highest preservation. The play comes off next Wednesday night, the 25th. What would I give to see you in the front row of the centre box, your spectacles gleaming not unlike those of my dear friend Pickwick, your face radiant with as broad a grin as a staid professor may indulge in, and your very coat, waistcoat, and shoulders expressive of what we should take together when the performance was over! I would give something (not so much, but still a good round sum) if you could only stumble into that very dark and dusty theatre in the daytime (at any

minute between twelve and three), and see me with my coat off, the stage manager and universal director, urging impracticable ladies and impossible gentlemen on to the very confines of insanity, shouting and driving about, in my own person, to an extent which would justify any philanthropic stranger in clapping me into a strait-waistcoat without further inquiry, endeavouring to goad H. into some dim and faint understanding of a prompter's duties, and struggling in such a vortex of noise, dirt, bustle, confusion, and inextricable entanglement of speech and action as you would grow giddy in contemplating. We perform "A Roland for an Oliver," "A Good Night's Rest," and "Deaf as a Post." This kind of voluntary hard labour used to be my great delight. The *furor* has come strong upon me again, and I begin to be once more of opinion that nature intended me for the lessee of a national theatre, and that pen, ink, and paper have spoiled a manager.

Oh, how I look forward across that rolling water to home and its small tenantry! How I busy myself in thinking how my books look, and where the tables are, and in what positions the chairs stand relatively to the other furniture; and whether we shall get there in the night, or in the morning, or in the afternoon; and whether we shall be able to surprise them, or whether they will be too sharply looking out for us; and what our pets will say; and how they'll look, and who will be the first to come and shake hands, and so forth! If I could but tell you how I have set my heart on rushing into Forster's study (he is my great friend, and writes at the bottom of all his letters: "My love to Felton"), and into Maclise's painting-room, and into Macready's managerial ditto, without a moment's warning, and how I picture every little trait and circumstance of our arrival to myself, down to the very colour of the bow on the cook's cap, you would almost think I had changed places with my eldest son, and was still in pantaloons of the thinnest texture. I left all these things—God only knows what a love I have for them—as coolly and calmly as any animated cucumber; but when I come upon them again I shall have lost all power of self-restraint, and shall as certainly make a fool of myself (in the popular meaning of that expression) as ever Grimaldi did in his way, or George the Third in his.

And not the less so, dear Felton, for having found some warm hearts, and left some instalments of earnest and sincere affection, behind me on this continent. And whenever I turn my mental telescope hitherward, trust me that one of the first figures it will descry will wear spectacles so like yours that the maker couldn't tell the difference, and shall address a Greek class in such an exact imitation of your voice, that the very students hearing it should cry, "That's he! Three cheers. Hoo-ray-ay-ay-ay-ay!"

About those joints of yours, I think you are mistaken. They *can't* be stiff. At the worst they merely want the air of New York, which, being impregnated with the flavour of last year's oysters, has a surprising effect in rendering the human frame supple and flexible in all cases of rust.

A terrible idea occurred to me as I wrote those words. The oyster-cellars—what do they do when oysters are not in season? Is pickled salmon vended there? Do they sell crabs, shrimps, winkles, herrings? The oyster-openers—what do *they* do? Do they commit suicide in despair, or wrench open tight drawers and cupboards and hermetically-sealed bottles for practice? Perhaps they are dentists out of the oyster season. Who knows?

Affectionately yours.

1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,
LONDON, *Sunday, July 31st, 1842.*

MY DEAR FELTON,

Of all the monstrous and incalculable amount of occupation that ever beset one unfortunate man, mine has been the most stupendous since I came home. The dinners I have had to eat, the places I have had to go to, the letters I have had to answer, the sea of business and of pleasure in which I have been plunged, not even the genius of an —— or the pen of a —— could describe.

Wherefore I indite a monstrously short and wildly uninteresting epistle to the American Dando; but perhaps you don't know who Dando was. He was an oyster-eater, my dear Felton. He used to go into oyster-shops, without a farthing of money, and stand at the counter eating natives, until the man who opened them grew pale, cast down his knife, staggered backward, struck his white forehead with his open hand, and cried, "You are Dando!!!" He has been known to eat twenty dozen at one sitting, and would have eaten forty, if the truth had not flashed upon the shopkeeper. For these offences he was constantly committed to the House of Correction. During his last imprisonment he was taken ill, got worse and worse, and at last began knocking violent double knocks at Death's door. The doctor stood beside his bed, with his fingers on his pulse. "He is going," says the doctor. "I see it in his eye. There is only one thing that would keep life in him for another hour, and that is—oysters." They were immediately brought. Dando swallowed eight, and feebly took a ninth. He held it in his mouth and looked round the bed strangely. "Not a bad one, is it?" says the doctor. The patient shook his head, rubbed his trembling hand upon his stomach, bolted the oyster, and fell back—dead. They buried him in the prison-yard, and paved his grave with oyster-shells.

We are all well and hearty, and have already begun to wonder what time next year you and Mrs. Felton and Dr. Howe will come across the briny sea together. To-morrow we go to the seaside for two months. I am looking out for news of Longfellow, and shall be delighted when I know that he is on his way to London and this house.

I am bent upon striking at the piratical newspapers with the sharpest edge I can put upon my small axe, and hope in the next session of Parliament to stop their entrance into Canada. For the first time within the memory of man, the professors of English literature seem disposed to act together on this question. It is a good thing to aggravate a scoundrel, if one can do nothing else, and I think we *can* make them smart a little in this way. . . . .

I wish you had been at Greenwich the other day, where a party of friends gave me a private dinner; public ones I have refused. C—— was perfectly wild at the reunion, and, after singing all manner of marine songs, wound up the entertainment by coming home (six miles) in a little open phaeton of mine, *on his head*, to the mingled delight and indignation of the metropolitan police. We were very jovial indeed; and I assure you that I drank your health with fearful vigour and energy.

On board that ship coming home I established a club, called the United Vagabonds, to

the large amusement of the rest of the passengers. This holy brotherhood committed all kinds of absurdities, and dined always, with a variety of solemn forms, at one end of the table, below the mast, away from all the rest. The captain being ill when we were three or four days out, I produced my medicine-chest and recovered him. We had a few more sick men after that, and I went round "the wards" every day in great state, accompanied by two Vagabonds, habited as Ben Allen and Bob Sawyer, bearing enormous rolls of plaster and huge pairs of scissors. We were really very merry all the way, breakfasted in one party at Liverpool, shook hands, and parted most cordially. . . . .

Affectionately your faithful friend.

P.S.—I have looked over my journal, and have decided to produce my American trip in two volumes. I have written about half the first since I came home, and hope to be out in October. This is "exclusive news," to be communicated to any friends to whom you may like to intrust it, my dear F——.

The same.

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
London, *September 1st, 1842.*

My dear Felton,

Of course that letter in the papers was as foul a forgery as ever felon swung for. . . . . I have not contradicted it publicly, nor shall I. When I tilt at such wringings out of the dirtiest mortality, I shall be another man—indeed, almost the creature they would make me.

I gave your message to Forster, who sends a despatch-box full of kind remembrances in return. He is in a great state of delight with the first volume of my American book (which I have just finished), and swears loudly by it. It is *True* and Honourable I know, and I shall hope to send it you, complete, by the first steamer in November.

Your description of the porter and the carpet-bags prepares me for a first-rate facetious novel, brimful of the richest humour, on which I have no doubt you are engaged. What is it called? Sometimes I imagine the title-page thus:

OYSTERS
IN
EVERY STYLE
OR
OPENINGS
OF
LIFE
BY
YOUNG DANDO.

As to the man putting the luggage on his head, as a sort of sign, I adopt it from this hour.

I date this from London, where I have come, as a good profligate, graceless bachelor,

for a day or two; leaving my wife and babbies at the seaside. . . . . Heavens! if you were but here at this minute! A piece of salmon and a steak are cooking in the kitchen; it's a very wet day, and I have had a fire lighted; the wine sparkles on a side table; the room looks the more snug from being the only *un*dismantled one in the house; plates are warming for Forster and Maclise, whose knock I am momentarily expecting; that groom I told you of, who never comes into the house, except when we are all out of town, is walking about in his shirt-sleeves without the smallest consciousness of impropriety; a great mound of proofs are waiting to be read aloud, after dinner. With what a shout I would clap you down into the easiest chair, my genial Felton, if you could but appear, and order you a pair of slippers instantly!

Since I have written this, the aforesaid groom—a very small man (as the fashion is), with fiery red hair (as the fashion is *not*)—has looked very hard at me and fluttered about me at the same time, like a giant butterfly. After a pause, he says, in a Sam Wellerish kind of way: "I vent to the club this mornin', sir. There vorn't no letters, sir." "Very good, Topping." "How's missis, sir?" "Pretty well, Topping." "Glad to hear it, sir. *My* missis ain't wery well, sir." "No!" "No, sir, she's a goin', sir, to have a hincrease wery soon, and it makes her rather nervous, sir; and ven a young voman gets at all down at sich a time, sir, she goes down wery deep, sir." To this sentiment I replied affirmatively, and then he adds, as he stirs the fire (as if he were thinking out loud): "Wot a mystery it is! Wot a go is natur'!" With which scrap of philosophy, he gradually gets nearer to the door, and so fades out of the room.

This same man asked me one day, soon after I came home, what Sir John Wilson was. This is a friend of mine, who took our house and servants, and everything as it stood, during our absence in America. I told him an officer. "A wot, sir?" "An officer." And then, for fear he should think I meant a police-officer, I added, "An officer in the army." "I beg your pardon, sir," he said, touching his hat, "but the club as I always drove him to wos the United Servants."

The real name of this club is the United Service, but I have no doubt he thought it was a high-life-below-stairs kind of resort, and that this gentleman was a retired butler or superannuated footman.

There's the knock, and the Great Western sails, or steams rather, to-morrow. Write soon again, dear Felton, and ever believe me. . . . .

Your affectionate friend.

P.S.—All good angels prosper Dr. Howe! He, at least, will not like me the less, I hope, for what I shall say of Laura.

The same.

1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,
LONDON, *31st December, 1842.*

MY DEAR FELTON,

Many and many happy New Years to you and yours! As many happy children as may

be quite convenient (no more!), and as many happy meetings between them and our children, and between you and us, as the kind fates in their utmost kindness shall favourably decree!

The American book (to begin with that) has been a most complete and thorough-going success. Four large editions have now been sold *and paid for*, and it has won golden opinions from all sorts of men, except our friend in F——, who is a miserable creature; a disappointed man in great poverty, to whom I have ever been most kind and considerate (I need scarcely say that); and another friend in B——, no less a person than an illustrious gentleman named ——, who wrote a story called ——. They have done no harm, and have fallen short of their mark, which, of course, was to annoy me. Now I am perfectly free from any diseased curiosity in such respects, and whenever I hear of a notice of this kind, I never read it; whereby I always conceive (don't you?) that I get the victory. With regard to your slave-owners, they may cry, till they are as black in the face as their own slaves, that Dickens lies. Dickens does not write for their satisfaction, and Dickens will not explain for their comfort. Dickens has the name and date of every newspaper in which every one of those advertisements appeared, as they know perfectly well; but Dickens does not choose to give them, and will not at any time between this and the day of judgment. . . . .

I have been hard at work on my new book, of which the first number has just appeared. The Paul Joneses who pursue happiness and profit at other men's cost will no doubt enable you to read it, almost as soon as you receive this. I hope you will like it. And I particularly commend, my dear Felton, one Mr. Pecksniff and his daughters to your tender regards. I have a kind of liking for them myself.

Blessed star of morning, such a trip as we had into Cornwall, just after Longfellow went away! The "we" means Forster, Maclise, Stanfield (the renowned marine painter), and the Inimitable Boz. We went down into Devonshire by the railroad, and there we hired an open carriage from an innkeeper, patriotic in all Pickwick matters, and went on with post-horses. Sometimes we travelled all night, sometimes all day, sometimes both. I kept the joint-stock purse, ordered all the dinners, paid all the turnpikes, conducted facetious conversations with the post-boys, and regulated the pace at which we travelled. Stanfield (an old sailor) consulted an enormous map on all disputed points of wayfaring; and referred, moreover, to a pocket-compass and other scientific instruments. The luggage was in Forster's department; and Maclise, having nothing particular to do, sang songs. Heavens! If you could have seen the necks of bottles—distracting in their immense varieties of shape—peering out of the carriage pockets! If you could have witnessed the deep devotion of the post-boys, the wild attachment of the hostlers, the maniac glee of the waiters! If you could have followed us into the earthy old churches we visited, and into the strange caverns on the gloomy sea-shore, and down into the depths of mines, and up to the tops of giddy heights where the unspeakably green water was roaring, I don't know how many hundred feet below! If you could have seen but one gleam of the bright fires by which we sat in the big rooms of ancient inns at night, until long after the small hours had come and gone, or smelt but one steam of the hot punch (not white, dear Felton, like that amazing compound I sent you a taste of, but a rich, genial, glowing brown) which came in every evening in a huge broad china bowl! I never laughed in my life as I did on this journey. It would have done you good to hear me. I was choking and gasping and bursting

the buckle off the back of my stock, all the way. And Stanfield (who is very much of your figure and temperament, but fifteen years older) got into such apoplectic entanglements that we were often obliged to beat him on the back with portmanteaus before we could recover him. Seriously, I do believe there never was such a trip. And they made such sketches, those two men, in the most romantic of our halting-places, that you would have sworn we had the Spirit of Beauty with us, as well as the Spirit of Fun. But stop till you come to England—I say no more.

The actuary of the national debt couldn't calculate the number of children who are coming here on Twelfth Night, in honour of Charley's birthday, for which occasion I have provided a magic lantern and divers other tremendous engines of that nature. But the best of it is that Forster and I have purchased between us the entire stock-in-trade of a conjurer, the practice and display whereof is intrusted to me. And O my dear eyes, Felton, if you could see me conjuring the company's watches into impossible tea-caddies, and causing pieces of money to fly, and burning pocket-handkerchiefs without hurting 'em, and practising in my own room, without anybody to admire, you would never forget it as long as you live. In those tricks which require a confederate, I am assisted (by reason of his imperturbable good humour) by Stanfield, who always does his part exactly the wrong way, to the unspeakable delight of all beholders. We come out on a small scale, to-night, at Forster's, where we see the old year out and the new one in. Particulars shall be forwarded in my next.

I have quite made up my mind that F—— really believes he *does* know you personally, and has all his life. He talks to me about you with such gravity that I am afraid to grin, and feel it necessary to look quite serious. Sometimes he *tells* me things about you, doesn't ask me, you know, so that I am occasionally perplexed beyond all telling, and begin to think it was he, and not I, who went to America. It's the queerest thing in the world.

The book I was to have given Longfellow for you is not worth sending by itself, being only a Barnaby. But I will look up some manuscript for you (I think I have that of the American Notes complete), and will try to make the parcel better worth its long conveyance. With regard to Maclise's pictures, you certainly are quite right in your impression of them; but he is "such a discursive devil" (as he says about himself) and flies off at such odd tangents, that I feel it difficult to convey to you any general notion of his purpose. I will try to do so when I write again. I want very much to know about —— and that charming girl. . . . . Give me full particulars. Will you remember me cordially to Sumner, and say I thank him for his welcome letter? The like to Hillard, with many regards to himself and his wife, with whom I had one night a little conversation which I shall not readily forget. The like to Washington Allston, and all friends who care for me and have outlived my book. . . . . Always, my dear Felton,

With true regard and affection, yours.

Mr. Tom Hood.

MY DEAR HOOD,

I can't state in figures (not very well remembering how to get beyond a million) the

number of candidates for the Sanatorium matronship, but if you will ask your little boy to trace figures in the beds of your garden, beginning at the front wall, going down to the cricket-ground, coming back to the wall again, and "carrying over" to the next door, and will then set a skilful accountant to add up the whole, the product, as the Tutor's Assistants say, will give you the amount required. I have pledged myself (being assured of her capability) to support a near relation of Miss E——'s; otherwise, I need not say how glad I should have been to forward any wish of yours.

Very faithfully yours.

1843.

Mr. Macvey Napier.

[19]DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, *January 21st, 1843.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Let me hasten to say, in the fullest and most explicit manner, that you have acted a most honourable, open, fair and manly part in the matter of my complaint,[20] for which I beg you to accept my best thanks, and the assurance of my friendship and regard. I would on no account publish the letter you have sent me for that purpose, as I conceive that by doing so, I should not reciprocate the spirit in which you have written to me privately. But if you should, upon consideration, think it not inexpedient to set the *Review* right in regard to this point of fact, by a note in the next number, I should be glad to see it there.

In reference to the article itself, it did, by repeating this statement, hurt my feelings excessively; and is, in this respect, I still conceive, most unworthy of its author. I am at a loss to divine who its author is. I *know* he read in some cut-throat American paper, this and other monstrous statements, which I could at any time have converted into sickening praise by the payment of some fifty dollars. I know that he is perfectly aware that his statement in the *Review* in corroboration of these lies, would be disseminated through the whole of the United States; and that my contradiction will never be heard of. And though I care very little for the opinion of any person who will set the statement of an American editor (almost invariably an atrocious scoundrel) against my character and conduct, such as they may be; still, my sense of justice does revolt from this most cavalier and careless exhibition of me to a whole people, as a traveller under false pretences, and a disappointed intriguer. The better the acquaintance with America, the more defenceless and more inexcusable such conduct is. For, I solemnly declare (and appeal to any man but the writer of this paper, who has travelled in that country, for confirmation of my statement) that the source from which he drew the “information” so recklessly put forth again in England, is infinitely more obscene, disgusting, and brutal than the very worst Sunday newspaper that has ever been printed in Great Britain. Conceive *The Edinburgh Review* quoting *The Satirist*, or *The Man about Town*, as an authority against a man with one grain of honour, or feather-weight of reputation.

With regard to yourself, let me say again that I thank you with all sincerity and heartiness, and fully acquit you of anything but kind and generous intentions towards me. In proof of which, I do assure you that I am even more desirous than before to write for the *Review*, and to find some topic which would at once please me and you.

Always faithfully yours.

Professor Felton.

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
London, *March 2nd, 1843.*

My dear Felton,

I don't know where to begin, but plunge headlong with a terrible splash into this letter, on the chance of turning up somewhere.

Hurrah! Up like a cork again, with *The North American Review* in my hand. Like you, my dear ——, and I can say no more in praise of it, though I go on to the end of the sheet. You cannot think how much notice it has attracted here. Brougham called the other day, with the number (thinking I might not have seen it), and I being out at the time, he left a note, speaking of it, and of the writer, in terms that warmed my heart. Lord Ashburton (one of whose people wrote a notice in the *Edinburgh* which they have since publicly contradicted) also wrote to me about it in just the same strain. And many others have done the like.

I am in great health and spirits and powdering away at Chuzzlewit, with all manner of facetiousness rising up before me as I go on. As to news, I have really none, saving that —— (who never took any exercise in his life) has been laid up with rheumatism for weeks past, but is now, I hope, getting better. My little captain, as I call him—he who took me out, I mean, and with whom I had that adventure of the cork soles—has been in London too, and seeing all the lions under my escort. Good heavens! I wish you could have seen certain other mahogany-faced men (also captains) who used to call here for him in the morning, and bear him off to docks and rivers and all sorts of queer places, whence he always returned late at night, with rum-and-water tear-drops in his eyes, and a complication of punchy smells in his mouth! He was better than a comedy to us, having marvellous ways of tying his pocket-handkerchief round his neck at dinner-time in a kind of jolly embarrassment, and then forgetting what he had done with it; also of singing songs to wrong tunes, and calling land objects by sea names, and never knowing what o'clock it was, but taking midnight for seven in the evening; with many other sailor oddities, all full of honesty, manliness, and good temper. We took him to Drury Lane Theatre to see "Much Ado About Nothing." But I never could find out what he meant by turning round, after he had watched the first two scenes with great attention, and inquiring "whether it was a Polish piece." . . . .

On the 4th of April I am going to preside at a public dinner for the benefit of the printers; and if you were a guest at that table, wouldn't I smite you on the shoulder, harder than ever I rapped the well-beloved back of Washington Irving at the City Hotel in New York!

You were asking me—I love to say asking, as if we could talk together—about Maclise. He is such a discursive fellow, and so eccentric in his might, that on a mental review of his pictures I can hardly tell you of them as leading to any one strong purpose. But the annual Exhibition of the Royal Academy comes off in May, and then I will endeavour to give you some notion of him. He is a tremendous creature, and might do anything. But, like all tremendous creatures, he takes his own way, and flies off at unexpected breaches in the conventional wall.

You know H——'s Book, I daresay. Ah! I saw a scene of mingled comicality and

seriousness at his funeral some weeks ago, which has choked me at dinner-time ever since. C—— and I went as mourners; and as he lived, poor fellow, five miles out of town, I drove C—— down. It was such a day as I hope, for the credit of nature, is seldom seen in any parts but these—muddy, foggy, wet, dark, cold, and unutterably wretched in every possible respect. Now, C—— has enormous whiskers, which straggle all down his throat in such weather, and stick out in front of him, like a partially unravelled bird's-nest; so that he looks queer enough at the best, but when he is very wet, and in a state between jollity (he is always very jolly with me) and the deepest gravity (going to a funeral, you know), it is utterly impossible to resist him; especially as he makes the strangest remarks the mind of man can conceive, without any intention of being funny, but rather meaning to be philosophical. I really cried with an irresistible sense of his comicality all the way; but when he was dressed out in a black cloak and a very long black hat-band by an undertaker (who, as he whispered me with tears in his eyes—for he had known H—— many years—was a "character, and he would like to sketch him"), I thought I should have been obliged to go away. However, we went into a little parlour where the funeral party was, and God knows it was miserable enough, for the widow and children were crying bitterly in one corner, and the other mourners—mere people of ceremony, who cared no more for the dead man than the hearse did—were talking quite coolly and carelessly together in another; and the contrast was as painful and distressing as anything I ever saw. There was an Independent clergyman present, with his bands on and a bible under his arm, who, as soon as we were seated, addressed —— thus, in a loud emphatic voice: "Mr. C——, have you seen a paragraph respecting our departed friend, which has gone the round of the morning papers?" "Yes, sir," says C——, "I have," looking very hard at me the while, for he had told me with some pride coming down that it was his composition. "Oh!" said the clergyman. "Then you will agree with me, Mr. C——, that it is not only an insult to me, who am the servant of the Almighty, but an insult to the Almighty, whose servant I am." "How is that, sir?" said C——. "It is stated, Mr. C——, in that paragraph," says the minister, "that when Mr. H—— failed in business as a bookseller, he was persuaded by *me* to try the pulpit; which is false, incorrect, unchristian, in a manner blasphemous, and in all respects contemptible. Let us pray." With which, my dear Felton, and in the same breath, I give you my word, he knelt down, as we all did, and began a very miserable jumble of an extemporary prayer. I was really penetrated with sorrow for the family, but when C—— (upon his knees, and sobbing for the loss of an old friend) whispered me, "that if that wasn't a clergyman, and it wasn't a funeral, he'd have punched his head," I felt as if nothing but convulsions could possibly relieve me. . . . .

Faithfully always, my dear Felton.

Mrs. Hogarth.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *8th May, 1843.*

MY DEAR MRS. HOGARTH,

I was dressing to go to church yesterday morning—thinking, very sadly, of that time six years—when your kind note and its accompanying packet were brought to me. The best portrait that was ever painted would be of little value to you and me, in comparison

with that unfading picture we have within us; and of the worst (which ——‘s really is) I can only say, that it has no interest in my eyes, beyond being something which she sat near in its progress, full of life and beauty. In that light, I set some store by the copy you have sent me; and as a mark of your affection, I need not say I value it very much. As any record of that dear face, it is utterly worthless.

I trace in many respects a strong resemblance between her mental features and Georgina’s—so strange a one, at times, that when she and Kate and I are sitting together, I seem to think that what has happened is a melancholy dream from which I am just awakening. The perfect like of what she was, will never be again, but so much of her spirit shines out in this sister, that the old time comes back again at some seasons, and I can hardly separate it from the present.

After she died, I dreamed of her every night for many months—I think for the better part of a year—sometimes as a spirit, sometimes as a living creature, never with any of the bitterness of my real sorrow, but always with a kind of quiet happiness, which became so pleasant to me that I never lay down at night without a hope of the vision coming back in one shape or other. And so it did. I went down into Yorkshire, and finding it still present to me, in a strange scene and a strange bed, I could not help mentioning the circumstance in a note I wrote home to Kate. From that moment I have never dreamed of her once, though she is so much in my thoughts at all times (especially when I am successful, and have prospered in anything) that the recollection of her is an essential part of my being, and is as inseparable from my existence as the beating of my heart is.

Always affectionately.

Professor Felton.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *September 1st, 1843.*

MY DEAR FELTON,

If I thought it in the nature of things that you and I could ever agree on paper, touching a certain Chuzzlewitian question whereupon F—— tells me you have remarks to make, I should immediately walk into the same, tooth and nail. But as I don’t, I won’t. Contenting myself with this prediction, that one of these years and days, you will write or say to me: “My dear Dickens, you were right, though rough, and did a world of good, though you got most thoroughly hated for it.” To which I shall reply: “My dear Felton, I looked a long way off and not immediately under my nose.” . . . . At which sentiment you will laugh, and I shall laugh; and then (for I foresee this will all happen in my land) we shall call for another pot of porter and two or three dozen of oysters.

Now, don’t you in your own heart and soul quarrel with me for this long silence? Not half so much as I quarrel with myself, I know; but if you could read half the letters I write to you in imagination, you would swear by me for the best of correspondents. The truth is, that when I have done my morning’s work, down goes my pen, and from that minute I feel it a positive impossibility to take it up again, until imaginary butchers and bakers wave me to my desk. I walk about brimful of letters, facetious descriptions, touching morsels, and pathetic friendships, but can’t for the soul of me uncork myself. The post-office is my rock

ahead. My average number of letters that *must* be written every day is, at the least, a dozen. And you could no more know what I was writing to you spiritually, from the perusal of the bodily thirteenth, than you could tell from my hat what was going on in my head, or could read my heart on the surface of my flannel waistcoat.

This is a little fishing-place; intensely quiet; built on a cliff, whereon—in the centre of a tiny semicircular bay—our house stands; the sea rolling and dashing under the windows. Seven miles out are the Goodwin Sands (you've heard of the Goodwin Sands?) whence floating lights perpetually wink after dark, as if they were carrying on intrigues with the servants. Also there is a big lighthouse called the North Foreland on a hill behind the village, a severe parsonic light, which reproves the young and giddy floaters, and stares grimly out upon the sea. Under the cliff are rare good sands, where all the children assemble every morning and throw up impossible fortifications, which the sea throws down again at high water. Old gentlemen and ancient ladies flirt after their own manner in two reading-rooms and on a great many scattered seats in the open air. Other old gentlemen look all day through telescopes and never see anything. In a bay-window in a one-pair sits, from nine o'clock to one, a gentleman with rather long hair and no neckcloth, who writes and grins as if he thought he were very funny indeed. His name is Boz. At one he disappears, and presently emerges from a bathing-machine, and may be seen—a kind of salmon-coloured porpoise—splashing about in the ocean. After that he may be seen in another bay-window on the ground-floor, eating a strong lunch; after that, walking a dozen miles or so, or lying on his back in the sand reading a book. Nobody bothers him unless they know he is disposed to be talked to; and I am told he is very comfortable indeed. He's as brown as a berry, and they *do* say is a small fortune to the innkeeper who sells beer and cold punch. But this is mere rumour. Sometimes he goes up to London (eighty miles, or so, away), and then I'm told there is a sound in Lincoln's Inn Fields at night, as of men laughing, together with a clinking of knives and forks and wine-glasses.

I never shall have been so near you since we parted aboard the *George Washington* as next Tuesday. Forster, Maclise, and I, and perhaps Stanfield, are then going aboard the Cunard steamer at Liverpool, to bid Macready good-bye, and bring his wife away. It will be a very hard parting. You will see and know him of course. We gave him a splendid dinner last Saturday at Richmond, whereat I presided with my accustomed grace. He is one of the noblest fellows in the world, and I would give a great deal that you and I should sit beside each other to see him play Virginius, Lear, or Werner, which I take to be, every way, the greatest piece of exquisite perfection that his lofty art is capable of attaining. His Macbeth, especially the last act, is a tremendous reality; but so indeed is almost everything he does. You recollect, perhaps, that he was the guardian of our children while we were away. I love him dearly. . . . .

You asked me, long ago, about Maclise. He is such a wayward fellow in his subjects, that it would be next to impossible to write such an article as you were thinking of about him. I wish you could form an idea of his genius. One of these days a book will come out, "Moore's Irish Melodies," entirely illustrated by him, on every page. *When* it comes, I'll send it to you. You will have some notion of him then. He is in great favour with the Queen, and paints secret pictures for her to put upon her husband's table on the morning of his birthday, and the like. But if he has a care, he will leave his mark on more enduring

things than palace walls.

And so L—— is married. I remember *her* well, and could draw her portrait, in words, to the life. A very beautiful and gentle creature, and a proper love for a poet. My cordial remembrances and congratulations. Do they live in the house where we breakfasted? . . . .

I very often dream I am in America again; but, strange to say, I never dream of you. I am always endeavouring to get home in disguise, and have a dreary sense of the distance. *À propos* of dreams, is it not a strange thing if writers of fiction never dream of their own creations; recollecting, I suppose, even in their dreams, that they have no real existence? *I* never dreamed of any of my own characters, and I feel it so impossible that I would wager Scott never did of his, real as they are. I had a good piece of absurdity in my head a night or two ago. I dreamed that somebody was dead. I don't know who, but it's not to the purpose. It was a private gentleman, and a particular friend; and I was greatly overcome when the news was broken to me (very delicately) by a gentleman in a cocked hat, top boots, and a sheet. Nothing else. "Good God!" I said, "is he dead?" "He is as dead, sir," rejoined the gentleman, "as a door-nail. But we must all die, Mr. Dickens, sooner or later, my dear sir." "Ah!" I said. "Yes, to be sure. Very true. But what did he die of?" The gentleman burst into a flood of tears, and said, in a voice broken by emotion: "He christened his youngest child, sir, with a toasting-fork." I never in my life was so affected as at his having fallen a victim to this complaint. It carried a conviction to my mind that he never could have recovered. I knew that it was the most interesting and fatal malady in the world; and I wrung the gentleman's hand in a convulsion of respectful admiration, for I felt that this explanation did equal honour to his head and heart!

What do you think of Mrs. Gamp? And how do you like the undertaker? I have a fancy that they are in your way. Oh heaven! such green woods as I was rambling among down in Yorkshire, when I was getting that done last July! For days and weeks we never saw the sky but through green boughs; and all day long I cantered over such soft moss and turf, that the horse's feet scarcely made a sound upon it. We have some friends in that part of the country (close to Castle Howard, where Lord Morpeth's father dwells in state, *in* his park indeed), who are the jolliest of the jolly, keeping a big old country house, with an ale cellar something larger than a reasonable church, and everything, like Goldsmith's bear dances, "in a concatenation accordingly." Just the place for you, Felton! We performed some madnesses there in the way of forfeits, picnics, rustic games, inspections of ancient monasteries at midnight, when the moon was shining, that would have gone to your heart, and, as Mr. Weller says, "come out on the other side." . . . .

Write soon, my dear Felton; and if I write to you less often than I would, believe that my affectionate heart is with you always. Loves and regards to all friends, from yours ever and ever.

Very faithfully yours.

Mr. Macvey Napier.

BROADSTAIRS, *September 16th, 1843.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I hinted, in a letter of introduction I gave Mr. Hood to you, that I had been thinking of a subject for the *Edinburgh*. Would it meet the purposes of the *Review* to come out strongly against any system of education based exclusively on the principles of the Established Church? If it would, I should like to show why such a thing as the Church Catechism is wholly inapplicable to the state of ignorance that now prevails; and why no system but one, so general in great religious principles as to include all creeds, can meet the wants and understandings of the dangerous classes of society. This is the only broad ground I could hold, consistently with what I feel and think on such a subject. But I could give, in taking it, a description of certain voluntary places of instruction, called "the ragged schools," now existing in London, and of the schools in jails, and of the ignorance presented in such places, which would make a very striking paper, especially if they were put in strong comparison with the effort making, by subscription, to maintain exclusive Church instruction. I could show these people in a state so miserable and so neglected, that their very nature rebels against the simplest religion, and that to convey to them the faintest outlines of any system of distinction between right and wrong is in itself a giant's task, before which mysteries and squabbles for forms *must* give way. Would this be too much for the *Review?*

Faithfully yours.

1844.

Professor Felton.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, *January 2nd, 1844.*

MY VERY DEAR FELTON,

You are a prophet, and had best retire from business straightway. Yesterday morning, New Year's Day, when I walked into my little workroom after breakfast, and was looking out of window at the snow in the garden—not seeing it particularly well in consequence of some staggering suggestions of last night, whereby I was beset—the postman came to the door with a knock, for which I denounced him from my heart. Seeing your hand upon the cover of a letter which he brought, I immediately blessed him, presented him with a glass of whisky, inquired after his family (they are all well), and opened the despatch with a moist and oystery twinkle in my eye. And on the very day from which the new year dates, I read your New Year congratulations as punctually as if you lived in the next house. Why don't you?

Now, if instantly on the receipt of this you will send a free and independent citizen down to the Cunard wharf at Boston, you will find that Captain Hewett, of the *Britannia* steamship (my ship), has a small parcel for Professor Felton of Cambridge; and in that parcel you will find a Christmas Carol in prose; being a short story of Christmas by Charles Dickens. Over which Christmas Carol Charles Dickens wept and laughed and wept again, and excited himself in a most extraordinary manner in the composition; and thinking whereof he walked about the black streets of London, fifteen and twenty miles many a night when all the sober folks had gone to bed. . . . . Its success is most prodigious. And by every post all manner of strangers write all manner of letters to him about their homes and hearths, and how this same Carol is read aloud there, and kept on a little shelf by itself. Indeed, it is the greatest success, as I am told, that this ruffian and rascal has ever achieved.

Forster is out again; and if he don't go in again, after the manner in which we have been keeping Christmas, he must be very strong indeed. Such dinings, such dancings, such conjurings, such blindman's-buffings, such theatre-goings, such kissings-out of old years and kissings-in of new ones, never took place in these parts before. To keep the Chuzzlewit going, and do this little book, the Carol, in the odd times between two parts of it, was, as you may suppose, pretty tight work. But when it was done I broke out like a madman. And if you could have seen me at a children's party at Macready's the other night, going down a country dance with Mrs. M., you would have thought I was a country gentleman of independent property, residing on a tiptop farm, with the wind blowing straight in my face every day. . . . .

Your friend, Mr. P——, dined with us one day (I don't know whether I told you this before), and pleased us very much. Mr. C—— has dined here once, and spent an evening here. I have not seen him lately, though he has called twice or thrice; for K—— being

unwell and I busy, we have not been visible at our accustomed seasons. I wonder whether H—— has fallen in your way. Poor H——! He was a good fellow, and has the most grateful heart I ever met with. Our journeyings seem to be a dream now. Talking of dreams, strange thoughts of Italy and France, and maybe Germany, are springing up within me as the Chuzzlewit clears off. It's a secret I have hardly breathed to anyone, but I "think" of leaving England for a year, next midsummer, bag and baggage, little ones and all—then coming out with *such* a story, Felton, all at once, no parts, sledgehammer blow.

I send you a Manchester paper, as you desire. The report is not exactly done, but very well done, notwithstanding. It was a very splendid sight, I assure you, and an awful-looking audience. I am going to preside at a similar meeting at Liverpool on the 26th of next month, and on my way home I may be obliged to preside at another at Birmingham. I will send you papers, if the reports be at all like the real thing.

I wrote to Prescott about his book, with which I was perfectly charmed. I think his descriptions masterly, his style brilliant, his purpose manly and gallant always. The introductory account of Aztec civilisation impressed me exactly as it impressed you. From beginning to end the whole history is enchanting and full of genius. I only wonder that, having such an opportunity of illustrating the doctrine of visible judgments, he never remarks, when Cortes and his men tumble the idols down the temple steps and call upon the people to take notice that their gods are powerless to help themselves, that possibly if some intelligent native had tumbled down the image of the Virgin or patron saint after them nothing very remarkable might have ensued in consequence.

Of course you like Macready. Your name's Felton. I wish you could see him play Lear. It is stupendously terrible. But I suppose he would be slow to act it with the Boston company.

Hearty remembrances to Sumner, Longfellow, Prescott, and all whom you know I love to remember. Countless happy years to you and yours, my dear Felton, and some instalment of them, however slight, in England, in the loving company of

THE PROSCRIBED ONE.
Oh, breathe not his name!

Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer.

ATHENÆUM, *Thursday Afternoon, 25th January, 1844.*

MY DEAR SIR EDWARD,

I received your kind cheque yesterday, in behalf of the Elton family; and am much indebted to you on their behalf.

Pray do not believe that the least intentional neglect has prevented me from calling on you, or that I am not sincerely desirous to avail myself of any opportunity of cultivating your friendship. I venture to say this to you in an unaffected and earnest spirit, and I hope it will not be displeasing to you.

At the time when you called, and for many weeks afterwards, I was so closely occupied with my little Carol (the idea of which had just occurred to me), that I never left home

before the owls went out, and led quite a solitary life. When I began to have a little time and to go abroad again, I knew that you were in affliction, and I then thought it better to wait, even before I left a card at your door, until the pressure of your distress had past.

I fancy a reproachful spirit in your note, possibly because I knew that I may appear to deserve it. But *do* let me say to you that it would give me real pain to retain the idea that there was any coldness between us, and that it would give me heartfelt satisfaction to know the reverse.

I shall make a personal descent upon you before Sunday, in the hope of telling you this myself. But I cannot rest easy without writing it also. And if this should lead to a better knowledge in each of us, of the other, believe me that I shall always look upon it as something I have long wished for.

Always faithfully yours.

Mr. Thompson.

[21]LIVERPOOL, *Wednesday Night, 28th February,*
Half-past ten at night.

MY DEAR THOMPSON,

There never were such considerate people as they are here. After offering me unbounded hospitality and my declining it, they leave me to myself like gentlemen. They saved me from all sorts of intrusion at the Town Hall—brought me back—and left me to my quiet supper (now on the table) as they had left me to my quiet dinner.

I wish you had come. It was really a splendid sight. The Town Hall was crammed to the roof by, I suppose, two thousand persons. The ladies were in full dress and immense numbers; and when Dick showed himself, the whole assembly stood up, rustling like the leaves of a wood. Dick, with the heart of a lion, dashed in bravely. He introduced that about the genie in the casket with marvellous effect; and was applauded to the echo, which did applaud again. He was horribly nervous when he arrived at Birmingham,[22] but when he stood upon the platform, I don't believe his pulse increased ten degrees. A better and quicker audience never listened to man.

The ladies had hung the hall (do you know what an immense place it is?) with artificial flowers all round. And on the front of the great gallery, immediately fronting this young gentleman, were the words in artificial flowers (you'll observe) "Welcome Boz" in letters about six feet high. Behind his head, and about the great organ, were immense transparencies representing several Fames crowning a corresponding number of Dicks, at which Victoria (taking out a poetic licence) was highly delighted.

* * * * * *

I am going to bed. The landlady is not literary, and calls me Mr. Digzon. In other respects it is a good house.

My dear Thompson, always yours.

Countess of Blessington.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *March 10th, 1844.*

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,

I have made up my mind to "see the world," and mean to decamp, bag and baggage, next midsummer for a twelvemonth. I purpose establishing my family in some convenient place, from whence I can make personal ravages on the neighbouring country, and, somehow or other, have got it into my head that Nice would be a favourable spot for head-quarters. You are so well acquainted with these matters, that I am anxious to have the benefit of your kind advice. I do not doubt that you can tell me whether this same Nice be a healthy place the year through, whether it be reasonably cheap, pleasant to look at and to live in, and the like. If you will tell me, when you have ten minutes to spare for such a client, I shall be delighted to come to you, and guide myself by your opinion. I will not ask you to forgive me for troubling you, because I am sure beforehand that you will do so. I beg to be kindly remembered to Count D'Orsay and to your nieces—I was going to say "the Misses Power," but it looks so like the blue board at a ladies' school, that I stopped short.

Very faithfully yours.

Mr. Thompson.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *March 13th, 1844.*

MY DEAR THOMPSON,

Think of Italy! Don't give that up! Why, my house is entered at Phillips's and at Gillow's to be let for twelve months; my letter of credit lies ready at Coutts's; my last number of Chuzzlewit comes out in June; and the first week, if not the first day in July, sees me, God willing, steaming off towards the sun.

Yes. We must have a few books, and everything that is idle, sauntering, and enjoyable. We must lie down at the bottom of those boats, and devise all kinds of engines for improving on that gallant holiday. I see myself in a striped shirt, moustache, blouse, red sash, straw hat, and white trousers, sitting astride a mule, and not caring for the clock, the day of the month, or the week. Tinkling bells upon the mule, I hope. I look forward to it day and night, and wish the time were come. Don't *you* give it up. That's all.

* * * * * *

Always, my dear Thompson,
Faithfully your friend.

The same.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sunday, March 24th, 1844.*

MY DEAR THOMPSON,

My study fireplace having been suddenly seized with symptoms of insanity, I have been in great affliction. The bricklayer was called in, and considered it necessary to perform an extensive operation without delay. I don't know whether you are aware of a peculiar bricky raggedness (not unaccompanied by pendent stalactites of mortar) which is exposed to view on the removal of a stove, or are acquainted with the suffocating properties of a kind of accidental snuff which flies out of the same cavernous region in great abundance. It is very distressing. I have been walking about the house after the manner of the dove before the waters subsided for some days, and have no pens or ink or paper. Hence this gap in our correspondence which I now repair.

What are you doing??? When are you coming away???? Why are you stopping there????? Do enlighten me, for I think of you constantly, and have a true and real interest in your proceedings.

D'Orsay, who knows Italy very well indeed, strenuously insists there is no such place for headquarters as Pisa. Lady Blessington says so also. What do you say? On the first of July! The first of July! Dick turns his head towards the orange groves.

* * * * * *

Daniel not having yet come to judgment, there is no news stirring. Every morning I proclaim: "At home to Mr. Thompson." Every evening I ejaculate with Monsieur Jacques[23]: "But he weel come. I know he weel." After which I look vacantly at the boxes; put my hands to my gray wig, as if to make quite sure that it is still on my head, all safe: and go off, first entrance O.P. to soft music.

* * * * * *

Always faithfully your friend.

Mr. Ebenezer Jones.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,
Monday, 15th April, 1844.

DEAR SIR,

I don't know how it has happened that I have been so long in acknowledging the receipt of your kind present of your poems[24]; but I *do* know that I have often thought of writing to you, and have very often reproached myself for not carrying that thought into execution.

I have not been neglectful of the poems themselves, I assure you, but have read them with very great pleasure. They struck me at the first glance as being remarkably nervous, picturesque, imaginative, and original. I have frequently recurred to them since, and never with the slightest abatement of that impression. I am much flattered and gratified by your

recollection of me. I beg you to believe in my unaffected sympathy with, and appreciation of, your powers; and I entreat you to accept my best wishes, and genuine though tardy thanks.

Dear Sir, faithfully yours.

Mr. Charles Babbage.

9, OSNABURGH TERRACE, NEW ROAD, *28th May, 1844.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I regret to say that we are placed in the preposterous situation of being obliged to postpone our little dinner-party on Saturday, by reason of having no house to dine in. We have not been burnt out; but a desirable widow (as a tenant, I mean) proposed, only last Saturday, to take our own house for the whole term of our intended absence abroad, on condition that she had possession of it to-day. We fled, and were driven into this place, which has no convenience for the production of any other banquet than a cold collation of plate and linen, the only comforts we have not left behind us.

My consolation lies in knowing what sort of dinner you would have had if you had come *here*, and in looking forward to claiming the fulfilment of your kind promise when we are again at home.

Always believe me, my dear Sir, faithfully yours.

Countess of Blessington.

MILAN, *Wednesday, November 20th, 1844.*

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,

Appearances are against me. Don’t believe them. I have written you, in intention, fifty letters, and I can claim no credit for anyone of them (though they were the best letters you ever read), for they all originated in my desire to live in your memory and regard. Since I heard from Count D’Orsay, I have been beset in I don’t know how many ways. First of all, I went to Marseilles and came back to Genoa. Then I moved to the Peschiere. Then some people, who had been present at the Scientific Congress here, made a sudden inroad on that establishment, and overran it. Then they went away, and I shut myself up for a month, close and tight, over my little Christmas book, “The Chimes.” All my affections and passions got twined and knotted up in it, and I became as haggard as a murderer, long before I wrote “The End.” When I had done that, like “*The* man of Thessaly,” who having scratched his eyes out in a quickset hedge, plunged into a bramble-bush to scratch them in again, I fled to Venice, to recover the composure I had disturbed. From thence I went to Verona and to Mantua. And now I am here—just come up from underground, and earthy all over, from seeing that extraordinary tomb in which the dead saint lies in an alabaster case, with sparkling jewels all about him to mock his dusty eyes, not to mention the twenty-franc pieces which devout votaries were ringing down upon a sort of sky-light in the cathedral pavement above, as if it were the counter of his heavenly shop. You know

Verona? You know everything in Italy, *I* know. The Roman Amphitheatre there delighted me beyond expression. I never saw anything so full of solemn ancient interest. There are the four-and-forty rows of seats, as fresh and perfect as if their occupants had vacated them but yesterday—the entrances, passages, dens, rooms, corridors, the numbers over some of the arches. An equestrian troop had been there some days before, and had scooped out a little ring at one end of the arena, and had their performances in that spot. I should like to have seen it, of all things, for its very dreariness. Fancy a handful of people sprinkled over one corner of the great place (the whole population of Verona wouldn't fill it now); and a spangled cavalier bowing to the echoes, and the grass-grown walls! I climbed to the topmost seat, and looked away at the beautiful view for some minutes; when I turned round, and looked down into the theatre again, it had exactly the appearance of an immense straw hat, to which the helmet in the Castle of Otranto was a baby; the rows of seats representing the different plaits of straw, and the arena the inside of the crown. I had great expectations of Venice, but they fell immeasurably short of the wonderful reality. The short time I passed there went by me in a dream. I hardly think it possible to exaggerate its beauties, its sources of interest, its uncommon novelty and freshness. A thousand and one realisations of the Thousand and one Nights, could scarcely captivate and enchant me more than Venice.

Your old house at Albaro—Il Paradiso—is spoken of as yours to this day. What a gallant place it is! I don't know the present inmate, but I hear that he bought and furnished it not long since, with great splendour, in the French style, and that he wishes to sell it. I wish I were rich and could buy it. There is a third-rate wine shop below Byron's house, and the place looks dull and miserable, and ruinous enough. Old —— is a trifle uglier than when I first arrived. He has periodical parties, at which there are a great many flowerpots and a few ices—no other refreshments. He goes about, constantly charged with extemporaneous poetry, and is always ready, like tavern dinners, on the shortest notice and the most reasonable terms. He keeps a gigantic harp in his bedroom, together with pen, ink, and paper, for fixing his ideas as they flow, a kind of profane King David, but truly good-natured and very harmless.

Pray say to Count D'Orsay everything that is cordial and loving from me. The travelling purse he gave me has been of immense service. It has been constantly opened. All Italy seems to yearn to put its hand in it. I think of hanging it, when I come back to England, on a nail as a trophy, and of gashing the brim like the blade of an old sword, and saying to my son and heir, as they do upon the stage: "You see this notch, boy? Five hundred francs were laid low on that day, for post-horses. Where this gap is, a waiter charged your father treble the correct amount—and got it. This end, worn into teeth like the rasped edge of an old file, is sacred to the Custom Houses, boy, the passports, and the shabby soldiers at town-gates, who put an open hand and a dirty coat-cuff into the coach windows of all 'Forestieri.' Take it, boy. Thy father has nothing else to give!"

My desk is cooling itself in a mail-coach, somewhere down at the back of the cathedral, and the pens and ink in this house are so detestable, that I have no hope of your ever getting to this portion of my letter. But I have the less misery in this state of mind, from knowing that it has nothing in it to repay you for the trouble of perusal.

Very faithfully yours.

COVENT GARDEN, *Sunday, Noon (December, 1844).*

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,

Business for other people (and by no means of a pleasant kind) has held me prisoner during two whole days, and will so detain me to-day, in the very agony of my departure for Italy again, that I shall not even be able to reach Gore House once more, on which I had set my heart. I cannot bear the thought of going away without some sort of reference to the happy day you gave me on Monday, and the pleasure and delight I had in your earnest greeting. I shall never forget it, believe me. It would be worth going to China—it would be worth going to America, to come home again for the pleasure of such a meeting with you and Count D'Orsay—to whom my love, and something as near it to Miss Power and her sister as it is lawful to send. It will be an unspeakable satisfaction to me (though I am not maliciously disposed) to know under your own hand at Genoa that my little book made you cry. I hope to prove a better correspondent on my return to those shores. But better or worse, or any how, I am ever, my dear Lady Blessington, in no common degree, and not with an every-day regard, yours.

Very faithfully yours.

1845.

The same.

GENOA, *May 9th, 1845.*

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,

Once more in my old quarters, and with rather a tired sole to my foot, from having found such an immense number of different resting-places for it since I went away. I write you my last Italian letter for this bout, designing to leave here, please God, on the ninth of next month, and to be in London again by the end of June. I am looking forward with great delight to the pleasure of seeing you once more, and mean to come to Gore House with such a swoop as shall astonish the poodle, if, after being accustomed to his own size and sense, he retain the power of being astonished at anything in the wide world. You know where I have been, and every mile of ground I have travelled over, and every object I have seen. It is next to impossible, surely, to exaggerate the interest of Rome; though, I think, it *is* very possible to find the main source of interest in the wrong things. Naples disappointed me greatly. The weather was bad during a great part of my stay there. But if I had not had mud, I should have had dust, and though I had had sun, I must still have had the Lazzaroni. And they are so ragged, so dirty, so abject, so full of degradation, so sunken and steeped in the hopelessness of better things, that they would make heaven uncomfortable, if they could ever get there. I didn't expect to see a handsome city, but I expected something better than that long dull line of squalid houses, which stretches from the Chiaja to the quarter of the Porta Capuana; and while I was quite prepared for a miserable populace, I had some dim belief that there were bright rays among them, and dancing legs, and shining sun-browned faces. Whereas the honest truth is, that connected with Naples itself, I have not one solitary recollection. The country round it charmed me, I need not say. Who can forget Herculaneum and Pompeii?

As to Vesuvius, it burns away in my thoughts, beside the roaring waters of Niagara, and not a splash of the water extinguishes a spark of the fire; but there they go on, tumbling and flaming night and day, each in its fullest glory.

I have seen so many wonders, and each of them has such a voice of its own, that I sit all day long listening to the roar they make as if it were in a sea-shell, and have fallen into an idleness so complete, that I can't rouse myself sufficiently to go to Pisa on the twenty-fifth, when the triennial illumination of the Cathedral and Leaning Tower, and Bridges, and what not, takes place. But I have already been there; and it cannot beat St. Peter's, I suppose. So I don't think I shall pluck myself up by the roots, and go aboard a steamer for Leghorn. Let me thank you heartily for the "Keepsake" and the "Book of Beauty." They reached me a week or two ago. I have been very much struck by two papers in them—one, Landor's "Conversations," among the most charming, profound, and delicate productions I have ever read; the other, your lines on Byron's room at Venice. I am as sure that you wrote them from your heart, as I am that they found their way immediately to mine.

It delights me to receive such accounts of Maclise's fresco. If he will only give his magnificent genius fair play, there is not enough cant and dulness even in the criticism of art from which Sterne prayed kind heaven to defend him, as the worst of all the cants continually canted in this canting world—to keep the giant down an hour.

Our poor friend, the naval governor,[25] has lost his wife, I am sorry to hear, since you and I spoke of his pleasant face. Do not let your nieces forget me, if you can help it, and give my love to Count D'Orsay, with many thanks to him for his charming letter. I was greatly amused by his account of ——. There was a cold shade of aristocracy about it, and a dampness of cold water, which entertained me beyond measure.

Always faithfully yours.

Mr. Macvey Napier.

1, Devonshire Terrace, *July 28th, 1845.*

My dear Sir,

As my note is to bear reference to business, I will make it as short and plain as I can. I think I could write a pretty good and a well-timed article on the *Punishment of Death*, and sympathy with great criminals, instancing the gross and depraved curiosity that exists in reference to them, by some of the outrageous things that were written, done, and said in recent cases. But as I am not sure that my views would be yours, and as their statement would be quite inseparable from such a paper, I will briefly set down their purport that you may decide for yourself.

Society, having arrived at that state in which it spares bodily torture to the worst criminals, and having agreed, if criminals be put to death at all, to kill them in the speediest way, I consider the question with reference to society, and not at all with reference to the criminal, holding that, in a case of cruel and deliberate murder, he is already mercifully and sparingly treated. But, as a question for the deliberate consideration of all reflective persons, I put this view of the case. With such very repulsive and odious details before us, may it not be well to inquire whether the punishment of death be beneficial to society? I believe it to have a horrible fascination for many of those persons who render themselves liable to it, impelling them onward to the acquisition of a frightful notoriety; and (setting aside the strong confirmation of this idea afforded in individual instances) I presume this to be the case in very badly regulated minds, when I observe the strange fascination which everything connected with this punishment, or the object of it, possesses for tens of thousands of decent, virtuous, well-conducted people, who are quite unable to resist the published portraits, letters, anecdotes, smilings, snuff-takings, of the bloodiest and most unnatural scoundrel with the gallows before him. I observe that this strange interest does not prevail to anything like the same degree where death is not the penalty. Therefore I connect it with the dread and mystery surrounding death in any shape, but especially in this avenging form, and am disposed to come to the conclusion that it produces crime in the criminally disposed, and engenders a diseased sympathy—morbid and bad, but natural and often irresistible—among the well-conducted and gentle. Regarding it as doing harm to both these classes, it may even then be right to inquire,

whether it has any salutary influence on those small knots and specks of people, mere bubbles in the living ocean, who actually behold its infliction with their proper eyes. On this head it is scarcely possible to entertain a doubt, for we know that robbery, and obscenity, and callous indifference are of no commoner occurrence anywhere than at the foot of the scaffold. Furthermore, we know that all exhibitions of agony and death have a tendency to brutalise and harden the feelings of men, and have always been the most rife among the fiercest people. Again, it is a great question whether ignorant and dissolute persons (ever the great body of spectators, as few others will attend), seeing *that* murder done, and not having seen the other, will not, almost of necessity, sympathise with the man who dies before them, especially as he is shown, a martyr to their fancy, tied and bound, alone among scores, with every kind of odds against him.

I should take all these threads up at the end by a vivid little sketch of the origin and progress of such a crime as Hooker's, stating a somewhat parallel case, but an imaginary one, pursuing its hero to his death, and showing what enormous harm he does *after* the crime for which he suffers. I should state none of these positions in a positive sledge-hammer way, but tempt and lure the reader into the discussion of them in his own mind; and so we come to this at last—whether it be for the benefit of society to elevate even this crime to the awful dignity and notoriety of death; and whether it would not be much more to its advantage to substitute a mean and shameful punishment, degrading the deed and the committer of the deed, and leaving the general compassion to expend itself upon the only theme at present quite forgotten in the history, that is to say, the murdered person.

I do not give you this as an outline of the paper, which I think I could make attractive. It is merely an exposition of the inferences to which its whole philosophy must tend.

Always faithfully yours.

Mr. Thompson.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *17th October, 1845*.

MY DEAR THOMPSON,

Roche has not returned; and from what I hear of your movements, I fear I cannot answer for his being here in time for you.

I enclose you, lest I should forget it, the letter to the Peschiere agent. He is the Marquis Pallavicini's man of business, and speaks the most abominable Genoese ever heard. He is a rascal of course; but a more reliable villain, in his way, than the rest of his kind.

You recollect what I told you of the Swiss banker's wife, the English lady? If you would like Christiana[26] to have a friend at Genoa in the person of a most affectionate and excellent little woman, and if you would like to have a resource in the most elegant and comfortable family there, I need not say that I shall be delighted to give you a letter to those who would die to serve me.

Always yours.

Mr. H. P. Smith.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *4th November, 1845.*

MY DEAR SMITH,

My chickens and their little aunt will be delighted to do honour to the Lord Mayor on the ninth. So should I be, but I am hard at it, grinding my teeth.

I came down with Thompson the other day, hoping to see you. You are keeping it up, however, in some holiday region, and your glass-case looked like a large pantry, out of which some giant had stolen the meat.

Best regards to Mrs. Smith from all of us. Kate quite hearty, and the baby, like Goldsmith's bear, "in a concatenation" accordingly.

Always, my dear Smith, faithfully yours.

Mr. Macvey Napier.

November 10th, 1845.

MY DEAR SIR,

I write to you in great haste. I most bitterly regret the being obliged to disappoint and inconvenience you (as I fear I shall do), but I find it will be *impossible* for me to write the paper on Capital Punishment for your next number. The fault is really not mine. I have been involved for the last fortnight in one maze of distractions, which nothing could have enabled me to anticipate or prevent. Everything I have had to do has been interfered with and cast aside. I have never in my life had so many insuperable obstacles crowded into the way of my pursuits. It is as little my fault, believe me, as though I were ill and wrote to you from my bed. And pray bear as gently as you can with the vexation I occasion you, when I tell you how very heavily it falls upon myself.

Faithfully yours.

1846.

Mr. W. J. Fox.

OFFICE OF THE "DAILY NEWS," WHITEFRIARS,
21st January, 1846.

MY DEAR FOX,[27]

The boy is in waiting. I need not tell you how our Printer failed us last night.[28] I hope for better things to-night, and am bent on a fight for it. If we can get a good paper to-morrow, I believe we are as safe as such a thing can be.

Your leader most excellent. I made bold to take out —— for reasons that I hinted at the other day, and which I think have validity in them. He is unscrupulous and indiscreet. Cobden never so.

It didn't offend you?

Ever faithfully.

Mr. Thompson.

ROSEMONT, *Tuesday Morning.*

MY DEAR THOMPSON,

All kinds of hearty and cordial congratulations on the event.[29] We are all delighted that it is at last well over. There is an uncertainty attendant on angelic strangers (as Miss Tox says) which it is a great relief to have so happily disposed of.

Ever yours.

The same.

48, RUE DE COURCELLES, ST. HONORÉ, PARIS,
2nd December, 1846.

MY DEAR THOMPSON,

We got to Paris, in due course, on the Friday evening. We had a pleasant and prosperous journey, having rather cold weather in Switzerland and on the borders thereof, and a slight detention of three hours and a half at the frontier Custom House, atop of a mountain, in a hard frost and a dense fog. We came into this house last Thursday. It has a pretty drawing-room, approached through four most extraordinary chambers. It is the most ridiculous and preposterous house in the world, I should think. It belongs to a Marquis Castellane, but was fitted (so Paul Pry Poole said, who dined here yesterday) by —— in a fit of temporary insanity, I have no doubt. The dining-room is mere midsummer madness,

and is designed to represent a bosky grove.

At this present writing, snow is falling in the street, and the weather is very cold, but not so cold as it was yesterday. I dined with Lord Normanby on Sunday last. Everything seems to be queer and uncomfortable in the diplomatic way, and he is rather bothered and worried, to my thinking. I found young Sheridan (Mrs. Norton's brother) the attaché. I know him very well, and he is a good man for my sight-seeing purposes. There are to be no theatricals unless the times should so adjust themselves as to admit of their being French, to which the Markis seems to incline, as a bit of conciliation and a popular move.

Lumley, of Italian opera notoriety, also dined here yesterday, and seems hugely afeard of the opposition opera at Covent Garden, who have already spirited away Grisi and Mario, which he affects to consider a great comfort and relief. I gave him some uncompromising information on the subject of his pit, and told him that if he didn't conciliate the middle classes, he might depend on being damaged, very decidedly. The danger of the Covent Garden enterprise seems to me to be that they are going in for ballet too, and I really don't think the house is large enough to repay the double expense.

Forster writes me that Mac has come out with tremendous vigour in the Christmas Book, and took off his coat at it with a burst of such alarming energy that he has done four subjects! Stanfield has done three. Keeleys are making that "change"[30] I was so hot upon at Lausanne, and seem ready to spend money with bold hearts, but the cast (as far as I know it, at present) would appear to be black despair and moody madness. J. W. Leigh Murray, from the Princess's, is to be the Alfred, and Forster says there is a Mrs. Gordon at Bolton's who must be got for Grace. I am horribly afraid —— will do one of the lawyers, and there seems to be nobody but —— for Marion. I shall run over and carry consternation into the establishment, as soon as I have done the number. But I have not begun it yet, though I hope to do so to-night, having been quite put out by chopping and changing about, and by a vile touch of biliousness, that makes my eyes feel as if they were yellow bullets. "Dombey" has passed its thirty thousand already. Do you remember a mysterious man in a straw hat low-crowned, and a Petersham coat, who was a sort of manager or amateur man-servant at Miss Kelly's? Mr. Baynton Bolt, sir, came out, the other night, as Macbeth, at the Royal Surrey Theatre.

There's all my news for you! Let me know, in return, whether you have fought a duel yet with your milingtary landlord, and whether Lausanne is still that giddy whirl of dissipation it was wont to be, also full particulars of your fairer and better half, and of the baby. I will send a Christmas book to Clermont as soon as I get any copies. And so no more at present from yours ever.

1847.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *January 12th, 1847.*

MY DEAR SIR EDWARD,

The Committee of the General Theatrical Fund (who are all actors) are anxious to prefer a petition to you to preside at their next annual dinner at the London Tavern, and having no personal knowledge of you, have requested me, as one of their Trustees, through their Secretary, Mr. Cullenford, to give them some kind of presentation to you.

I will only say that I have felt great interest in their design, which embraces all sorts and conditions of actors from the first, and it has been maintained by themselves with extraordinary perseverance and determination. It has been in existence some years, but it is only two years since they began to dine. At their first festival I presided, at their second, Macready. They very naturally hold that if they could prevail on you to reign over them now they would secure a most powerful and excellent advocate, whose aid would serve and grace their cause immensely. I sympathise with their feeling so cordially, and know so well that it would certainly be mine if I were in their case (as, indeed, it is, being their friend), that I comply with their request for an introduction. And I will not ask you to excuse my troubling you, feeling sure that I may use this liberty with you.

Believe me always, very faithfully yours.

Countess of Blessington.

48, RUE DE COURCELLES, PARIS, *January 24th, 1847.*

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,

I feel very wicked in beginning this note, and deeply remorseful for not having begun and ended it long ago. But *you* know how difficult it is to write letters in the midst of a writing life; and as you know too (I hope) how earnestly and affectionately I always think of you, wherever I am, I take heart, on a little consideration, and feel comparatively good again.

Forster has been cramming into the space of a fortnight every description of impossible and inconsistent occupation in the way of sight-seeing. He has been now at Versailles, now in the prisons, now at the opera, now at the hospitals, now at the Conservatoire, and now at the Morgue, with a dreadful insatiability. I begin to doubt whether I had anything to do with a book called “Dombey,” or ever sat over number five (not finished a fortnight yet) day after day, until I half began, like the monk in poor Wilkie’s story, to think it the only reality in life, and to mistake all the realities for short-lived shadows.

Among the multitude of sights, we saw our pleasant little bud of a friend, Rose Chéri, play Clarissa Harlowe the other night. I believe she does it in London just now, and perhaps you may have seen it. A most charming, intelligent, modest, affecting piece of acting it is, with a death superior to anything I ever saw on the stage, except Macready’s

Lear. The theatres are admirable just now. We saw “Gentil Bernard” at the Variétés last night, acted in a manner that was absolutely perfect. It was a little picture of Watteau, animated and talking from beginning to end. At the Cirque there is a new show-piece called the “French Revolution,” in which there is a representation of the National Convention, and a series of battles (fought by some five hundred people, who look like five thousand) that are wonderful in their extraordinary vigour and truth. Gun-cotton gives its name to the general annual jocose review at the Palais Royal, which is dull enough, saving for the introduction of Alexandre Dumas, sitting in his study beside a pile of quarto volumes about five feet high, which he says is the first tableau of the first act of the first piece to be played on the first night of his new theatre. The revival of Molière’s “Don Juan,” at the Français, has drawn money. It is excellently played, and it is curious to observe how different *their* Don Juan and valet are from our English ideas of the master and man. They are playing “Lucretia Borgia” again at the Porte St. Martin, but it is poorly performed and hangs fire drearily, though a very remarkable and striking play. We were at Victor Hugo’s house last Sunday week, a most extraordinary place, looking like an old curiosity shop, or the property-room of some gloomy, vast, old theatre. I was much struck by Hugo himself, who looks like a genius as he is, every inch of him, and is very interesting and satisfactory from head to foot. His wife is a handsome woman, with flashing black eyes. There is also a charming ditto daughter of fifteen or sixteen, with ditto eyes. Sitting among old armour and old tapestry, and old coffers, and grim old chairs and tables, and old canopies of state from old palaces, and old golden lions going to play at skittles with ponderous old golden balls, they made a most romantic show and looked like a chapter out of one of his own books.

* * * * * *

Mr. Edward Chapman.

CHESTER PLACE, *Monday, 3rd May, 1847.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Here is a young lady—Miss Power, Lady Blessington’s niece—has “gone and been” and translated a story by Georges Sand, the French writer, which she has printed, and got four woodcuts engraved ready for. She wants to get it published—something in the form of the Christmas books. I know the story, and it is a very fine one.

Will you do it for her? There is no other risk than putting a few covers on a few copies. Half-profits is what she expects and no loss. She has made appeal to me, and if there is to be a hard-hearted ogre in the business at all, I would rather it should be you than I; so I have told her I would make proposals to your mightiness.

Answer this straightway, for I have no doubt the fair translator thinks I am tearing backwards and forwards in a cab all day to bring the momentous affair to a conclusion.

Faithfully yours.

Mr. James Sheridan Knowles.

[31]148, King's Road, Brighton, *26th May, 1847.*

My dear Knowles,

I have learned, I hope, from the art we both profess (if you will forgive this classification of myself with you) to respect a man of genius in his mistakes, no less than in his triumphs. You have so often read the human heart well that I can readily forgive your reading mine ill, and greatly wronging me by the supposition that any sentiment towards you but honour and respect has ever found a place in it.

You write as few lines which, dying, you would wish to blot, as most men. But if you ever know me better, as I hope you may (the fault shall not be mine if you do not), I know you will be glad to have received the assurance that some part of your letter has been written on the sand and that the wind has already blown over it.

Faithfully yours always.

Dr. Hodgson.[32]

Regent's Park, London, *Friday, 4th June, 1847.*

My dear Sir,

I have rarely, if ever, seen a more remarkable effort of what I may call intellectual memory than the enclosed. It is evidence, I think, of very uncommon power. I have read it with the greatest interest and surprise, and I am truly obliged to you for giving me the opportunity. If you should see no objection to telling the young lady herself this much, pray do so, as it is sincere praise.

Your criticism of Coombe's pamphlet is as justly felt as it is earnestly and strongly written. I undergo more astonishment and disgust in connection with that question of education almost every day of my life than is awakened in me by any other member of the whole magazine of social monsters that are walking about in these times.

You were in my thoughts when your letter arrived this morning, for we have a half-formed idea of reviving our old amateur theatrical company for a special purpose, and even of bringing it bodily to Manchester and Liverpool, on which your opinion would be very valuable. If we should decide on Monday, when we meet, to pursue our idea in this warm weather, I will explain it to you in detail, and ask counsel of you in regard of a performance at Liverpool. Meantime it is mentioned to no one.

Your interest in "Dombey" gives me unaffected pleasure. I hope you will find no reason to think worse of it as it proceeds. There is a great deal to do—one or two things among the rest that society will not be the worse, I hope, for thinking about a little.

May I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Hodgson? You always remember me yourself, I hope, as one who has a hearty interest in all you do and in all you have so admirably done for the advancement of the best objects.

Always believe me very faithfully yours.

The same.

REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, *June 12th, 1847.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I write to you in reference to a scheme to which you may, perhaps, already have seen some allusion in the London *Athenæum* of to-day.

The party of amateurs connected with literature and art, who acted in London two years ago, have resolved to play again at one of the large theatres here for the benefit of Leigh Hunt, and to make a great appeal to all classes of society in behalf of a writer who should have received long ago, but has not yet, some enduring return from his country for all he has undergone and all the good he has done. It is believed that such a demonstration by literature on behalf of literature, and such a mark of sympathy by authors and artists, for one who has written so well, would be of more service, present and prospective, to Hunt than almost any other means of help that could be devised. And we know, from himself, that it would be most gratifying to his own feelings.

The arrangements are, as yet, in an imperfect state; for the date of their being carried out depends on our being able to get one of the large theatres before the close of the present London season. In the event of our succeeding, we purpose acting in London, on Wednesday the 14th of July, and on Monday the 19th. On the first occasion we shall play "Every Man in His Humour," and a farce; on the second, "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and a farce.

But we do not intend to stop here. Believing that Leigh Hunt has done more to instruct the young men of England, and to lend a helping hand to those who educate themselves, than any writer in England, we are resolved to come down, in a body, to Liverpool and Manchester, and to act one night at each place. And the object of my letter is, to ask you, as the representative of the great educational establishment of Liverpool, whether we can count on your active assistance; whether you will form a committee to advance our object; and whether, if we send you our circulars and addresses, you will endeavour to secure us a full theatre, and to enlist the general sympathy and interest in behalf of the cause we have at heart?

I address, by this post, a letter, which is almost the counterpart of the present, to the honorary secretaries of the Manchester Athenæum. If we find in both towns such a response as we confidently expect, I would propose, on behalf of my friends, that the Liverpool and Manchester Institutions should decide for us, at which town we shall first appear, and which play we shall act in each place.

I forbear entering into any more details, however, until I am favoured with your reply.

Always believe me, my dear Sir,
faithfully your Friend.

Mr. Alexander Ireland.

REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, *June 17th, 1847.*

DEAR SIR,[33]

In the hope that I may consider myself personally introduced to you by Dr. Hodgson, of Liverpool, I take the liberty of addressing you in this form.

I hear from that friend of ours, that you are greatly interested in all that relates to Mr. Leigh Hunt, and that you will be happy to promote our design in reference to him. Allow me to assure you of the gratification with which I have received this intelligence, and of the importance we shall all attach to your valuable co-operation.

I have received a letter from Mr. Langley, of the Athenæum, informing me that a committee is in course of formation, composed of directors of that institution (acting as private gentlemen) and others. May I hope to find that you are one of this body, and that I may soon hear of its proceedings, and be in communication with it?

Allow me to thank you beforehand for your interest in the cause, and to look forward to the pleasure of doing so in person, when I come to Manchester.

Dear Sir, very faithfully yours.

The same.

ATHENÆUM CLUB, LONDON, *Saturday, June 26th, 1847.*

MY DEAR SIR,

The news of Mr. Hunt's pension is quite true. We do not propose to act in London after this change in his affairs, but we do still distinctly propose to act in Manchester and Liverpool. I have set forth the plain state of the case in a letter to Mr. Robinson by this post (a counterpart of which I have addressed to Liverpool), and to which, in the midst of a most laborious correspondence on the subject, I beg to refer you.

It will be a great satisfaction to us to believe that we shall still be successful in Manchester. There is great and urgent need why we should be so, I assure you.

If you can help to bring the matter speedily into a practical and plain shape, you will render Hunt the greatest service.

I fear, in respect to your kind invitation, that neither Jerrold nor I will feel at liberty to accept it. There was a pathetic proposal among us that we should "keep together;" and, as president of the society, I am bound, I fear, to stand by the brotherhood with particular constancy. Nor do I think that we shall have more than one very short evening in Manchester.

I write in great haste. The sooner I can know (at Broadstairs, in Kent) the Manchester and Liverpool nights, and what the managers say, the better (I hope) will be the entertainments.

My dear Sir, very faithfully yours.

P.S.—I enclose a copy of our London circular, issued before the granting of the

pension.

The same.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *July 11th, 1847.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I am much indebted to you for the present of your notice of Hunt's books. I cannot praise it better or more appropriately than by saying it is in Hunt's own spirit, and most charmingly expressed. I had the most sincere and hearty pleasure in reading it.[34]

Your announcement of "The Working Man's Life" had attracted my attention by reason of the title, which had a great interest for me.[35] I hardly know if there is something wanting to my fancy in a certain genuine simple air I had looked for in the first part. But there is great promise in it, and I shall be earnest to know how it proceeds.

Now, to leave these pleasant matters, and resume my managerial character, which I shall be heartily glad (between ourselves) to lay down again, though I have none but pleasant correspondents, and the most easily governable company of actors on earth.

I have written to Mr. Robinson by this post that I wish these words, from our original London circular, to stand at top of the bills, after "For the Benefit of Mr. Leigh Hunt":

"It is proposed to devote a portion of the proceeds of this benefit to the assistance of another celebrated writer, whose literary career is at an end, and who has no provision for the decline of his life."

I have also told him that there is no objection to its being known that this is Mr. Poole, the author of "Paul Pry," and "Little Pedlington," and many comic pieces of great merit, and whose farce of "Turning the Tables" we mean to finish with in Manchester. Beyond what he will get from these benefits, he has no resource in this wide world, *I know*. There are reasons which make it desirable to get this fact abroad, and if you see no objection to paragraphing it at your office (sending the paragraph round, if you should please, to the other Manchester papers), I should be much obliged to you.

You may like to know, as a means of engendering a more complete individual interest in our actors, who they are. Jerrold and myself you have heard of; Mr. George Cruikshank and Mr. Leech (the best caricaturists of any time perhaps) need no introduction. Mr. Frank Stone (a Manchester man) and Mr. Egg are artists of high reputation. Mr. Forster is the critic of *The Examiner*, the author of "The Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth," and very distinguished as a writer in *The Edinburgh Review*. Mr. Lewes is also a man of great attainments in polite literature, and the author of a novel published not long since, called "Ranthorpe." Mr. Costello is a periodical writer, and a gentleman renowned as a tourist. Mr. Mark Lemon is a dramatic author, and the editor of *Punch*—a most excellent actor, as you will find. My brothers play small parts, for love, and have no greater note than the Treasury and the City confer on their disciples. Mr. Thompson is a private gentleman. You may know all this, but I thought it possible you might like to hold the key to our full company. Pray use it as you will.

My dear Sir,

Faithfully yours always.

1848.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *10th April, 1848, Monday Evening.*

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I confess to small faith in any American profits having international copyright for their aim. But I will carefully consider Blackwood's letter (when I get it) and will call upon you and tell you what occurs to me in reference to it, before I communicate with that northern light.

I have been "going" to write to you for many a day past, to thank you for your kindness to the General Theatrical Fund people, and for your note to me; but I have waited until I should hear of your being stationary somewhere. What you said of the "Battle of Life" gave me great pleasure. I was thoroughly wretched at having to use the idea for so short a story. I did not see its full capacity until it was too late to think of another subject, and I have always felt that I might have done a great deal better if I had taken it for the groundwork of a more extended book. But for an insuperable aversion I have to trying back in such a case, I should certainly forge that bit of metal again, as you suggest—one of these days perhaps.

I have not been special constable myself to-day—thinking there was rather an epidemic in that wise abroad. I walked over and looked at the preparations, without any baggage of staff, warrant, or affidavit.

Very faithfully yours.

Mrs. Cowden Clarke.

[36]DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *14th April, 1848.*

DEAR MRS. COWDEN CLARKE,

I did not understand, when I had the pleasure of conversing with you the other evening, that you had really considered the subject, and desired to play. But I am very glad to understand it now; and I am sure there will be a universal sense among us of the grace and appropriateness of such a proceeding. Falstaff (who depends very much on Mrs. Quickly) may have in his modesty, some timidity about acting with an amateur actress. But I have no question, as you have studied the part, and long wished to play it, that you will put him completely at his ease on the first night of your rehearsal. Will you, towards that end, receive this as a solemn "call" to rehearsal of "The Merry Wives" at Miss Kelly's theatre, to-morrow (Saturday) *week* at seven in the evening?

And will you let me suggest another point for your consideration? On the night when "The Merry Wives" will *not* be played, and when "Every Man in his Humour" *will* be,

Kenny's farce of "Love, Law, and Physic" will be acted. In that farce there is a very good character (one Mrs. Hilary, which I have seen Mrs. Orger, I think, act to admiration), that would have been played by Mrs. C. Jones, if she had acted Dame Quickly, as we at first intended. If you find yourself quite comfortable and at ease among us, in Mrs. Quickly, would you like to take this other part too? It is an excellent farce, and is safe, I hope, to be very well done.

We do not play to purchase the house[37] (which may be positively considered as paid for), but towards endowing a perpetual curatorship of it, for some eminent literary veteran. And I think you will recognise in this even a higher and more gracious object than the securing, even, of the debt incurred for the house itself.

Believe me, very faithfully yours.

Mr. Alexander Ireland.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *May 22nd, 1848.*

MY DEAR SIR,

You very likely know that my company of amateurs have lately been playing, with a great reputation, in London here. The object is, "The endowment of a perpetual curatorship of Shakespeare's house, to be always held by some one distinguished in literature, and more especially in dramatic literature," and we have already a pledge from the Shakespeare House Committee that Sheridan Knowles shall be recommended to the Government as the first curator. This pledge, which is in the form of a minute, we intend to advertise in our country bills.

Now, on Monday, the 5th of June, we are going to play at Liverpool, where we are assured of a warm reception, and where an active committee for the issuing of tickets is already formed. Do you think the Manchester people would be equally glad to see us again, and that the house could be filled, as before, at our old prices? *If yes, would you and our other friends go, at once, to work in the cause?* The only night on which we could play in Manchester would be Saturday, the 3rd of June. It is possible that the depression of the times may render a performance in Manchester unwise. In that case I would immediately abandon the idea. But what I want to know, *by return of post* is, is it safe or unsafe? If the former, here is the bill as it stood in London, with the addition, on the back, of a paragraph I would insert in Manchester, of which immediate use can be made. If the latter, my reason for wishing to settle the point immediately is that we may make another use of that Saturday night.

Assured of your generous feeling I make no apology for troubling you. A sum of money, got together by these means, will insure to literature (I will take good care of that) a proper expression of itself in the bestowal of an essentially literary appointment, not only now but henceforth. Much is to be done, time presses, and the least added the better.

I have addressed a counterpart of this letter to Mr. Francis Robinson, to whom perhaps you will communicate the bill.

Faithfully yours always.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday Evening,*
July 22nd, 1848.

MY DEAR MRS. CLARKE,

I have no energy whatever, I am very miserable. I loathe domestic hearths. I yearn to be a vagabond. Why can't I marry Mary?[38] Why have I seven children—not engaged at sixpence a-night apiece, and dismissable for ever, if they tumble down, not taken on for an indefinite time at a vast expense, and never,—no never, never,—wearing lighted candles round their heads.[39] I am deeply miserable. A real house like this is insupportable, after that canvas farm wherein I was so happy. What is a humdrum dinner at half-past five, with nobody (but John) to see me eat it, compared with *that* soup, and the hundreds of pairs of eyes that watched its disappearance? Forgive this tear.[40] It is weak and foolish, I know.

Pray let me divide the little excursional excesses of the journey among the gentlemen, as I have always done before, and pray believe that I have had the sincerest pleasure and gratification in your co-operation and society, valuable and interesting on all public accounts, and personally of no mean worth, nor held in slight regard.

You had a sister once, when we were young and happy—I think they called her Emma. If she remember a bright being who once flitted like a vision before her, entreat her to bestow a thought upon the "Gas" of departed joys. I can write no more.

Y. G.[41] THE (DARKENED) G. L. B.[42]

P.S.—"I am completely *blasé*—literally used up. I am dying for excitement. Is it possible that nobody can suggest anything to make my heart beat violently, my hair stand on end—but no!"

Where did I hear those words (so truly applicable to my forlorn condition) pronounced by some delightful creature? In a previous state of existence, I believe.

Oh, Memory, Memory!

Ever yours faithfully.

Y—no C. G.—no D. C. D. I think it is—but I don't know—"there's nothing in it."

1849.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *23rd February, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR EDWARD,

I have not written sooner to thank you for “King Arthur” because I felt sure you would prefer my reading it before I should do so, and because I wished to have an opportunity of reading it with the sincerity and attention which such a composition demands.

This I have done. I do not write to express to you the measure of my gratification and pleasure (for I should find that very difficult to be accomplished to my own satisfaction), but simply to say that I have read the poem, and dwelt upon it with the deepest interest, admiration, and delight; and that I feel proud of it as a very good instance of the genius of a great writer of my own time. I should feel it as a kind of treason to what has been awakened in me by the book, if I were to try to set off my thanks to you, or if I were tempted into being diffuse in its praise. I am too earnest on the subject to have any misgiving but that I shall convey something of my earnestness to you in the briefest and most unaffected flow of expression.

Accept it for what a genuine word of homage is worth, and believe me,

Faithfully yours.

Mr. C. Cowden Clarke.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *May 5th, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I am very sorry to say that my Orphan Working School vote is promised in behalf of an unfortunate young orphan, who, after being canvassed for, polled for, written for, quarrelled for, fought for, called for, and done all kind of things for, by ladies who wouldn’t go away and wouldn’t be satisfied with anything anybody said or did for them, was floored at the last election and comes up to the scratch next morning, for the next election, fresher than ever. I devoutly hope he may get in, and be lost sight of for evermore.

Pray give my kindest regards to my quondam Quickly, and believe me,

Faithfully yours.

Mr. Joseph C. King.[43]

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday, December 1st, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I hasten to let you know what took place at Eton to-day. I found that I *did* stand in some sort committed to Mr. Evans, though not so much so but that I could with perfect ease have declined to place Charley in his house if I had desired to do so. I must say, however, that after seeing Mr. Cookesley (a most excellent man in his way) and seeing Mr. Evans, and Mr. Evans's house, I think I should, under any circumstances, have given the latter the preference as to the domestic part of Charley's life. I would certainly prefer to try it. I therefore thought it best to propose to have Mr. Cookesley for his tutor, and to place him as a boarder with Mr. Evans. Both gentlemen seemed satisfied with this arrangement, and Dr. Hawtrey expressed his approval of it also.

Mr. Cookesley, wishing to know what Charley could do, asked me if I would object to leaving him there for half-an-hour or so. As Charley appeared not at all afraid of this proposal, I left him then and there. On my return, Mr. Cookesley said, in high and unqualified terms, that he had been thoroughly well grounded and well taught—that he had examined him in Virgil and Herodotus, and that he not only knew what he was about perfectly well, but showed an intelligence in reference to those authors which did his tutor great credit. He really appeared most interested and pleased, and filled me with a grateful feeling towards you, to whom Charley owes so much.

He said there were certain verses in imitation of Horace (I really forget what sort of verses) to which Charley was unaccustomed, and which were a little matter enough in themselves, but were made a great point of at Eton, and could be got up well in a month "*from an Old Etonian*." For this purpose he would desire Charley to be sent every day to a certain Mr. Hardisty, in Store Street, Bedford Square, to whom he had already (in my absence) prepared a note. Between ourselves, I must not hesitate to tell you plainly that this appeared to me to be a conventional way of bestowing a little patronage. But, of course, I had nothing for it but to say it should be done; upon which, Mr. Cookesley added that he was then certain that Charley, on coming after the Christmas holidays, would be placed at once in "the remove," which seemed to surprise Mr. Evans when I afterwards told him of it as a high station.

I will take him to this gentleman on Monday, and arrange for his going there every day; but, if you will not object, I should still like him to remain with you, and to have the advantage of preparing these annoying verses under your eye until the holidays. That Mr. Cookesley may have his own way thoroughly, I will send Charley to Mr. Hardisty daily until the school at Eton recommences.

Let me impress upon you in the strongest manner, not only that I was inexpressibly delighted myself by the readiness with which Charley went through this ordeal with a stranger, but that I also saw you would have been well pleased and much gratified if you could have seen Mr. Cookesley afterwards. He had evidently not expected such a result, and took it as not at all an ordinary one.

My dear Sir, yours faithfully and obliged.

Mr. Alexander Ireland.

[Private.]

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, *24th December, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR,

You will not be offended by my saying that (in common with many other men) I think "our London correspondent" one of the greatest nuisances of this kind, inasmuch as our London correspondent, seldom knowing anything, feels bound to know everything, and becomes in consequence a very reckless gentleman in respect of the truthfulness of his intelligence.

In your paper, sent to me this morning, I see the correspondent mentions one ——, and records how I was wont to feast in the house of the said ——. As I never was in the man's house in my life, or within five miles of it that I know of, I beg you will do me the favour to contradict this.

You will be the less surprised by my begging you to set this right, when I tell you that, hearing of his book, and knowing his history, I wrote to New York denouncing him as "a forger and a thief;" that he thereupon put the gentleman who published my letter into prison, and that having but one day before the sailing of the last steamer to collect the proofs printed in the accompanying sheet (which are but a small part of the villain's life), I got them together in short time, and sent them out to justify the character I gave him. It is not agreeable to me to be supposed to have sat at this amiable person's feasts.

Faithfully yours.

1850.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Tuesday, 3rd September, 1850.*

MY DEAR SIR EDWARD,

I have had the long-contemplated talk with Forster about the play, and write to assure you that I shall be delighted to come down to Knebworth and do Bobadil, or anything else, provided it would suit your convenience to hold the great dramatic festival in the last week of October. The concluding number of "Copperfield" will prevent me from leaving here until Saturday, the 26th of that month. If I were at my own disposal, I hope I need not say I should be at yours.

Forster will tell you with what men we must do the play, and what laurels we would propose to leave for the gathering of new aspirants; of whom I hope you have a reasonable stock in your part of the country.

Do you know Mary Boyle—daughter of the old Admiral? because she is the very best actress I ever saw off the stage, and immeasurably better than a great many I have seen on it. I have acted with her in a country house in Northamptonshire, and am going to do so again next November. If you know her, I think she would be more than pleased to play, and by giving her something good in a farce we could get her to do Mrs. Kitely. In that case my little sister-in-law would "go on" for the second lady, and you could do without actresses, besides giving the thing a particular grace and interest.

If we could get Mary Boyle, we would do "Used Up," which is a delightful piece, as the farce. But maybe you know nothing about the said Mary, and in that case I should like to know what you would think of doing.

You gratify me more than I can tell you by what you say about "Copperfield," the more so as I hope myself that some heretofore-deficient qualities are there. You are not likely to misunderstand me when I say that I like it very much, and am deeply interested in it, and that I have kept and am keeping my mind very steadily upon it.

Believe me always, very faithfully yours.

The same.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sunday Night, November 3rd, 1850.*

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I should have waited at home to-day on the chance of your calling, but that I went over to look after Lemon; and I went for this reason: the surgeon opines that there is no possibility of Mrs. Dickens being able to play, although she is going on "as well as

possible," which I sincerely believe.

Now, *when* the accident happened, Mrs. Lemon told my little sister-in-law that she would gladly undertake the part if it should become necessary. Going after her to-day, I found that she and Lemon had gone out of town, but will be back to-night. I have written to her, earnestly urging her to the redemption of her offer. I have no doubt of being able to see her well up in the characters; and I hope you approve of this remedy. If she once screws her courage to the sticking place, I have no fear of her whatever. This is what I would say to you. If I don't see you here, I will write to you at Forster's, reporting progress. Don't be discouraged, for I am full of confidence, and resolve to do the utmost that is in me—and I well know they all will—to make the nights at Knebworth *triumphant*. Once in a thing like this—once in everything, to my thinking—it must be carried out like a mighty enterprise, heart and soul.

Pray regard me as wholly at the disposal of the theatricals, until they shall be gloriously achieved.

My unfortunate other half (lying in bed) is very anxious that I should let you know that she means to break her heart if she should be prevented from coming as one of the audience, and that she has been devising means all day of being brought down in the brougham with her foot upon a T.

Ever faithfully yours.

The same.

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," *Wednesday Evening,*
November 13th, 1850.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

On the principle of postponing nothing connected with the great scheme, I have been to Ollivier's, where I found our friend the choremusicon in a very shattered state—his mouth wide open—the greater part of his teeth out—his bowels disclosed to the public eye—and his whole system frightfully disordered. In this condition he is speechless. I cannot, therefore, report touching his eloquence, but I find he is a piano as well as a choremusicon—that he requires to pass through no intermediate stage between choremusicon and piano, and therefore that he can easily and certainly accompany songs.

Now, will you have it? I am inclined to believe that on the whole, it is the best thing.

I have not heard of anything else having happened to anybody.

If I should not find you gone to Australia or elsewhere, and should not have occasion to advertise in the third column of *The Times*, I shall hope not to add to your misfortunes—I dare not say to afford you consolation—by shaking hands with you to-morrow night, and afterwards keeping every man connected with the theatrical department to his duty.

Ever faithfully yours.

1851.

The same.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sunday Night,*
January 5th, 1851.

MY DEAR BULWER,

I am so sorry to have missed you! I had gone down to Forster, comedy in hand.

I think it *most admirable*.[44] Full of character, strong in interest, rich in capital situations, and *certain to go nobly*. You know how highly I thought of "Money," but I sincerely think these three acts finer. I did not think of the slight suggestions you make, but I said, *en passant*, that perhaps the drunken scene might do better on the stage a little concentrated. I don't believe it would require even that, with the leading-up which you propose. I cannot say too much of the comedy to express what I think and feel concerning it; and I look at it, too, remember, with the yellow eye of an actor! I should have taken to it (need I say so!) *con amore* in any case, but I should have been jealous of your reputation, exactly as I appreciate your generosity. If I had a misgiving of ten lines I should have scrupulously mentioned it.

Stone will take the Duke capitally; and I will answer for his being got into doing it *very well*. Looking down the perspective of a few winter evenings here, I am confident about him. Forster will be thoroughly sound and real. Lemon is so surprisingly sensible and trustworthy on the stage, that I don't think any actor could touch his part as he will; and I hope you will have opportunities of testing the accuracy of this prediction. Egg ought to do the Author to absolute perfection. As to Jerrold—there he stands in the play! I would propose Leech (well made up) for Easy. He is a good name, and I see nothing else for him.

This brings me to my own part. If we had anyone, or could get anyone, for Wilmot, I could do (I think) something so near your meaning in Sir Gilbert, that I let him go with a pang. Assumption has charms for me—I hardly know for how many wild reasons—so delightful, that I feel a loss of, oh! I can't say what exquisite foolery, when I lose a chance of being someone in voice, etc., not at all like myself. But—I speak quite freely, knowing you will not mistake me—I know from experience that we could find nobody to hold the play together in Wilmot if I didn't do it. I think I could touch the gallant, generous, careless pretence, with the real man at the bottom of it, so as to take the audience with him from the first scene. I am quite sure I understand your meaning; and I am absolutely certain that as Jerrold, Forster, and Stone came in, I could, as a mere little bit of mechanics, present them better by doing that part, and paying as much attention to their points as my own, than another amateur actor could. Therefore I throw up my cap for Wilmot, and hereby devote myself to him, heart and head!

I ought to tell you that in a play we once rehearsed and never played (but rehearsed several times, and very carefully), I saw Lemon do a piece of reality with a rugged pathos in it, which I felt, as I stood on the stage with him to be extraordinarily good. In the

serious part of Sir Gilbert he will surprise you. And he has an intuitive discrimination in such things which will just keep the suspicious part from being too droll at the outset—which will just show a glimpse of something in the depths of it.

The moment I come back to town (within a fortnight, please God!) I will ascertain from Forster where you are. Then I will propose to you that we call our company together, agree upon one general plan of action, and that you and I immediately begin to see and book our Vice-Presidents, etc. Further, I think we ought to see about the Queen. I would suggest our playing first about three weeks before the opening of the Exhibition, in order that it may be the town talk before the country people and foreigners come. Macready thinks with me that a very large sum of money may be got in London.

I propose (for cheapness and many other considerations) to make a theatre expressly for the purpose, which we can put up and take down—say in the Hanover Square Rooms—and move into the country. As Watson wanted something of a theatre made for his forthcoming Little Go, I have made it a sort of model of what I mean, and shall be able to test its working powers before I see you. Many things that, for portability, were to be avoided in Mr. Hewitt's theatre, I have replaced with less expensive and weighty contrivances.

Now, my dear Bulwer, I have come to the small hours, and am writing alone here, as if *I* were writing something to do what your comedy will. At such a time the temptation is strong upon me to say a great deal more, but I will only say this—in mercy to you—that I do devoutly believe that this plan carried, will entirely change the status of the literary man in England, and make a revolution in his position, which no Government, no power on earth but his own, could ever effect. I have implicit confidence in the scheme—so splendidly begun—if we carry it out with a steadfast energy. I have a strong conviction that we hold in our hands the peace and honour of men of letters for centuries to come, and that you are destined to be their best and most enduring benefactor.

Oh! what a procession of New Years might walk out of all this, after we are very dusty!

Ever yours faithfully.

P.S.—I have forgotten something. I suggest this title: "Knowing the World; or, Not So Bad As We Seem."

The same.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday Night, March 4th, 1851.*

MY DEAR BULWER,

I know you will be glad to hear what I have to tell you.

I wrote to the Duke of Devonshire this morning, enclosing him the rough proof of the scheme, and plainly telling him what we wanted, *i.e.*, to play for the first time at his house, to the Queen and Court. Within a couple of hours he wrote me as follows:

"DEAR SIR,

"I have read with very great interest the prospectus of the new

endowment which you have confided to my perusal.

"Your manner of doing so is a proof that I am honoured by your goodwill and approbation.

"I'm truly happy to offer you my earnest and sincere co-operation. My services, my house, and my subscription will be at your orders. And I beg you to let me see you before long, not merely to converse upon this subject, but because I have long had the greatest wish to improve our acquaintance, which has, as yet, been only one of crowded rooms."

This is quite princely, I think, and will push us along as brilliantly as heart could desire. Don't you think so too?

Yesterday Lemon and I saw the Secretary of the National Provident Institution (the best Office for the purpose, I am inclined to think) and stated all our requirements. We appointed to meet the chairman and directors next Tuesday; so on the day of our reading and dining I hope we shall have that matter in good time.

The theatre is also under consultation; and directly after the reading we shall go briskly to work in all departments.

I hear nothing but praises of your Macready speech—of its eloquence, delicacy, and perfect taste, all of which it is good to hear, though I know it all beforehand as well as most men can tell it me.

Ever cordially.

The same.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday Morning, 25th March, 1851*.

MY DEAR BULWER,

Coming home at midnight last night after our first rehearsal, I find your letter. I write to entreat you, if you make any change in the first three acts, to let it be only of the slightest kind. Because we are now fairly under way, everybody is already drilled into his place, and in two or three rehearsals those acts will be in a tolerably presentable state.

It is of vital importance that we should get the last two acts *soon*. The Queen and Prince are coming—Phipps wrote me yesterday the most earnest letter possible—the time is fearfully short, and we *must* have the comedy in such a state as that it will go like a machine. Whatever you do, for heaven's sake don't be persuaded to endanger that!

Even at the risk of your falling into the pit with despair at beholding anything of the comedy in its present state, if you can by any possibility come down to Covent Garden Theatre to-night, do. I hope you will see in Lemon the germ of a very fine presentation of Sir Geoffrey. I think Topham, too, will do Easy admirably.

We really did wonders last night in the way of arrangement. I see the ground-plan of the first three acts distinctly. The dressing and furnishing and so forth, will be a perfect picture, and I will answer for the men in three weeks' time.

In great haste, my dear Bulwer,
Ever faithfully yours.

Mrs. Cowden Clarke.

GREAT MALVERN, *29th March, 1851*.

MY DEAR MRS. COWDEN CLARKE,

Ah, those were days indeed, when we were so fatigued at dinner that we couldn't speak, and so revived at supper that we couldn't go to bed; when wild in inns the noble savage ran; and all the world was a stage, gas-lighted in a double sense—by the Young Gas and the old one! When Emmeline Montague (now Compton, and the mother of two children) came to rehearse in our new comedy[45] the other night, I nearly fainted. The gush of recollection was so overpowering that I couldn't bear it.

I use the portfolio[46] for managerial papers still. That's something.

But all this does not thank you for your book.[47] I have not got it yet (being here with Mrs. Dickens, who has been very unwell), but I shall be in town early in the week, and shall bring it down to read quietly on these hills, where the wind blows as freshly as if there were no Popes and no Cardinals whatsoever—nothing the matter anywhere. I thank you a thousand times, beforehand, for the pleasure you are going to give me. I am full of faith. Your sister Emma, she is doing work of some sort on the P.S. side of the boxes, in some dark theatre, *I know*, but where, I wonder? W.[48] has not proposed to her yet, has he? I understood he was going to offer his hand and heart, and lay his leg[49] at her feet.

Ever faithfully yours.

Mr. Mitton.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *19th April, 1851*.

MY DEAR MITTON,

I have been in trouble, or I should have written to you sooner. My wife has been, and is, far from well. My poor father's death caused me much distress. I came to London last Monday to preside at a public dinner—played with little Dora, my youngest child, before I went—and was told when I left the chair that she had died in a moment. I am quite happy again, but I have undergone a good deal.

I am not going back to Malvern, but have let this house until September, and taken the "Fort," at Broadstairs.

Faithfully yours.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday, 28th April, 1851*.

MY DEAR BULWER,

I see you are so anxious, that I shall endeavour to send you this letter by a special messenger. I think I can relieve your mind completely.

The Duke has read the play. He asked for it a week ago, and had it. He has been at Brighton since. He called here before eleven on Saturday morning, but I was out on the play business, so I went to him at Devonshire House yesterday. He almost knows the play by heart. He is supremely delighted with it, and critically understands it. In proof of the latter part of this sentence I may mention that he had made two or three memoranda of trivial doubtful points, *every one of which had attracted our attention in rehearsal*, as I found when he showed them to me. He thoroughly understands and appreciates the comedy of the Duke—threw himself back in his chair and laughed, as I say of Walpole, "till I thought he'd have choked," about his first Duchess, who was a Percy. He suggested that he shouldn't say: "You know how to speak to the heart of a Noble," because it was not likely that he would call himself a Noble. He thought we might close up the Porter and Softhead a little more (already done) and was so charmed and delighted to recall the comedy that he was more pleased than any boy you ever saw when I repeated two or three of the speeches in my part for him. He is coming to the rehearsal to-day (we rehearse now at Devonshire House, three days a-week, all day long), and, since he read the play, has conceived a most magnificent and noble improvement in the Devonshire House plan, by which, I daresay, we shall get another thousand or fifteen hundred pounds. There is not a grain of distrust or doubt in him. I am perfectly certain that he would confide to me, and does confide to me, his whole mind on the subject.

More than this, the Duke comes out the best man in the play. I am happy to report to you that Stone does the honourable manly side of that pride inexpressibly better than I should have supposed possible in him. The scene where he makes that reparation to the slandered woman is *certain* to be an effect. He is *not* a jest upon the order of Dukes, but a great tribute to them. I have sat looking at the play (as you may suppose) pretty often, and carefully weighing every syllable of it. I see, in the Duke, the most estimable character in the piece. I am as sure that I represent the audience in this as I am that I hear the words when they are spoken before me. The first time that scene with Hardman was seriously done, it made an effect on the company that quite surprised and delighted me; and whenever and wherever it is done (but most of all at Devonshire House) the result will be the same.

Everyone is greatly improved. I wrote an earnest note to Forster a few days ago on the subject of his being too loud and violent. He has since subdued himself with the most admirable pains, and improved the part a thousand per cent. All the points are gradually being worked and smoothed out with the utmost neatness all through the play. They are all most heartily anxious and earnest, and, upon the least hitch, will do the same thing twenty times over. The scenery, furniture, etc., are rapidly advancing towards completion, and will be beautiful. The dresses are a perfect blaze of colour, and there is not a pocket-flap or a scrap of lace that has not been made according to Egg's drawings to the quarter of an inch. Every wig has been made from an old print or picture. From the Duke's snuff-box to Will's Coffee-house, you will find everything in perfect truth and keeping. I have resolved that whenever we come to a weak place in the acting, it must, somehow or other, be made

a strong one. The places that I used to be most afraid of are among the best points now.

Will you come to the dress rehearsal on the Tuesday evening before the Queen's night? There will be no one present but the Duke.

I write in the greatest haste, for the rehearsal time is close at hand, and I have the master carpenter and gasman to see before we begin.

Miss Coutts is one of the most sensible of women, and if I had not seen the Duke yesterday, I would have shown her the play directly. But there can't be any room for anxiety on the head that has troubled you so much. You may clear it from your mind as completely as Gunpowder Plot.

In great haste, ever cordially.

The Hon. Miss Eden.[50]

BROADSTAIRS, *Sunday, 28th September, 1851*.

MY DEAR MISS EDEN,

Many thanks for the grapes; which must have come from the identical vine a man ought to sit under. They were a prodigy of excellence.

I have been concerned to hear of your indisposition, but thought the best thing I could do, was to make no formal calls when you were really ill. I have been suffering myself from another kind of malady—a severe, spasmodic, house-buying-and-repairing attack—which has left me extremely weak and all but exhausted. The seat of the disorder has been the pocket.

I had the kindest of notes from the kindest of men this morning, and am going to see him on Wednesday. Of course I mean the Duke of Devonshire. Can I take anything to Chatsworth for you?

Very faithfully yours.

Mr. Frank Stone.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO MR. STONE.

8th September, 1851.

You never saw such a sight as the sands between this and Margate presented yesterday. This day fortnight a steamer laden with cattle going from Rotterdam to the London market, was wrecked on the Goodwin—on which occasion, by-the-bye, the coming in at night of our Salvage Luggers laden with dead cattle, which where hoisted up upon the pier where they lay in heaps, was a most picturesque and striking sight. The sea since Wednesday has been very rough, blowing in straight upon the land. Yesterday, the shore was strewn with hundreds of oxen, sheep, and pigs (and with bushels upon bushels of apples), in every state and stage of decay—burst open, rent asunder, lying with their stiff hoofs in the air, or with their great ribs yawning like the wrecks of ships—tumbled and

beaten out of shape, and yet with a horrible sort of humanity about them. Hovering among these carcases was every kind of water-side plunderer, pulling the horns out, getting the hides off, chopping the hoofs with poleaxes, etc. etc., attended by no end of donkey carts, and spectral horses with scraggy necks, galloping wildly up and down as if there were something maddening in the stench. I never beheld such a demoniacal business!

Very faithfully yours.

Mr. Henry Austin.

BROADSTAIRS, *Monday, 8th September, 1851*.

MY DEAR HENRY,

Your letter, received this morning, has considerably allayed the anguish of my soul. Our letters crossed, of course, as letters under such circumstances always do.

I am perpetually wandering (in fancy) up and down the house[51] and tumbling over the workmen; when I feel that they are gone to dinner I become low, when I look forward to their total abstinence on Sunday, I am wretched. The gravy at dinner has a taste of glue in it. I smell paint in the sea. Phantom lime attends me all the day long. I dream that I am a carpenter and can't partition off the hall. I frequently dance (with a distinguished company) in the drawing-room, and fall into the kitchen for want of a pillar.

A great to-do here. A steamer lost on the Goodwins yesterday, and our men bringing in no end of dead cattle and sheep. I stood a supper for them last night, to the unbounded gratification of Broadstairs. They came in from the wreck very wet and tired, and very much disconcerted by the nature of their prize—which, I suppose, after all, will have to be recommitted to the sea, when the hides and tallow are secured. One lean-faced boatman murmured, when they were all ruminative over the bodies as they lay on the pier: "Couldn't sassages be made on it?" but retired in confusion shortly afterwards, overwhelmed by the execrations of the bystanders.

Ever affectionately.

P.S.—Sometimes I think ——'s bill will be too long to be added up until Babbage's calculating machine shall be improved and finished. Sometimes that there is not paper enough ready made, to carry it over and bring it forward upon.

I dream, also, of the workmen every night. They make faces at me, and won't do anything.

Mr. Austen Henry Layard.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, *16th December, 1851*.

MY DEAR LAYARD,[52]

I want to renew your recollection of "the last time we parted"—not at Wapping Old Stairs, but at Miss Coutts's—when we vowed to be more intimate after all nations should

have departed from Hyde Park, and I should be able to emerge from my cave on the sea-shore.

Can you, and will you, be in town on Wednesday, the last day of the present old year? If yes, will you dine with us at a quarter after six, and see the New Year in with such extemporaneous follies of an exploded sort (in genteel society) as may occur to us? Both Mrs. Dickens and I would be really delighted if this should find you free to give us the pleasure of your society.

Believe me always, very faithfully yours.

1852.

Mr. James Bower Harrison.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, *5th January, 1852.*

DEAR SIR,

I have just received the work[53] you have had the kindness to send me, and beg to thank you for it, and for your obliging note, cordially. It is a very curious little volume, deeply interesting, and written (if I may be allowed to say so) with as much power of knowledge and plainness of purpose as modesty.

Faithfully yours.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday Night, 15th February, 1852.*

MY DEAR BULWER,

I left Liverpool at four o'clock this morning, and am so blinded by excitement, gas, and waving hats and handkerchiefs, that I can hardly see to write, but I cannot go to bed without telling you what a triumph we have had. Allowing for the necessarily heavy expenses of all kinds, I believe we can hardly fund less than a Thousand Pounds out of this trip alone. And, more than that, the extraordinary interest taken in the idea of the Guild by "this grand people of England" down in these vast hives, and the enthusiastic welcome they give it, assure me that we may do what we will if we will only be true and faithful to our design. There is a social recognition of it which I cannot give you the least idea of. I sincerely believe that we have the ball at our feet, and may throw it up to the very Heaven of Heavens. And I don't speak for myself alone, but for all our people, and not least of all for Forster, who has been absolutely stunned by the tremendous earnestness of these great places.

To tell you (especially after your affectionate letter) what I would have given to have had you there would be idle. But I can most seriously say that all the sights of the earth turned pale in my eyes, before the sight of three thousand people with one heart among them, and no capacity in them, in spite of all their efforts, of sufficiently testifying to you how they believe you to be right, and feel that they cannot do enough to cheer you on. They understood the play (*far better acted by this time than ever you have seen it*) as well as you do. They allowed nothing to escape them. They rose up, when it was over, with a perfect fury of delight, and the Manchester people sent a requisition after us to Liverpool to say that if we will go back there in May, when we act at Birmingham (as of course we shall) they will joyfully undertake to fill the Free Trade Hall again. Among the Tories of Liverpool the reception was equally enthusiastic. We played, two nights running, to a hall crowded to the roof—more like the opera at Genoa or Milan than anything else I can

compare it to. We dined at the Town Hall magnificently, and it made no difference in the response. I said what we were quietly determined to do (when the Guild was given as the toast of the night), and really they were so noble and generous in their encouragement that I should have been more ashamed of myself than I hope I ever shall be, if I could have felt conscious of having ever for a moment faltered in the work.

I will answer for Birmingham—for any great working town to which we chose to go. We have won a position for the idea which years upon years of labour could not have given it. I believe its worldly fortunes have been advanced in this last week fifty years at least. I feebly express to you what Forster (who couldn't be at Liverpool, and has not those shouts ringing in his ears) has felt from the moment he set foot in Manchester. Believe me we may carry a perfect fiery cross through the North of England, and over the Border, in this cause, if need be—not only to the enrichment of the cause, but to the lasting enlistment of the people's sympathy.

I have been so happy in all this that I could have cried on the shortest notice any time since Tuesday. And I do believe that our whole body would have gone to the North Pole with me if I had shown them good reason for it.

I hope I am not so tired but that you may be able to read this. I have been at it almost incessantly, day and night for a week, and I am afraid my handwriting suffers. But in all other respects I am only a giant refreshed.

We meet next Saturday you recollect? Until then, and ever afterwards,

Believe me, heartily yours.

Mrs. Cowden Clarke.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *3rd March, 1852.*

MY DEAR MRS. CLARKE,

It is almost an impertinence to tell you how delightful your flowers were to me; for you who thought of that beautiful and delicately-timed token of sympathy and remembrance, must know it very well already.

I do assure you that I have hardly ever received anything with so much pleasure in all my life. They are not faded yet—are on my table here—but never can fade out of my remembrance.

I should be less than a Young Gas, and more than an old Manager—that commemorative portfolio is here too—if I could relieve my heart of half that it could say to you. All my house are my witnesses that you have quite filled it, and this note is my witness that I can *not* empty it.

Ever faithfully and gratefully your friend.

Mr. James Bower Harrison.

LONDON, TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *26th March, 1852.*

DEAR SIR,

I beg to thank you for your interesting pamphlet, and to add that I shall be very happy to accept an article from you on the subject[54] for “Household Words.” I should already have suggested to you that I should have great pleasure in receiving contributions from one so well and peculiarly qualified to treat of many interesting subjects, but that I felt a delicacy in encroaching on your other occupations. Will you excuse my remarking that to make an article on this particular subject useful, it is essential to address the employed as well as the employers? In the case of the Sheffield grinders the difficulty was, for many years, not with the masters, but the men. Painters who use white lead are with the greatest difficulty persuaded to be particular in washing their hands, and I daresay that I need not remind you that one could not generally induce domestic servants to attend to the commonest sanitary principles in their work without absolutely forcing them to experience their comfort and convenience.

Dear Sir, very faithfully yours.

1853.

Mr. W. H. Wills.

1, JUNCTION PARADE, BRIGHTON,
Thursday night, 4th March, 1853.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I am sorry, but Brutus sacrifices unborn children of his own as well as those of other people. “The Sorrows of Childhood,” long in type, and long a mere mysterious name, must come out. The paper really is, like the celebrated ambassadorial appointment, “too bad.”

“A Doctor of Morals,” *impossible of insertion as it stands*. A mere puff, with all the difficult facts of the question blinked, and many statements utterly at variance with what I am known to have written. It is exactly because the great bulk of offences in a great number of places are committed by professed thieves, that it will not do to have pet prisoning advocated without grave remonstrance and great care. That class of prisoner is not to be reformed. We must begin at the beginning and prevent, by stringent correction and supervision of wicked parents, that class of prisoner from being regularly supplied as if he were a human necessity.

Do they teach trades in workhouses and try to fit *their* people (the worst part of them) for society? Come with me to Tothill Fields Bridewell, and I will show you what a workhouse girl is. Or look to my “Walk in a Workhouse” (in “H. W.”) and to the glance at the youths I saw in one place positively kept like wolves.

Mr. —— thinks prisons could be made nearly self-supporting. Have you any idea of the difficulty that is found in disposing of Prison-work, or does he think that the Treadmills didn’t grind the air because the State or the Magistracy objected to the competition of prison-labour with free-labour, but because the work *could not be got?*

I never can have any kind of prison-discipline disquisition in “H. W.” that does not start with the first great principle I have laid down, and that does not protest against Prisons being considered *per se*. Whatever chance is given to a man in a prison must be given to a man in a refuge for distress.

The article in itself is very good, but it must have these points in it, otherwise I am not only compromising opinions I am known to hold, but the journal itself is blowing hot and cold, and playing fast and loose in a ridiculous way.

“Starting a Paper in India” is very droll to us. But it is full of references that the public don’t understand, and don’t in the least care for. Bourgeois, brevier, minion, and nonpareil, long primer, turn-ups, dunning advertisements, and reprints, back forme, imposing-stone, and locking-up, are all quite out of their way, and a sort of slang that they have no interest in.

Let me see a revise when you have got it together, and if you can strengthen it—do. I mention all the objections that occur to me as I go on, not because you can obviate them (except in the case of the prison-paper), but because if I make a point of doing so always you will feel and judge the more readily both for yourself and me too when I take an Italian flight.

YOU:
How are the eyes getting on?

ME:
I have been at work all day.

Ever faithfully.

The same.

BOULOGNE, *Sunday, 7th August, 1853.*

MY DEAR WILLS,

Can't possibly write autographs until I have written "Bleak House." My work has been very hard since I have been here; and when I throw down my pen of a day, I throw down myself, and can take up neither article.

The "C. P." is very well done, but I cannot make up my mind to lend my blow to the great Forge-bellows of puffery at work. I so heartily desire to have nothing to do with it, that I wish you would cancel this article altogether, and substitute something else. As to the guide-books, I think they are a sufficiently flatulent botheration in themselves, without being discussed. A lurking desire is always upon me to put Mr. ——'s speech on Accidents to the public, as chairman of the Brighton Railway, against his pretensions as a chairman of public instructors and guardians. And I don't know but that I may come to it at some odd time. This strengthens me in my wish to avoid the bellows.

How two men can have gone, one after the other, to the Camp, and have written nothing about it, passes my comprehension. I have been in great doubt about the end of ——. I wish you would suggest to him from me, when you see him, how wrong it is. Surely he cannot be insensible to the fact that military preparations in England at this time mean Defence. Woman, says ——, means Home, love, children, Mother. Does he not find any protection for these things in a wise and moderate means of Defence; and is not the union between these things and those means one of the most natural, significant, and plain in the world?

I wish you would send friend Barnard here a set of "Household Words," in a paid parcel (on the other side is an inscription to be neatly pasted into vol. i. before sending), with a post-letter beforehand from yourself, saying that I had begged you to forward the books, feeling so much obliged to him for his uniform attention and politeness. Also that you will not fail to continue his set, as successive volumes appear.

ASPECTS OF NATURE.

We have had a tremendous sea here. Steam-packet in the harbour frantic, and dashing

her brains out against the stone walls.

Ever faithfully.

Rev. James White.

BOULOGNE, *September 30th, 1853.*

MY DEAR WHITE,

As you wickedly failed in your truth to the writer of books you adore, I write something that I hoped to have said, and meant to have said, in the confidence of the Pavilion among the trees.

Will you write another story for the Christmas No.? It will be exactly (I mean the Xmas No.) on the same plan as the last.

I shall be at the office from Monday to Thursday, and shall hope to receive a cheery "Yes," in reply.

Loves from all to all, and my particular love to Mrs. White.

Ever cordially yours.

Mrs. Charles Dickens.

HOTEL DE LONDRES, CHAMOUNIX,
Thursday Night, 20th October, 1853.

MY DEAREST KATE,

We[55] came here last night after a very long journey over very bad roads, from Geneva, and leave here (for Montigny, by the Tête Noire) at 6 to-morrow morning. Next morning early we mean to try the Simplon.

After breakfast to-day we ascended to the Mer de Glace—wonderfully different at this time of the year from when we saw it—a great portion of the ascent being covered with snow, and the climbing very difficult. Regardless of my mule, I walked up and walked down again, to the great admiration of the guides, who pronounced me "an Intrepid." The little house at the top being closed for the winter, and Edward having forgotten to carry any brandy, we had nothing to drink at the top—which was a considerable disappointment to the Inimitable, who was streaming with perspiration from head to foot. But we made a fire in the snow with some sticks, and after a not too comfortable rest came down again. It took a long time—from 10 to 3.

The appearance of Chamounix at this time of year is very remarkable. The travellers are over for the season, the inns are generally shut up, all the people who can afford it are moving off to Geneva, the snow is low on the mountains, and the general desolation and grandeur extraordinarily fine. I wanted to pass by the Col de Balme, but the snow lies too deep upon it.

You would have been quite delighted if you could have seen the warmth of our old

Lausanne friends, and the heartiness with which they crowded down on a fearfully bad morning to see us off. We passed the night at the Ecu de Genève, in the rooms once our old rooms—at that time (the day before yesterday) occupied by the Queen of the French (ex- I mean) and Prince Joinville and his family.

Tell Sydney that all the way here from Geneva, and up to the Sea of Ice this morning, I wore his knitting, which was very comfortable indeed. I mean to wear it on the long mule journey to Martigny to-morrow.

We get on extremely well. Edward continues as before. He had never been here, and I took him up to the Mer de Glace this morning, and had a mule for him.

I shall leave this open, as usual, to add a word or two on our arrival at Martigny. We have had an amusingly absurd incident this afternoon. When we came here, I saw added to the hotel—our old hotel, and I am now writing in the room where we once dined at the table d'hôte—some baths, cold and hot, down on the margin of the torrent below. This induced us to order three hot baths. Thereupon the keys of the bath-rooms were found with immense difficulty, women ran backwards and forwards across the bridge, men bore in great quantities of wood, a horrible furnace was lighted, and a smoke was raised which filled the whole valley. This began at half-past three, and we congratulated each other on the distinction we should probably acquire by being the cause of the conflagration of the whole village. We sat by the fire until half-past five (dinner-time), and still no baths. Then Edward came up to say that the water was as yet only "tippit," which we suppose to be tepid, but that by half-past eight it would be in a noble state. Ever since the smoke has poured forth in enormous volume, and the furnace has blazed, and the women have gone and come over the bridge, and piles of wood have been carried in; but we observe a general avoidance of us by the establishment which still looks like failure. We have had a capital dinner, the dessert whereof is now on the table. When we arrived, at nearly seven last night, all the linen in the house, newly washed, was piled in the sitting-room, all the curtains were taken down, and all the chairs piled bottom upwards. They cleared away as much as they could directly, and had even got the curtains up at breakfast this morning.

I am looking forward to letters at Genoa, though I doubt if we shall get there (supposing all things right at the Simplon) before Monday night or Tuesday morning. I found there last night what F—— would call "Mr. Smith's" story of Mont Blanc, and took it to bed to read. It is extremely well and unaffectedly done. You would be interested in it.

MARTIGNY, *Friday Afternoon, October 21st.*

Safely arrived here after a most delightful day, without a cloud. I walked the whole way. The scenery most beautifully presented. We are in the hotel where our old St. Bernard party assembled.

I should like to see you all very much indeed.

Ever affectionately.

The same.

HÔTEL DE LA VILLE, MILAN, *25th October, 1853.*

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,

The road from Chamounix here takes so much more time than I supposed (for I travelled it day and night, and my companions don't at all understand the idea of never going to bed) that we only reached Milan last night, though we had been travelling twelve and fifteen hours a day. We crossed the Simplon on Sunday, when there was not (as there is not now) a particle of cloud in the whole sky, and when the pass was as nobly grand and beautiful as it possibly can be. There was a good deal of snow upon the top, but not across the road, which had been cleared. We crossed the Austrian frontier yesterday, and, both there and at the gate of Milan, received all possible consideration and politeness.

I have not seen Bairr yet. He has removed from the old hotel to a larger one at a few hours' distance. The head-waiter remembered me very well last night after I had talked to him a little while, and was greatly interested in hearing about all the family, and about poor Roche. The boy we used to have at Lausanne is now seventeen-and-a-half—very tall, he says. The elder girl, fifteen, very like her mother, but taller and more beautiful. He described poor Mrs. Bairr's death (I am speaking of the head-waiter before mentioned) in most vivacious Italian. It was all over in ten minutes, he said. She put her hands to her head one day, down in the courtyard, and cried out that she heard little bells ringing violently in her ears. They sent off for Bairr, who was close by. When she saw him, she stretched out her arms, said in English, "Adieu, my dear!" and fell dead. He has not married again, and he never will. She was a good woman (my friend went on), excellent woman, full of charity, loved the poor, but *un poco furiosa*—that was nothing!

The new hotel is just like the old one, admirably kept, excellently furnished, and a model of comfort. I hope to be at Genoa on Thursday morning, and to find your letter there. We have agreed to drop Sicily, and to return home by way of Marseilles. Our projected time for reaching London is the 10th of December.

As this house is full, I daresay we shall meet some one we know at the table d'hôte to-day. It is extraordinary that the only travellers we have encountered, since we left Paris, have been one horribly vapid Englishman and wife whom we dropped at Basle, one boring Englishman whom we found (and, thank God, left) at Geneva, and two English maiden ladies, whom we found sitting on a rock (with parasols) the day before yesterday, in the

most magnificent part of the Gorge of Gondo, the most awful portion of the Simplon—there awaiting their travelling chariot, in which, with their money, their parasols, and a perfect shop of baskets, they were carefully *locked up* by an English servant in sky blue and silver buttons. We have been in the most extraordinary vehicles—like swings, like boats, like Noah's arks, like barges and enormous bedsteads. After dark last night, a landlord, where we changed horses, discovered that the luggage would certainly be stolen from *questo porco d'uno carro*—this pig of a cart—his complimentary description of our carriage, unless cords were attached to each of the trunks, which cords were to hang down so that we might hold them in our hands all the way, and feel any tug that might be made at our treasures. You will imagine the absurdity of our jolting along some twenty miles in this way, exactly as if we were in three shower-baths and were afraid to pull the string.

We are going to the Scala to-night, having got the old box belonging to the hotel, the old key of which is lying beside me on the table. There seem to be no singers of note here now, and it appears for the time to have fallen off considerably. I shall now bring this to a close, hoping that I may have more interesting jottings to send you about the old scenes and people, from Genoa, where we shall stay two days. You are now, I take it, at Macready's. I shall be greatly interested by your account of your visit there. We often talk of you all.

Edward's Italian is (I fear) very weak. When we began to get really into the language, he reminded me of poor Roche in Germany. But he seems to have picked up a little this morning. He has been unfortunate with the unlucky Egg, leaving a pair of his shoes (his favourite shoes) behind in Paris, and his flannel dressing-gown yesterday morning at Domo d'Ossola. In all other respects he is just as he was.

Egg and Collins have gone out to kill the lions here, and I take advantage of their absence to write to you, Georgie, and Miss Coutts. Wills will have told you, I daresay, that Cerjat accompanied us on a miserably wet morning, in a heavy rain, down the lake. By-the-bye, the wife of one of his cousins, born in France of German parents, living in the next house to Haldimand's, is one of the most charming, natural, open-faced, and delightful women I ever saw. Madame de —— is set up as the great attraction of Lausanne; but this capital creature shuts her up altogether. We have called her (her—the real belle), ever since, the early closing movement.

I am impatient for letters from home; confused ideas are upon me that you are going to White's, but I have no notion when.

Take care of yourself, and God bless you.

Ever most affectionately.

The same.

CROCE DI MALTA, GENOA,
Friday Night, October 29th, 1853.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,

As we arrived here later than I had expected (in consequence of the journey from Milan

being most horribly slow) I received your welcome letter only this morning. I write this before going to bed, that I may be sure of not being taken by any engagement off the post time to-morrow.

We came in last night between seven and eight. The railroad to Turin is finished and opened to within twenty miles of Genoa. Its effect upon the whole town, and especially upon that part of it lying down beyond the lighthouse and away by San Pietro d'Arena, is quite wonderful. I only knew the place by the lighthouse, so numerous were the new buildings, so wide the streets, so busy the people, and so thriving and busy the many signs of commerce. To-day I have seen ——, the ——, the ——, and the ——, the latter of whom live at Nervi, fourteen or fifteen miles off, towards Porto Fino. First, of the ——. They are just the same, except that Mrs. ——'s face is larger and fuller, and her hair rather gray. As I rang at their bell she came out walking, and stared at me. "What! you don't know me?" said I; upon which she recognised me very warmly, and then said in her old quiet way: "I expected to find a ruin. We heard you had been so ill; and I find you younger and better-looking than ever. But it's so strange to see you without a bright waistcoat. Why haven't you got a bright waistcoat on?" I apologised for my black one, and was sent upstairs, when —— presently appeared in a hideous and demoniacal nightdress, having turned out of bed to greet his distinguished countryman. After a long talk, in the course of which I arranged to dine there on Sunday early, before starting by the steamer for Naples, and in which they told me every possible and impossible particular about their minutest affairs, and especially about ——'s marriage, I set off for ——, at ——. I had found letters from him here, and he had been here over and over again, and had driven out no end of times to the Gate to leave messages for me, and really is (in his strange uncouth way) crying glad to see me. I found him and his wife in a little comfortable country house, overlooking the sea, sitting in a small summer-house on wheels, exactly like a bathing machine. I found her rather pretty, extraordinarily cold and composed, a mere piece of furniture, *talking broken English*. Through eight months in the year they live in this country place. She never reads, never works, never talks, never gives an order or directs anything, has only a taste for going to the theatre (where she never speaks either) and buying clothes. They sit in the garden all day, dine at four, *smoke their cigars*, go in at eight, sit about till ten, and then go to bed. The greater part of this I had from —— himself in a particularly unintelligible confidence in the garden, the only portion of which that I could clearly understand were the words "and one thing and another," repeated one hundred thousand times. He described himself as being perfectly happy, and seemed very fond of his wife. "But that," said —— to me this morning, looking like the figure-head of a ship, with a nutmeg-grater for a face, "that he ought to be, and must be, and is bound to be—he couldn't help it."

Then I went on to the ——'s, and found them living in a beautiful situation in a ruinous Albaro-like palace. Coming upon them unawares, I found ——, with a pointed beard, smoking a great German pipe, in a pair of slippers; the two little girls very pale and faint from the climate, in a singularly untidy state—one (heaven knows why!) without stockings, and both with their little short hair cropped in a manner never before beheld, and a little bright bow stuck on the top of it. —— said she had invented this headgear as a picturesque thing, adding that perhaps it was—and perhaps it was not. She was greatly flushed and agitated, but looked very well, and seems to be greatly liked here. We had

disturbed her at her painting in oils, and I rather received an impression that, what with that, and what with music, the household affairs went a little to the wall. —— was teaching the two little girls the multiplication table in a disorderly old billiard-room with all manner of maps in it.

Having obtained a gracious permission from the lady of the school, I am going to show my companions the Sala of the Peschiere this morning. It is raining intensely hard in the regular Genoa manner, so that I can hardly hope for Genoa's making as fine an impression as I could desire. Our boat for Naples is a large French mail boat, and we hope to get there on Tuesday or Wednesday. If the day after you receive this you write to the Poste Restante, Rome, it will be the safest course. Friday's letter write Poste Restante, Florence. You refer to a letter you suppose me to have received from Forster—to whom my love. No letter from him has come to hand.

I will resume my report of this place in my next. In the meantime, I will not fail to drink dear Katey's health to-day. Edward has just come in with mention of an English boat on Tuesday morning, superior to French boat to-morrow, and faster. I shall inquire at —— and take the best. When I next write I will give you our route in detail.

I am pleased to hear of Mr. Robson's success in a serious part, as I hope he will now be a fine actor. I hope you will enjoy yourself at Macready's, though I fear it must be sometimes but a melancholy visit.

Good-bye, my dear, and believe me ever most affectionately.

Sunday, 30th October.

We leave for Naples to-morrow morning by the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer the *Valletta*. I send a sketch of our movements that I have at last been able to make.

Mrs. —— quite came out yesterday. So did Mrs. —— (in a different manner), by violently attacking Mrs. —— for painting ill in oils when she might be playing well on the piano. It rained hard all yesterday, but is finer this morning. We went over the Peschiere in the wet afternoon. The garden is sorely neglected now, and the rooms are all full of boarding-school beds, and most of the fireplaces are closed up, but the old beauty and grandeur of the place were in it still.

This will find you, I suppose, at Sherborne. My heartiest love to dear Macready, and to Miss Macready, and to all the house. I hope my godson has not forgotten me.

I will think of Charley (from whom I have heard here) and soon write to him definitely. At present I think he had better join me at Boulogne. I shall not bring the little boys over, as, if we keep our time, it would be too long before Christmas Day.

With love to Georgy, ever most affectionately yours.

The same.

HOTEL DES ÉTRANGERS, NAPLES,
Friday Night, November 4th, 1853.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,

We arrived here at midday—two days after our intended time, under circumstances which I reserve for Georgina's letter, by way of variety—in what Forster used to call good health and sp—p—pirits. We have a charming apartment opposite the sea, a little lower down than the Victoria—in the direction of the San Carlo Theatre—and the windows are now wide open as on an English summer night. The first persons we found on board at Genoa, were Emerson Tennent, Lady Tennent, their son and daughter. They are all here too, in an apartment over ours, and we have all been constantly together in a very friendly way, ever since our meeting. We dine at the table d'hôte—made a league together on board—and have been mutually agreeable. They have no servant with them, and have profited by Edward. He goes on perfectly well, is always cheerful and ready, has been sleeping on board (upside down, I believe), in a corner, with his head in the wet and his heels against the side of the paddle-box—but has been perpetually gay and fresh.

As soon as we got our luggage from the custom house, we packed complete changes in a bag, set off in a carriage for some warm baths, and had a most refreshing cleansing after our long journey. There was an odd Neapolitan attendant—a steady old man—who, bringing the linen into my bath, proposed to "soap me." Upon which I called out to the other two that I intended to have everything done to me that could be done, and gave him directions accordingly. I was frothed all over with Naples soap, rubbed all down, scrubbed with a brush, had my nails cut, and all manner of extraordinary operations performed. He was as much disappointed (apparently) as surprised not to find me dirty, and kept on ejaculating under his breath, "Oh, Heaven! how clean this Englishman is!" He also remarked that the Englishman is as fair as a beautiful woman. Some relations of Lord John Russell's, going to Malta, were aboardship, and we were very pleasant. Likewise there was a Mr. Young aboard—an agreeable fellow, not very unlike Forster in person—who introduced himself as the brother of the Miss Youngs whom we knew at Boulogne. He was musical and had much good-fellowship in him, and we were very agreeable together also. On the whole I became decidedly popular, and was embraced on all hands when I came over the side this morning. We are going up Vesuvius, of course, and to Herculaneum and Pompeii, and the usual places. The Tennents will be our companions in most of our excursions, but we shall leave them here behind us. Naples looks just the same as when we left it, except that the weather is much better and brighter.

On the day before we left Genoa, we had another dinner with —— at his country place. He was the soul of hospitality, and really seems to love me. You would have been quite touched if you could have seen the honest warmth of his affection. On the occasion of this second banquet, Egg made a brilliant mistake that perfectly convulsed us all. I had introduced all the games with great success, and we were playing at the "What advice would you have given that person?" game. The advice was "Not to bully his fellow-creatures." Upon which, Egg triumphantly and with the greatest glee, screamed, "Mr. ——!" utterly forgetting ——'s relationship, which I had elaborately impressed upon him. The effect was perfectly irresistible and uncontrollable; and the little woman's way of humouring the joke was in the best taste and the best sense. While I am upon Genoa I may

add, that when we left the Croce the landlord, in hoping that I was satisfied, told me that as I was an old inhabitant, he had charged the prices “as to a Genoese.” They certainly were very reasonable.

Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris have lately been staying in this house, but are just gone. It is kept by an English waiting-maid who married an Italian courier, and is extremely comfortable and clean. I am getting impatient to hear from you with all home news, and shall be heartily glad to get to Rome, and find my best welcome and interest at the post-office there.

That ridiculous —— and her mother were at the hotel at Leghorn the day before yesterday, where the mother (poor old lady!) was so ill from the fright and anxiety consequent on her daughter’s efforts at martyrdom, that it is even doubtful whether she will recover. I learnt from a lady friend of ——, that all this nonsense originated at Nice, where she was stirred up by Free Kirk parsons—itinerant—any one of whom I take her to be ready to make a semi-celestial marriage with. The dear being who told me all about her was a noble specimen—single, forty, in a clinging flounced black silk dress, which wouldn’t drape, or bustle, or fall, or do anything of that sort—and with a leghorn hat on her head, at least (I am serious) *six feet round*. The consequence of its immense size, was, that whereas it had an insinuating blue decoration in the form of a bow in front, it was so out of her knowledge behind, that it was all battered and bent in that direction—and, viewed from that quarter, she looked drunk.

My best love to Mamey and Katey, and Sydney the king of the nursery, and Harry and the dear little Plornishghenter. I kiss almost all the children I encounter in remembrance of their sweet faces, and talk to all the mothers who carry them. I hope to hear nothing but good news from you, and to find nothing but good spirits in your expected letter when I come to Rome. I already begin to look homeward, being now at the remotest part of the journey, and to anticipate the pleasure of return.

Ever most affectionately.

1854.

Mr. Frederick Grew.[56]

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, *13th January, 1854.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I beg, through you, to assure the artizans' committee in aid of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, that I have received the resolution they have done me the honour to agree upon for themselves and their fellow-workmen, with the highest gratification. I awakened no pleasure or interest among them at Birmingham which they did not repay to me with abundant interest. I have their welfare and happiness sincerely at heart, and shall ever be their faithful friend.

Your obedient servant.

Mrs. Gaskell.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *February 18th, 1854.*

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

I am sorry to say that I am not one of the Zoologicals, or I should have been delighted to have had a hand in the introduction of a child to the lions and tigers. But Wills shall send up to the gardens this morning, and see if Mr. Mitchell, the secretary, can be found. If he be producible I have no doubt that I can send you what you want in the course of the day.

Such has been the distraction of *my* mind in *my* story, that I have twice forgotten to tell you how much I liked the Modern Greek Songs. The article is printed and at press for the very next number as ever is.

Don't put yourself out at all as to the division of the story into parts; I think you had far better write it in your own way. When we come to get a little of it into type, I have no doubt of being able to make such little suggestions as to breaks of chapters as will carry us over all that easily.

My dear Mrs. Gaskell,
Always faithfully yours.

Rev. W. Harness.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Evening, May 19th, 1854.*

MY DEAR HARNESS,

On Thursday, the first of June, we shall be delighted to come. (Might I ask for the

mildest whisper of the dinner-hour?) I am more than ever devoted to your niece, if possible, for giving me the choice of two days, as on the second of June I am a fettered mortal.

I heard a manly, Christian sermon last Sunday at the Foundling—with *great satisfaction*. If you should happen to know the preacher of it, pray thank him from me.

Ever cordially yours.

Rev. James White.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *May 26th, 1854.*

MY DEAR WHITE,

Here is Conolly in a dreadful state of mind because you won't dine with him on the 7th of June next to meet Stratford-on-Avon people, writing to me, to ask me to write to you and ask you what you mean by it.

What *do* you mean by it?

It appears to Conolly that your supposing you *can* have anything to do is a clear case of monomania, one of the slight instances of perverted intellect, wherein a visit to him cannot fail to be beneficial. After conference with my learned friend I am of the same opinion.

Loves from all in Tavistock to all in Bonchurch.

Ever faithfully yours.

Mr. W. H. Wills.

BOULOGNE, *Wednesday, August 2nd, 1854.*

MY DEAR WILLS,

I will endeavour to come off my back (and the grass) to do an opening paper for the starting number of "North and South." I can't positively answer for such a victory over the idleness into which I have delightfully sunk, as the achievement of this feat; but let us hope.

During a fête on Monday night the meteor flag of England (forgotten to be struck at sunset) was *stolen!!!*

Manage the proofs of "H. W." so that I may not have to correct them on a Sunday. I am not going over to the Sabbatarians, but like the haystack (particularly) on a Sunday morning.

I should like John to call on M. Henri, Townshend's servant, 21, Norfolk Street, Park Lane, and ask him if, when he comes here with his master, he can take charge of a trap bat and ball. If yea, then I should like John to proceed to Mr. Darke, Lord's Cricket Ground, and purchase said trap bat and ball of the best quality. Townshend is coming here on the 15th, probably will leave town a day or two before.

Pray be in a condition to drink a glass of the 1846 champagne when *you* come.

I think I have no more to say at present. I cannot sufficiently admire my prodigious energy in coming out of a stupor to write this letter.

Ever faithfully.

1855.

Miss King.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Evening,*
February 9th, 1855.

MY DEAR MISS KING,

I wish to get over the disagreeable part of my letter in the beginning. I have great doubts of the possibility of publishing your story in portions.

But I think it possesses *very great merit*. My doubts arise partly from the nature of the interest which I fear requires presentation as a whole, and partly on your manner of relating the tale. The people do not sufficiently work out their own purposes in dialogue and dramatic action. You are too much their exponent; what you do for them, they ought to do for themselves. With reference to publication in detached portions (or, indeed, with a reference to the force of the story in any form), that long stoppage and going back to possess the reader with the antecedents of the clergyman's biography, are rather crippling. I may mention that I think the boy (the child of the second marriage) a little too "slangy." I know the kind of boyish slang which belongs to such a character in these times; but, considering his part in the story, I regard it as the author's function to elevate such a characteristic, and soften it into something more expressive of the ardour and flush of youth, and its romance. It seems to me, too, that the dialogues between the lady and the Italian maid are conventional but not natural. This observation I regard as particularly applying to the maid, and to the scene preceding the murder. Supposing the main objection surmountable, I would venture then to suggest to you the means of improvement in this respect.

The paper is so full of good touches of character, passion, and natural emotion, that I very much wish for a little time to reconsider it, and to try whether condensation here and there would enable us to get it say into four parts. I am not sanguine of this, for I observed the difficulties as I read it the night before last; but I am very unwilling, I assure you, to decline what has so much merit.

I am going to Paris on Sunday morning for ten days or so. I purpose being back again within a fortnight. If you will let me think of this matter in the meanwhile, I shall at least have done all I can to satisfy my own appreciation of your work.

But if, in the meantime, you should desire to have it back with any prospect of publishing it through other means, a letter—the shortest in the world—from you to Mr. Wills at the "Household Words" office will immediately produce it. I repeat with perfect sincerity that I am much impressed by its merits, and that if I had read it as the production of an entire stranger, I think it would have made exactly this effect upon me.

My dear Miss King,
Very faithfully yours.

The same.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *24th February, 1855.*

MY DEAR MISS KING,

I have gone carefully over your story again, and quite agree with you that the episode of the clergyman could be told in a very few lines. Startling as I know it will appear to you, I am bound to say that I think the purpose of the whole tale would be immensely strengthened by great compression. I doubt if it could not be told more forcibly in half the space.

It is certainly too long for "Household Words," and I fear my idea of it is too short for you. I am, if possible, more unwilling than I was at first to decline it; but the more I have considered it, the longer it has seemed to grow. Nor can I ask you to try to present it free from that objection, because I already perceive the difficulty, and pain, of such an effort.

To the best of my knowledge, you are wrong about the Lady at last, and to the best of my observation, you do not express what you explain yourself to mean in the case of the Italian attendant. I have met with such talk in the romances of Maturin's time—certainly never in Italian life.

These, however, are slight points easily to be compromised in an hour. The great obstacle I must leave wholly to your own judgment, in looking over the tale again.

Believe me always, very faithfully yours.

Mr. W. M. Thackeray.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Evening, 23rd March, 1855.*

MY DEAR THACKERAY,[57]

I have read in *The Times* to-day an account of your last night's lecture, and cannot refrain from assuring you in all truth and earnestness that I am profoundly touched by your generous reference to me. I do not know how to tell you what a glow it spread over my heart. Out of its fulness I do entreat you to believe that I shall never forget your words of commendation. If you could wholly know at once how you have moved me, and how you have animated me, you would be the happier I am very certain.

Faithfully yours ever.

Mr. Forster.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, 29th March, 1855.*

MY DEAR FORSTER,

I have hope of Mr. Morley,[58] whom one cannot see without knowing to be a straightforward, earnest man. *I* also think Higgins[59] will materially help them.[60]

Generally, I quite agree with you that they hardly know what to be at; but it is an immensely difficult subject to start, and they must have every allowance. At any rate, it is not by leaving them alone and giving them no help, that they can be urged on to success. (Travers, too, I think, a man of the Anti-Corn-Law-League order.)

Higgins told me, after the meeting on Monday night, that on the previous evening he had been closeted with ——, whose letter in that day's paper he had put right for *The Times*. He had never spoken to —— before, he said, and found him a rather muddle-headed Scotchman as to his powers of conveying his ideas. He (Higgins) had gone over his documents judicially, and with the greatest attention; and not only was —— wrong in every particular (except one very unimportant circumstance), but, in reading documents to the House, had stopped short in sentences where no stop was, and by so doing had utterly perverted their meaning.

This is to come out, of course, when said —— gets the matter on. I thought the case so changed, before I knew this, by his letter and that of the other shipowners, that I told Morley, when I went down to the theatre, that I felt myself called upon to relieve him from the condition I had imposed.

For the rest, I am quite calmly confident that I only do justice to the strength of my opinions, and use the power which circumstances have given me, conscientiously and moderately, with a right object, and towards the prevention of nameless miseries. I should be now reproaching myself if I had not gone to the meeting, and, having been, I am very glad.

A good illustration of a Government office. —— very kindly wrote to me to suggest that "Houses of Parliament" illustration. After I had dined on Wednesday, and was going to jog slowly down to Drury Lane, it suddenly came into my head that perhaps his details were wrong. I had just time to turn to the "Annual Register," and *not one of them was correct!*

This is, of course, in close confidence.

Ever affectionately.

Mrs. Winter.

Tuesday, 3rd April, 1855.

MY DEAR MARIA,[61]

A necessity is upon me now—as at most times—of wandering about in my old wild way, to think. I could no more resist this on Sunday or yesterday than a man can dispense with food, or a horse can help himself from being driven. I hold my inventive capacity on the stern condition that it must master my whole life, often have complete possession of me, make its own demands upon me, and sometimes, for months together, put everything else away from me. If I had not known long ago that my place could never be held, unless I were at any moment ready to devote myself to it entirely, I should have dropped out of it very soon. All this I can hardly expect you to understand—or the restlessness and waywardness of an author's mind. You have never seen it before you, or lived with it, or

had occasion to think or care about it, and you cannot have the necessary consideration for it. “It is only half-an-hour,”—“It is only an afternoon,”—“It is only an evening,” people say to me over and over again; but they don’t know that it is impossible to command one’s self sometimes to any stipulated and set disposal of five minutes,—or that the mere consciousness of an engagement will sometimes worry a whole day. These are the penalties paid for writing books. Whoever is devoted to an art must be content to deliver himself wholly up to it, and to find his recompense in it. I am grieved if you suspect me of not wanting to see you, but I can’t help it; I must go my way whether or no.

I thought you would understand that in sending the card for the box I sent an assurance that there was nothing amiss. I am pleased to find that you were all so interested with the play. My ladies say that the first part is too painful and wants relief. I have been going to see it a dozen times, but have never seen it yet, and never may. Madame Céleste is injured thereby (you see how unreasonable people are!) and says in the green-room, “M. Dickens est artiste! Mais il n’a jamais vu ‘Janet Pride!’”

It is like a breath of fresh spring air to know that that unfortunate baby of yours is out of her one close room, and has about half-a-pint of very doubtful air per day. I could only have become her Godfather on the condition that she had five hundred gallons of open air at any rate every day of her life; and you would soon see a rose or two in the face of my other little friend, Ella, if you opened all your doors and windows throughout the whole of all fine weather, from morning to night.

I am going off; I don’t know where or how far, to ponder about I don’t know what. Sometimes I am half in the mood to set off for France, sometimes I think I will go and walk about on the seashore for three or four months, sometimes I look towards the Pyrenees, sometimes Switzerland. I made a compact with a great Spanish authority last week, and vowed I would go to Spain. Two days afterwards Layard and I agreed to go to Constantinople when Parliament rises. To-morrow I shall probably discuss with somebody else the idea of going to Greenland or the North Pole. The end of all this, most likely, will be, that I shall shut myself up in some out-of-the-way place I have not yet thought of, and go desperately to work there.

Once upon a time I didn’t do such things you say. No. But I have done them through a good many years now, and they have become myself and my life.

Ever affectionately.

The same.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, June 30th, 1855.*

MY DEAR MRS. WINTER,

I am truly grieved to hear of your affliction in the loss of your darling baby. But if you be not, even already, so reconciled to the parting from that innocent child for a little while, as to bear it gently and with a softened sorrow, I know that that not unhappy state of mind must soon arise. The death of infants is a release from so much chance and change—from so many casualties and distresses—and is a thing so beautiful in its serenity and peace—

that it should not be a bitterness, even in a mother's heart. The simplest and most affecting passage in all the noble history of our Great Master, is His consideration for little children, and in reference to yours, as many millions of bereaved mothers poor and rich will do in reference to theirs until the end of time, you may take the comfort of the generous words, "And He took a child, and set it in the midst of them."

In a book, by one of the greatest English writers, called "A Journey from this World to the Next," a parent comes to the distant country beyond the grave, and finds the little girl he had lost so long ago, engaged in building a bower to receive him in, when his aged steps should bring him there at last. He is filled with joy to see her, so young—so bright—so full of promise—and is enraptured to think that she never was old, wan, tearful, withered. This is always one of the sources of consolation in the deaths of children. With no effort of the fancy, with nothing to undo, you will always be able to think of the pretty creature you have lost, *as a child* in heaven.

A poor little baby of mine lies in Highgate cemetery—and I laid her just as you think of laying yours, in the catacombs there, until I made a resting-place for all of us in the free air.

It is better that I should not come to see you. I feel quite sure of that, and will think of you instead.

God bless and comfort you! Mrs. Dickens and her sister send their kindest condolences to yourself and Mr. Winter. I add mine with all my heart.

Affectionately your friend.

Mr. Wilkie Collins.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, 8th July, 1855.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,

I don't know whether you may have heard from Webster, or whether the impression I derived from Mark's manner on Friday may be altogether correct. But it strongly occurred to me that Webster was going to decline the play, and that he really has worried himself into a fear of playing Aaron.

Now, when I got this into my head—which was during the rehearsal—I considered two things:—firstly, how we could best put about the success of the piece more widely and extensively even than it has yet reached; and secondly, how you could be best assisted against a bad production of it hereafter, or no production of it. I thought I saw immediately, that the point would be to have this representation noticed in the newspapers. So I waited until the rehearsal was over and we had profoundly astonished the family, and then asked Colonel Waugh what he thought of sending some cards for Tuesday to the papers. He highly approved, and I yesterday morning directed Mitchell to send to all the morning papers, and to some of the weekly ones—a dozen in the whole.

I dined at Lord John's yesterday (where Meyerbeer was, and said to me after dinner: "Ah, mon ami illustre! que c'est noble de vous entendre parler d'haute voix morale, à la table d'un ministre!" for I gave them a little bit of truth about Sunday that was like

bringing a Sebastopol battery among the polite company), I say, after this long parenthesis, I dined at Lord John's, and found great interest and talk about the play, and about what everybody who had been here had said of it. And I was confirmed in my decision that the thing for you was the invitation to the papers. Hence I write to tell you what I have done.

I dine at home at half-past five if you are disengaged, and I shall be at home all the evening.

Ever faithfully.

NOTE (by Mr. Wilkie Collins).—This characteristically kind endeavour to induce managers of theatres to produce "The Lighthouse," after the amateur performances of the play, was not attended with any immediate success. The work remained in the author's desk until Messrs. Robson and Emden undertook the management of the Olympic Theatre. They opened their first season with "The Lighthouse;" the part of Aaron Gurnock being performed by Mr. F. Robson.—W. C.

Miss Emily Jolly.

3, ALBION VILLAS, FOLKESTONE, KENT,
Tuesday, 17th July, 1855.

DEAR MADAM,[62]

Your manuscript, entitled a "Wife's Story," has come under my own perusal within these last three or four days. I recognise in it such great merit and unusual promise, and I think it displays so much power and knowledge of the human heart, that I feel a strong interest in you as its writer.

I have begged the gentleman, who is in my confidence as to the transaction of the business of "Household Words," to return the MS. to you by the post, which (as I hope) will convey this note to you. My object is this: I particularly entreat you to consider the catastrophe. You write to be read, of course. The close of the story is unnecessarily painful—will throw off numbers of persons who would otherwise read it, and who (as it stands) will be deterred by hearsay from so doing, and is so tremendous a piece of severity, that it will defeat your purpose. All my knowledge and experience, such as they are, lead me straight to the recommendation that you will do well to spare the life of the husband, and of one of the children. Let her suppose the former dead, from seeing him brought in wounded and insensible—lose nothing of the progress of her mental suffering afterwards when that doctor is in attendance upon her—but bring her round at last to the blessed surprise that her husband is still living, and that a repentance which can be worked out, *in the way of atonement for the misery she has occasioned to the man whom she so ill repaid for his love, and made so miserable*, lies before her. So will you soften the reader whom you now as it were harden, and so you will bring tears from many eyes, which can only have their spring in affectionately and gently touched hearts. I am perfectly certain that with this change, all the previous part of your tale will tell for twenty times as much as it can in its present condition. And it is because I believe you have a great fame before you if

you do justice to the remarkable ability you possess, that I venture to offer you this advice in what I suppose to be the beginning of your career.

I observe some parts of the story which would be strengthened, even in their psychological interest, by condensation here and there. If you will leave that to me, I will perform the task as conscientiously and carefully as if it were my own. But the suggestion I offer for your acceptance, no one but yourself can act upon.

Let me conclude this hasty note with the plain assurance that I have never been so much surprised and struck by any manuscript I have read, as I have been by yours.

Your faithful Servant.

The same.

3, ALBION VILLAS, FOLKESTONE, *July 21st, 1855.*

DEAR MADAM,

I did not enter, in detail, on the spirit of the alteration I propose in your story; because I thought it right that you should think out that for yourself if you applied yourself to the change. I can now assure you that you describe it exactly as I had conceived it; and if I had wanted anything to confirm me in my conviction of its being right, our both seeing it so precisely from the same point of view, would be ample assurance to me.

I would leave her new and altered life to be inferred. It does not appear to me either necessary or practicable (within such limits) to do more than that. Do not be uneasy if you find the alteration demanding time. I shall quite understand that, and my interest will keep. *When* you finish the story, send it to Mr. Wills. Besides being in daily communication with him, I am at the office once a week; and I will go over it in print, before the proof is sent to you.

Very faithfully yours.

1855.[63]

Captain Morgan.

DEAR FRIEND,[64]

I am always delighted to hear from you. Your genial earnestness does me good to think of. And every day of my life I feel more and more that to be thoroughly in earnest is everything, and to be anything short of it is nothing. You see what we have been doing to our valiant soldiers.[65] You see what miserable humbugs we are. And because we have got involved in meshes of aristocratic red tape to our unspeakable confusion, loss, and sorrow, the gentlemen who have been so kind as to ruin us are going to give us a day of humiliation and fasting the day after to-morrow. I am sick and sour to think of such things at this age of the world. . . . . I am in the first stage of a new book, which consists in going round and round the idea, as you see a bird in his cage go about and about his sugar before he touches it.

Always most cordially yours.

1856.

Mr. T. Ross. Mr. J. Kenny.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, 19th May, 1856.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have received a letter signed by you (which I assume to be written mainly on behalf of what are called Working-Men and their families) inviting me to attend a meeting in our Parish Vestry Hall this evening on the subject of the stoppage of the Sunday bands in the Parks.

I thoroughly agree with you that those bands have afforded an innocent and healthful enjoyment on the Sunday afternoon, to which the people have a right. But I think it essential that the working people should, of themselves and by themselves, assert that right. They have been informed, on the high authority of their first Minister (lately rather in want of House of Commons votes I am told) that they are almost indifferent to it. The correction of that mistake, if official omniscience can be mistaken, lies with themselves. In case it should be considered by the meeting, which I prefer for this reason not to attend, expedient to unite with other Metropolitan parishes in forming a fund for the payment of such expenses as may be incurred in peaceably and numerously representing to the governing powers that the harmless recreation they have taken away is very much wanted, I beg you to put down my name as a subscriber of ten pounds.

And I am, your faithful Servant.

Mr. Washington Irving.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *London, July 5th, 1856.*

MY DEAR IRVING,

If you knew how often I write to you individually and personally in my books, you would be no more surprised in seeing this note than you were in seeing me do my duty by that flowery julep (in what I dreamily apprehend to have been a former state of existence) at Baltimore.

Will you let me present to you a cousin of mine, Mr. B——, who is associated with a merchant's house in New York? Of course he wants to see you, and know you. How can *I* wonder at that? How can anybody?

I had a long talk with Leslie at the last Academy dinner (having previously been with him in Paris), and he told me that you were flourishing. I suppose you know that he wears a moustache—so do I for the matter of that, and a beard too—and that he looks like a portrait of Don Quixote.

Holland House has four-and-twenty youthful pages in it now—twelve for my lord, and

twelve for my lady; and no clergyman coils his leg up under his chair all dinner-time, and begins to uncurve it when the hostess goes. No wheeled chair runs smoothly in with that beaming face in it; and ——‘s little cotton pocket-handkerchief helped to make (I believe) this very sheet of paper. A half-sad, half-ludicrous story of Rogers is all I will sully it with. You know, I daresay, that for a year or so before his death he wandered, and lost himself like one of the Children in the Wood, grown up there and grown down again. He had Mrs. Procter and Mrs. Carlyle to breakfast with him one morning—only those two. Both excessively talkative, very quick and clever, and bent on entertaining him. When Mrs. Carlyle had flashed and shone before him for about three-quarters of an hour on one subject, he turned his poor old eyes on Mrs. Procter, and pointing to the brilliant discourser with his poor old finger, said (indignantly), “Who is *she?*” Upon this, Mrs. Procter, cutting in, delivered (it is her own story) a neat oration on the life and writings of Carlyle, and enlightened him in her happiest and airiest manner; all of which he heard, staring in the dreariest silence, and then said (indignantly, as before), “And who are *you?*”

Ever, my dear Irving,
Most affectionately and truly yours.

Mr. Frank Stone, A.R.A

VILLE DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Wednesday, 9th July, 1856.

MY DEAR STONE,

I have got a capital part for you in the farce,[66] not a difficult one to learn, as you never say anything but “Yes” and “No.” You are called in the *dramatis personæ* an able-bodied British seaman, and you are never seen by mortal eye to do anything (except inopportunely producing a mop) but stand about the deck of the boat in everybody’s way, with your hair immensely touzled, one brace on, your hands in your pockets, and the bottoms of your trousers tucked up. Yet you are inextricably connected with the plot, and are the man whom everybody is inquiring after. I think it is a very whimsical idea and extremely droll. It made me laugh heartily when I jotted it all down yesterday.

Loves from all my house to all yours.

Ever affectionately.

1857.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, 28th January, 1857.*

MY DEAR BULWER,

I thought Wills had told you as to the Guild (for I begged him to) that he can do absolutely nothing until our charter is seven years old. It is the stringent and express prohibition of the Act of Parliament—for which things you members, thank God, are responsible and not I. When I observed this clause (which was just as we were going to grant a pension, if we could agree on a good subject), I caused our Counsel's opinion to be taken on it, and there is not a doubt about it. I immediately recommended that there should be no expenses—that the interest on the capital should be all invested as it accrued—that the chambers should be given up and the clerk discharged—and that the Guild should have the use of the "Household Words" office rent free, and the services of Wills on the same terms. All of which was done.

A letter is now copying, to be sent round to all the members, explaining, with the New Year, the whole state of the thing. You will receive this. It appears to me that it looks wholesome enough. But if a strong idiot comes and binds your hands, or mine, or both, for seven years, what is to be done against him?

As to greater matters than this, however—as to all matters on this teeming Earth—it appears to me that the House of Commons and Parliament altogether, is just the dreariest failure and nuisance that has bothered this much-bothered world.

Ever yours.

Miss Emily Jolly.

GRAVESEND, KENT, *10th April, 1857.*

DEAR MADAM,

As I am away from London for a few days, your letter has been forwarded to me.

I can honestly encourage and assure you that I believe the depression and want of confidence under which you describe yourself as labouring to have no sufficient foundation.

First as to "Mr. Arle." I have constantly heard it spoken of with great approval, and I think it a book of considerable merit. If I were to tell you that I see no evidence of inexperience in it, that would not be true. I think a little more stir and action to be desired also; but I am surprised by your being despondent about it, for I assure you that I had supposed it (always remembering that it is your first novel) to have met with a very good reception.

I can bring to my memory—here, with no means of reference at hand—only two papers of yours that have been unsuccessful at “Household Words.” I think the first was called “The Brook.” It appeared to me to break down upon a confusion that pervaded it, between a Coroner’s Inquest and a Trial. I have a general recollection of the mingling of the two, as to facts and forms that should have been kept apart, in some inextricable manner that was beyond my powers of disentanglement. The second was about a wife’s writing a Novel and keeping the secret from her husband until it was done. I did not think the incident of sufficient force to justify the length of the narrative. But there is nothing fatal in either of these mischances.

Mr. Wills told me when I spoke to him of the latter paper that you had it in contemplation to offer a longer story to “Household Words.” If you should do so, I assure you I shall be happy to read it myself, and that I shall have a sincere desire to accept it, if possible.

I can give you no better counsel than to look into the life about you, and to strive for what is noblest and true. As to further encouragement, I do not, I can most strongly add, believe that you have any reason to be downhearted.

Very faithfully yours.

The same.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Morning, 30th May, 1857.*

DEAR MADAM,

I read your story, with all possible attention, last night. I cannot tell you with what reluctance I write to you respecting it, for my opinion of it is *not* favourable, although I perceive your heart in it, and great strength.

Pray understand that I claim no infallibility. I merely express my own honest opinion, formed against my earnest desire. I do not lay it down as law for others, though, of course, I believe that many others would come to the same conclusion. It appears to me that the story is one that cannot possibly be told within the compass to which you have limited yourself. The three principal people are, every one of them, in the wrong with the reader, and you cannot put any of them right, without making the story extend over a longer space of time, and without anatomising the souls of the actors more slowly and carefully. Nothing would justify the departure of Alice, but her having some strong reason to believe that in taking that step, *she saved her lover*. In your intentions as to that lover’s transfer of his affections to Eleanor, I descry a striking truth; but I think it confusedly wrought out, and all but certain to fail in expressing itself. Eleanor, I regard as forced and overstrained. The natural result is, that she carries a train of anti-climax after her. I particularly notice this at the point when she thinks she is going to be drowned.

The whole idea of the story is sufficiently difficult to require the most exact truth and the greatest knowledge and skill in the colouring throughout. In this respect I have no doubt of its being extremely defective. The people do not talk as such people would; and the little subtle touches of description which, by making the country house and the general

scene real, would give an air of reality to the people (much to be desired) are altogether wanting. The more you set yourself to the illustration of your heroine's passionate nature, the more indispensable this attendant atmosphere of truth becomes. It would, in a manner, oblige the reader to believe in her. Whereas, for ever exploding like a great firework without any background, she glares and wheels and hisses, and goes out, and has lighted nothing.

Lastly, I fear she is too convulsive from beginning to end. Pray reconsider, from this point of view, her brow, and her eyes, and her drawing herself up to her full height, and her being a perfumed presence, and her floating into rooms, also her asking people how they dare, and the like, on small provocation. When she hears her music being played, I think she is particularly objectionable.

I have a strong belief that if you keep this story by you three or four years, you will form an opinion of it not greatly differing from mine. There is so much good in it, so much reflection, so much passion and earnestness, that, if my judgment be right, I feel sure you will come over to it. On the other hand, I do not think that its publication, as it stands, would do you service, or be agreeable to you hereafter.

I have no means of knowing whether you are patient in the pursuit of this art; but I am inclined to think that you are not, and that you do not discipline yourself enough. When one is impelled to write this or that, one has still to consider: "How much of this will tell for what I mean? How much of it is my own wild emotion and superfluous energy—how much remains that is truly belonging to this ideal character and these ideal circumstances?" It is in the laborious struggle to make this distinction, and in the determination to try for it, that the road to the correction of faults lies. [Perhaps I may remark, in support of the sincerity with which I write this, that I am an impatient and impulsive person myself, but that it has been for many years the constant effort of my life to practise at my desk what I preach to you.]

I should not have written so much, or so plainly, but for your last letter to me. It seems to demand that I should be strictly true with you, and I am so in this letter, without any reservation either way.

Very faithfully yours.

1858.

Mr. Albert Smith.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,
Wednesday Night, 1st December, 1858.

MY DEAR ALBERT,

I cannot tell you how grieved I am for poor dear Arthur (even you can hardly love him better than I do), or with what anxiety I shall wait for further news of him.

Pray let me know how he is to-morrow. Tell them at home that Olliffe is the kindest and gentlest of men—a man of rare experience and opportunity—perfect master of his profession, and to be confidently and implicitly relied upon. There is no man alive, in whose hands I would more thankfully trust myself.

I will write a cheery word to the dear fellow in the morning.

Ever faithfully.

Mr. Arthur Smith.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,
Thursday, 2nd December, 1858.

MY DEAR ARTHUR,

I cannot tell you how surprised and grieved I was last night to hear from Albert of your severe illness. It is not my present intention to give you the trouble of reading anything like a letter, but I MUST send you my loving word; and tell you how we all think of you.

And here am I going off to-morrow to that meeting at Manchester without *you!* the wildest and most impossible of moves as it seems to me. And to think of my coming back by Coventry, on Saturday, to receive the chronometer—also without you!

If you don’t get perfectly well soon, my dear old fellow, I shall come over to Paris to look after you, and to tell Olliffe (give him my love, and the same for Lady Olliffe) what a Blessing he is.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Arthur and her sister,

Ever heartily and affectionately yours.

1859.

Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,
Wednesday, 12th January, 1859.

MY DEAR FRITH,

At eleven on Monday morning next, the gifted individual whom you will transmit to posterity,[67] will be at Watkins'. Table also shall be there, and chair. Velvet coat likewise if the tailor should have sent it home. But the garment is more to be doubted than the man whose signature here follows.

Faithfully yours always.

Mrs. Cowden Clark.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
21st August, 1859.

MY DEAR MRS. COWDEN CLARKE,

I cannot tell you how much pleasure I have derived from the receipt of your earnest letter. Do not suppose it possible that such praise can be "less than nothing" to your old manager. It is more than all else.

Here in my little country house on the summit of the hill where Falstaff did the robbery, your words have come to me in the most appropriate and delightful manner. When the story can be read all at once, and my meaning can be better seen, I will send it to you (sending it to Dean Street, if you tell me of no better way), and it will be a hearty gratification to think that you and your good husband are reading it together. For you must both take notice, please, that I have a reminder of you always before me. On my desk, here, stand two green leaves[68] which I every morning station in their ever-green place at my elbow. The leaves on the oak-trees outside the window are less constant than these, for they are with me through the four seasons.

Lord! to think of the bygone day when you were stricken mute (was it not at Glasgow?) and, being mounted on a tall ladder at a practicable window, stared at Forster, and with a noble constancy refused to utter word! Like the Monk among the pictures with Wilkie, I begin to think *that* the real world, and this the sham that goes out with the lights.

God bless you both.

Ever faithfully yours.

1860.

Mr. Henry F. Chorley.

[69]TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, W.C.,
Friday Night, Feb. 3, 1860.

MY DEAR CHORLEY,

I can most honestly assure you that I think “Roccabella” a very remarkable book indeed. Apart—quite apart—from my interest in you, I am certain that if I had taken it up under any ordinarily favourable circumstances as a book of which I knew nothing whatever, I should not—could not—have relinquished it until I had read it through. I had turned but a few pages, and come to the shadow on the bright sofa at the foot of the bed, when I knew myself to be in the hands of an artist. That rare and delightful recognition I never lost for a moment until I closed the second volume at the end. I am “a good audience” when I have reason to be, and my girls would testify to you, if there were need, that I cried over it heartily. Your story seems to me remarkably ingenious. I had not the least idea of the purport of the sealed paper until you chose to enlighten me; and then I felt it to be quite natural, quite easy, thoroughly in keeping with the character and presentation of the Liverpool man. The position of the Bell family in the story has a special air of nature and truth; is quite new to me, and is so dexterously and delicately done that I find the deaf daughter no less real and distinct than the clergyman’s wife. The turn of the story round that damnable Princess I pursued with a pleasure with which I could pursue nothing but a true interest; and I declare to you that if I were put upon finding anything better than the scene of Roccabella’s death, I should stare round my bookshelves very much at a loss for a long time. Similarly, your characters have really surprised me. From the lawyer to the Princess, I swear to them as true; and in your fathoming of Rosamond altogether, there is a profound wise knowledge that I admire and respect with a heartiness not easily overstated in words.

I am not quite with you as to the Italians. Your knowledge of the Italian character seems to me surprisingly subtle and penetrating; but I think we owe it to those most unhappy men and their political wretchedness to ask ourselves mercifully, whether their faults are not essentially the faults of a people long oppressed and priest-ridden;—whether their tendency to slink and conspire is not a tendency that spies in every dress, from the triple crown to a lousy head, have engendered in their ancestors through generations? Again, like you, I shudder at the distresses that come of these unavailing risings; my blood runs hotter, as yours does, at the thought of the leaders safe, and the instruments perishing by hundreds; yet what is to be done? Their wrongs are so great that they *will* rise from time to time somehow. It would be to doubt the eternal providence of God to doubt that they will rise successfully at last. Unavailing struggles against a dominant tyranny precede all successful turning against it. And is it not a little hard in us Englishman, whose forefathers have risen so often and striven against so much, to look on, in our own security, through microscopes, and detect the motes in the brains of men driven mad?

Think, if you and I were Italians, and had grown from boyhood to our present time, menaced in every day through all these years by that infernal confessional, dungeons, and soldiers, could we be better than these men? Should we be so good? I should not, I am afraid, if I know myself. Such things would make of me a moody, bloodthirsty, implacable man, who would do anything for revenge; and if I compromised the truth—put it at the worst, habitually—where should I ever have had it before me? In the old Jesuits' college at Genoa, on the Chiaja at Naples, in the churches of Rome, at the University of Padua, on the Piazzo San Marco at Venice, where? And the government is in all these places, and in all Italian places. I have seen something of these men. I have known Mazzini and Gallenga; Manin was tutor to my daughters in Paris; I have had long talks about scores of them with poor Ary Scheffer, who was their best friend. I have gone back to Italy after ten years, and found the best men I had known there exiled or in jail. I believe they have the faults you ascribe to them (nationally, not individually), but I could not find it in my heart, remembering their miseries, to exhibit those faults without referring them back to their causes. You will forgive my writing this, because I write it exactly as I write my cordial little tribute to the high merits of your book. If it were not a living reality to me, I should care nothing about this point of disagreement; but you are far too earnest a man, and far too able a man, to be left unremonstrated with by an admiring reader. You cannot write so well without influencing many people. If you could tell me that your book had but twenty readers, I would reply, that so good a book will influence more people's opinions, through those twenty, than a worthless book would through twenty thousand; and I express this with the perfect confidence of one in whose mind the book has taken, for good and all, a separate and distinct place.

Accept my thanks for the pleasure you have given me. The poor acknowledgment of testifying to that pleasure wherever I go will be my pleasure in return. And so, my dear Chorley, good night, and God bless you.

Ever faithfully yours.

Sir John Bowring.

GAD'S HILL, *Wednesday, 31st October, 1860.*

MY DEAR SIR JOHN,[70]

First let me congratulate you on your marriage and wish you all happiness and prosperity.

Secondly, I must tell you that I was greatly vexed with the Chatham people for not giving me early notice of your lecture. In that case I should (of course) have presided, as President of the Institution, and I should have asked you to honour my Falstaff house here. But when they made your kind intention known to me, I had made some important business engagements at the "All the Year Round" office for that evening, which I could not possibly forego. I charged them to tell you so, and was going to write to you when I found your kind letter.

Thanks for your paper, which I have sent to the Printer's with much pleasure.

We heard of your accident here, and of your “making nothing of it.” I said that you didn’t make much of disasters, and that you took poison (from natives) as quite a matter of course in the way of business.

Faithfully yours.

Mr. A. H. Layard.

GAD’S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, 4th December, 1860.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

I know you will readily believe that I would come if I could, and that I am heartily sorry I cannot.

A new story of my writing, nine months long, is just begun in “All the Year Round.” A certain allotment of my time when I have that story-demand upon me, has, all through my author life, been an essential condition of my health and success. I have just returned here to work so many hours every day for so many days. It is really impossible for me to break my bond.

There is not a man in England who is more earnestly your friend and admirer than I am. The conviction that you know it, helps me out through this note. You are a man of so much mark to me, that I even regret your going into the House of Commons—for which assembly I have but a scant respect. But I would not mention it to the Southwark electors if I could come to-morrow; though I should venture to tell them (and even that your friends would consider very impolitic) that I think them very much honoured by having such a candidate for their suffrages.

My daughter and sister-in-law want to know what you have done with your “pledge” to come down here again. If they had votes for Southwark they would threaten to oppose you —but would never do it. I was solemnly sworn at breakfast to let you know that we should be delighted to see you. Bear witness that I kept my oath.

Ever, my dear Layard,
Faithfully yours.

Captain Morgan.

DEAR FRIEND,

I am heartily obliged to you for your seasonable and welcome remembrance. It came to the office (while I was there) in the pleasantest manner, brought by two seafaring men as if they had swum across with it. I have already told —— what I am very well assured of concerning you, but you are such a noble fellow that I must not pursue that subject. But you will at least take my cordial and affectionate thanks. . . . . We have a touch of most beautiful weather here now, and this country is most beautiful too. I wish I could carry you off to a favourite spot of mine between this and Maidstone, where I often smoke your cigars and think of you. We often take our lunch on a hillside there in the summer, and then I lie down on the grass—a splendid example of laziness—and say, “Now for my

Morgan!”

My daughter and her aunt declare that they know the true scent of the true article (which I don’t in the least believe), and sometimes they exclaim, “That’s not a Morgan,” and the worst of it is they were once right by accident. . . . . I hope you will have seen the Christmas number of “All the Year Round.”[71] Here and there, in the description of the sea-going hero, I have given a touch or two of remembrance of Somebody you know; very heartily desiring that thousands of people may have some faint reflection of the pleasure I have for many years derived from the contemplation of a most amiable nature and most remarkable man.

With kindest regards, believe me, dear Morgan,
Ever affectionately yours.

1861.

Mrs. Malleson.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Monday, 14th January, 1861.

MY DEAR MRS. MALLESON,

I am truly sorry that I cannot have the pleasure of dining with you on Thursday. Although I consider myself quite well, and although my doctor almost admits the fact when I indignantly tax him with it, I am not discharged. His treatment renders him very fearful that I should take cold in going to and fro; and he makes excuses, therefore (as I darkly suspect), for keeping me here until said treatment is done with. This morning he tells me he must see me "once more, on Wednesday." As he has said the like for a whole week, my confidence is not blooming enough at this present writing to justify me in leaving a possibility of Banquo's place at your table. Hence this note. It is screwed out of me.

With kind regards to Mr. Malleson, believe me,

Ever faithfully yours.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Wednesday, 23rd January, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I am delighted to receive your letter, and to look forward with confidence to having such a successor in August. I can honestly assure you that I never have been so pleased at heart in all my literary life, as I am in the proud thought of standing side by side with you before this great audience.

In regard of the story,[72] I have perfect faith in such a master-hand as yours; and I know that what such an artist feels to be terrible and original, is unquestionably so. You whet my interest by what you write of it to the utmost extent.

Believe me ever affectionately yours.

The same.

3, HANOVER TERRACE, REGENT'S PARK,
Sunday, 28th April, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

My story will finish in the first week in August. Yours ought to begin in the last week of July, or the last week but one. Wilkie Collins will be at work to follow you. The publication has made a very great success with “Great Expectations,” and could not present a finer time for you.

The question of length may be easily adjusted.

Of the misgiving you entertain I cannot of course judge until you give me leave to rush to the perusal. I swear that I never thought I had half so much self-denial as I have shown in this case! I think I shall come out at Exeter Hall as a choice vessel on the strength of it. In the meanwhile I have quickened the printer and told him to get on fast.

You cannot think how happy you make me by what you write of “Great Expectations.” There is nothing like the pride of making such an effect on such a writer as you.

Ever faithfully.

The same.

3, HANOVER TERRACE, REGENT’S PARK,
Wednesday, 8th May, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I am anxious to let you know that Mr. Frederic Lehmann, who is coming down to Knebworth to see you (with his sister Mrs. Benzon) is a particular friend of mine, for whom I have a very high and warm regard. Although he will sufficiently enlist your sympathy on his own behalf, I am sure that you will not be the less interested in him because I am.

Ever faithfully yours.

The same.

3, HANOVER TERRACE, *Sunday, 12th May, 1861.*

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I received your revised proofs only yesterday, and I sat down to read them last night. And before I say anything further I may tell you that I COULD NOT lay them aside, but was obliged to go on with them in my bedroom until I got into a very ghostly state indeed. This morning I have taken them again and have gone through them with the utmost attention.

Of the beauty and power of the writing I say not a word, or of its originality and boldness, or of its quite extraordinary constructive skill. I confine myself solely to your misgiving, and to the question whether there is any sufficient foundation for it.

On the last head I say, without the faintest hesitation, most decidedly there is NOT sufficient foundation for it. I do not share it in the least. I believe that the readers who have here given their minds (or perhaps had any to give) to those strange psychological mysteries in ourselves, of which we are all more or less conscious, will accept your

wonders as curious weapons in the armoury of fiction, and will submit themselves to the Art with which said weapons are used. Even to that class of intelligence the marvellous addresses itself from a very strong position; and that class of intelligence is not accustomed to find the marvellous in such very powerful hands as yours. On more imaginative readers the tale will fall (or I am greatly mistaken) like a spell. By readers who combine some imagination, some scepticism, and some knowledge and learning, I hope it will be regarded as full of strange fancy and curious study, startling reflections of their own thoughts and speculations at odd times, and wonder which a master has a right to evoke. In the last point lies, to my thinking, the whole case. If you were the Magician's servant instead of the Magician, these potent spirits would get the better of you; but you *are* the Magician, and they don't, and you make them serve your purpose.

Occasionally in the dialogue I see an expression here and there which might—always solely with a reference to your misgiving—be better away; and I think that the vision, to use the word for want of a better—in the museum, should be made a little less abstruse. I should not say that, if the sale of the journal was below the sale of *The Times* newspaper; but as it is probably several thousands higher, I do. I would also suggest that after the title we put the two words—A ROMANCE. It is an absurdly easy device for getting over your misgiving with the blockheads, but I think it would be an effective one. I don't, on looking at it, like the title. Here are a few that have occurred to me.

"The Steel Casket."

"The Lost Manuscript."

"Derval Court."

"Perpetual Youth."

"Maggie."

"Dr. Fenwick."

"Life and Death."

The four last I think the best. There is an objection to "Dr. Fenwick" because there has been "Dr. Antonio," and there is a book of Dumas' which repeats the objection. I don't think "Fenwick" startling enough. It appears to me that a more startling title would take the (John) Bull by the horns, and would be a serviceable concession to your misgiving, as suggesting a story off the stones of the gas-lighted Brentford Road.

The title is the first thing to be settled, and cannot be settled too soon.

For the purposes of the weekly publication the divisions of the story will often have to be greatly changed, though afterwards, in the complete book, you can, of course, divide it into chapters, free from that reference. For example: I would end the first chapter on the third slip at "and through the ghostly streets, under the ghostly moon, went back to my solitary room." The rest of what is now your first chapter might be made Chapter II., and would end the first weekly part.

I think I have become, by dint of necessity and practice, rather cunning in this regard; and perhaps you would not mind my looking closely to such points from week to week. It so happens that if you had written the opening of this story expressly for the occasion its

striking incidents could not possibly have followed one another better. One other merely mechanical change I suggest now. I would not have an initial letter for the town, but would state in the beginning that I gave the town a fictitious name. I suppose a blank or a dash rather fends a good many people off—because it always has that effect upon me.

Be sure that I am perfectly frank and open in all I have said in this note, and that I have not a grain of reservation in my mind. I think the story a very fine one, one that no other man could write, and that there is no strength in your misgiving for the two reasons: firstly, that the work is professedly a work of Fancy and Fiction, in which the reader is not required against his will to take everything for Fact; secondly, that it is written by the man who can write it. The Magician's servant does not know what to do with the ghost, and has, consequently, no business with him. The Magician does know what to do with him, and has all the business with him that he can transact.

I am quite at ease on the points that you have expressed yourself as not at ease upon. Quite. I cannot too often say that if they were carried on weak shoulders they would break the bearer down. But in your mastering of them lies the mastery over the reader.

This will reach you at Knebworth, I hope, to-morrow afternoon. Pray give your doubts to the winds of that high spot, and believe that if I had them I would swarm up the flag-staff quite as nimbly as Margrave and nail the Fenwick colours to the top.

Ever affectionately yours.

The same.

3, HANOVER TERRACE, REGENT'S PARK,
Monday, Twentieth May, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I did not read from Australia till the end, because I was obliged to be hard at work that day, and thought it best that the MS. should come back to you rather than that I should detain it. Of course, I *can* read it, whenever it suits you. As to Isabel's dying and Fenwick's growing old, I would say that, beyond question, whatever the meaning of the story tends to, is the proper end.

All the alterations you mention in your last, are excellent.

As to title, "Margrave, a Tale of Mystery," would be sufficiently striking. I prefer "Wonder" to "Mystery," because I think it suggests something higher and more apart from ordinary complications of plot, or the like, which "Mystery" might seem to mean. Will you kindly remark that the title PRESSES, and that it will be a great relief to have it as soon as possible. The last two months of my story are our best time for announcement and preparation. Of course, it is most desirable that your story should have the full benefit of them.

Ever faithfully.

Lady Olliffe.

LORD WARDEN HOTEL, DOVER,
Sunday, Twenty-sixth May, 1861.

MY DEAR LADY OLLIFFE,

I have run away to this sea-beach to get rid of my neuralgic face.

Touching the kind invitations received from you this morning, I feel that the only course I can take—without being a Humbug—is to decline them. After the middle of June I shall be mostly at Gad's Hill—I know that I cannot do better than keep out of the way of hot rooms and late dinners, and what would you think of me, or call me, if I were to accept and not come!

No, no, no. Be still my soul. Be virtuous, eminent author. Do *not* accept, my Dickens. She is to come to Gad's Hill with her spouse. Await her *there*, my child. (Thus the voice of wisdom.)

My dear Lady Olliffe,
Ever affectionately yours.

Mrs. Milner Gibson.

GAD'S HILL, *Monday, Eighth July, 1861.*

MY DEAR MRS. GIBSON,

I want very affectionately and earnestly to congratulate you on your eldest daughter's approaching marriage. Up to the moment when Mary told me of it, I had foolishly thought of her always as the pretty little girl with the frank loving face whom I saw last on the sands at Broadstairs. I rubbed my eyes and woke at the words "going to be married," and found I had been walking in my sleep some years.

I want to thank you also for thinking of me on the occasion, but I feel that I am better away from it. I should really have a misgiving that I was a sort of shadow on a young marriage, and you will understand me when I say so, and no more.

But I shall be with you in the best part of myself, in the warmth of sympathy and friendship—and I send my love to the dear girl, and devoutly hope and believe that she will be happy. The face that I remember with perfect accuracy, and could draw here, if I could draw at all, was made to be happy and to make a husband so.

I wonder whether you ever travel by railroad in these times! I wish Mary could tempt you to come by any road to this little place.

With kind regard to Milner Gibson, believe me ever,
Affectionately and faithfully yours.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, Seventeenth September, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I am delighted with your letter of yesterday—delighted with the addition to the length of the story—delighted with your account of it, and your interest in it—and even more than delighted by what you say of our working in company.

Not one dissentient voice has reached me respecting it. Through the dullest time of the year we held our circulation most gallantly. And it could not have taken a better hold. I saw Forster on Friday (newly returned from thousands of provincial lunatics), and he really was more impressed than I can tell you by what he had seen of it. Just what you say you think it will turn out to be, *he* was saying, almost in the same words.

I am burning to get at the whole story;—and you inflame me in the maddest manner by your references to what I don't know. The exquisite art with which you have changed it, and have overcome the difficulties of the mode of publication, has fairly staggered me. I know pretty well what the difficulties are; and there is no other man who could have done it, I ween.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. H. G. Adams.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, Sixth October, 1861.

MY DEAR MR. ADAMS,

My readings are a sad subject to me just now, for I am going away on the 28th to read fifty times, and I have lost Mr. Arthur Smith—a friend whom I can never replace—who always went with me, and transacted, as no other man ever can, all the business connected with them, and without whom, I fear, they will be dreary and weary to me. But this is not to the purpose of your letter.

I desire to be useful to the Institution of the place with which my childhood is inseparably associated, and I will serve it this next Christmas if I can. Will you tell me when I could do you most good by reading for you?

Faithfully yours.

Mr. B. W. Procter.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Tuesday, Twelfth November, 1861.

MY DEAR PROCTER,

I grieve to reply to your note, that I am obliged to read at Newcastle on the 21st. Poor Arthur Smith had pledged me to do so before I knew that my annual engagement with you was being encroached on. I am heartily sorry for this, and shall miss my usual place at your table, quite as much (to say the least) as my place can possibly miss me. You may be sure that I shall drink to my dear old friend in a bumper that day, with love and best wishes. Don't leave me out next year for having been carried away north this time.

Ever yours affectionately.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

QUEEN'S HEAD HOTEL, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,
Wednesday Night, Twentieth November, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I have read here, this evening, very attentively, Nos. 19 and 20. I have not the least doubt of the introduced matter; whether considered for its policy, its beauty, or its wise bearing on the story, it is decidedly a great improvement. It is at once very suggestive and very new to have these various points of view presented to the reader's mind.

That the audience is good enough for anything that is well presented to it, I am quite sure.

When you can avoid *notes*, however, and get their substance into the text, it is highly desirable in the case of so large an audience, simply because, as so large an audience necessarily reads the story in small portions, it is of the greater importance that they should retain as much of its argument as possible. Whereas the difficulty of getting numbers of people to read notes (which they invariably regard as interruptions of the text, not as strengtheners or elucidators of it) is wonderful.

Ever affectionately.

The same.

"ALL THE YEAR ROUND" OFFICE,
Eighteenth December, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I have not had a moment in which to write to you. Even now I write with the greatest press upon me, meaning to write in detail in a day or two.

But I have *read*, at all events, though not written. And I say, Most masterly and most admirable! It is impossible to lay the sheets down without finishing them. I showed them to Georgina and Mary, and they read and read and never stirred until they had read all. There cannot be a doubt of the beauty, power, and artistic excellence of the whole.

I counsel you most strongly NOT to append the proposed dialogue between Fenwick and Faber, and NOT to enter upon any explanation beyond the title-page and the motto, unless it be in some very brief preface. Decidedly I would not help the reader, if it were only for the reason that that anticipates his being in need of help, and his feeling objections and difficulties that require solution. Let the book explain itself. It speaks *for* itself with a noble eloquence.

Ever affectionately.

1862.

The same.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday, Twenty-fourth January, 1862.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I have considered your questions, and here follow my replies.

1. I think you undoubtedly *have* the right to forbid the turning of your play into an opera.

2. I do *not* think the production of such an opera in the slightest degree likely to injure the play or to render it a less valuable property than it is now. If it could have any effect on so standard and popular a work as "The Lady of Lyons," the effect would, in my judgment, be beneficial. But I believe the play to be high above any such influence.

3. Assuming you do consent to the adaptation, in a desire to oblige Oxenford, I would not recommend your asking any pecuniary compensation. This for two reasons: firstly, because the compensation could only be small at the best; secondly, because your taking it would associate you (unreasonably, but not the less assuredly) with the opera.

The only objection I descry is purely one of feeling. Pauline trotting about in front of the float, invoking the orchestra with a limp pocket-handkerchief, is a notion that makes goose-flesh of my back. Also a yelping tenor going away to the wars in a scene a half-an-hour long is painful to contemplate. Damas, too, as a bass, with a grizzled bald head, blatently bellowing about

Years long ago,
  When the sound of the drum
First made his blood glow
  With a rum ti tum tum—

rather sticks in my throat; but there really seems to me to be no other objection, if you can get over this.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. Baylis.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Saturday, First February, 1862.

MY DEAR MR. BAYLIS,

I have just come home. Finding your note, I write to you at once, or you might do me the wrong of supposing me unmindful of it and you.

I agree with you about Smith himself, and I don't think it necessary to pursue the painful subject. Such things are at an end, I think, for the time being;—fell to the ground with the poor man at Cremorne. If they should be resumed, then they must be attacked; but I hope the fashion (far too much encouraged in its Blondin-beginning by those who should know much better) is over.

It always appears to me that the common people have an excuse in their patronage of such exhibitions which people above them in condition have not. Their lives are full of physical difficulties, and they like to see such difficulties overcome. They go to see them overcome. If I am in danger of falling off a scaffold or a ladder any day, the man who claims that he can't fall from anything is a very wonderful and agreeable person to me.

Faithfully yours always.

Mr. Henry F. Chorley.

16, HYDE PARK GATE, SOUTH KENSINGTON GORE, W.,
Saturday, 1st March, 1862.

MY DEAR CHORLEY,

I was at your lecture[73] this afternoon, and I hope I may venture to tell you that I was extremely pleased and interested. Both the matter of the materials and the manner of their arrangement were quite admirable, and a modesty and complete absence of any kind of affectation pervaded the whole discourse, which was quite an example to the many whom it concerns. If you could be a very little louder, and would never let a sentence go for the thousandth part of an instant until the last word is out, you would find the audience more responsive.

A spoken sentence will never run alone in all its life, and is never to be trusted to itself in its most insignificant member. See it *well out*—with the voice—and the part of the audience is made surprisingly easier. In that excellent description of the Spanish mendicant and his guitar, as well as the very happy touches about the dance and the castanets, the people were really desirous to express very hearty appreciation; but by giving them rather too much to do in watching and listening for latter words, you stopped them. I take the liberty of making the remark, as one who has fought with beasts (oratorically) in divers arenas. For the rest nothing could be better. Knowledge, ingenuity, neatness, condensation, good sense, and good taste in delightful combination.

Affectionately always.

Mrs. Austin.

PARIS, RUE DU FAUBOURG ST. HONORÉ, 27,
Friday, Seventh November, 1862.

MY DEAR LETITIA,

I should have written to you from here sooner, but for having been constantly occupied.

Your improved account of yourself is very cheering and hopeful. Through determined occupation and action, lies the way. Be sure of it.

I came over to France before Georgina and Mary, and went to Boulogne to meet them coming in by the steamer on the great Sunday—the day of the storm. I stood (holding on with both hands) on the pier at Boulogne, five hours. The Sub-Marine Telegraph had telegraphed their boat as having come out of Folkestone—though the companion boat from Boulogne didn't try it—and at nine o'clock at night, she being due at six, there were no signs of her. My principal dread was, that she would try to get into Boulogne; which she could not possibly have done without carrying away everything on deck. The tide at nine o'clock being too low for any such desperate attempt, I thought it likely that they had run for the Downs and would knock about there all night. So I went to the Inn to dry my pea-jacket and get some dinner anxiously enough, when, at about ten, came a telegram from them at Calais to say they had run in there. To Calais I went, post, next morning, expecting to find them half-dead (of course, they had arrived half-drowned), but I found them elaborately got up to come on to Paris by the next Train, and the most wonderful thing of all was, that they hardly seem to have been frightened! Of course, they had discovered at the end of the voyage, that a young bride and her husband, the only other passengers on deck, and with whom they had been talking all the time, were an officer from Chatham whom they knew very well (when dry), just married and going to India! So they all set up house-keeping together at Dessin's at Calais (where I am well known), and looked as if they had been passing a mild summer there.

We have a pretty apartment here, but house-rent is awful to mention. Mrs. Bouncer (muzzled by the Parisian police) is also here, and is a wonderful spectacle to behold in the streets, restrained like a raging Lion.

I learn from an embassy here, that the Emperor has just made an earnest proposal to our Government to unite with France (and Russia, if Russia will) in an appeal to America to stop the brutal war. Our Government's answer is not yet received, but I think I clearly perceive that the proposal will be declined, on the ground "that the time has not yet come."

Ever affectionately.

1863.

Mr. Henry F. Chorley.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday, December 18th, 1863.

MY DEAR CHORLEY,

This is a "Social Science" note, touching prospective engagements.

If you are obliged, as you were last year, to go away between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, then we rely upon your coming back to see the old year out. Furthermore, I rely upon you for this: Lady Molesworth says she will come down for a day or two, and I have told her that I shall ask you to be her escort, and to arrange a time. Will you take counsel with her, and arrange accordingly? After our family visitors are gone, Mary is going a-hunting in Hampshire; but if you and Lady Molesworth could make out from Saturday, the 9th of January, as your day of coming together, or for any day between that and Saturday, the 16th, it would be beforehand with her going and would suit me excellently. There is a new officer at the dockyard, *vice* Captain —— (now an admiral), and I will take that opportunity of paying him and his wife the attention of asking them to dine in these gorgeous halls. For all of which reasons, if the Social Science Congress of two could meet and arrive at a conclusion, the conclusion would be thankfully booked by the illustrious writer of these lines.

On Christmas Eve there is a train from your own Victoria Station at 4.35 p.m., which will bring you to Strood (Rochester Bridge Station) in an hour, and there a majestic form will be descried in a Basket.

Yours affectionately.

1864.

Mr. W. H. Wills.

LORD WARDEN HOTEL, DOVER,
Sunday, 16th October, 1864.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I was unspeakably relieved, and most agreeably surprised to get your letter this morning. I had pictured you as lying there waiting full another week. Whereas, please God, you will now come up with a wet sheet and a flowing sail—as we say in these parts.

My expectations of "Mrs. Lirriper's" sale are not so mighty as yours, but I am heartily glad and grateful to be honestly able to believe that she is nothing but a good 'un. It is the condensation of a quantity of subjects and the very greatest pains.

George Russell knew nothing whatever of the slightest doubt of your being elected at the Garrick. Rely on my probing the matter to the bottom and ascertaining everything about it, and giving you the fullest information in ample time to decide what shall be done. Don't bother yourself about it. I have spoken. On my eyes be it.

As next week will not be my working-time at "Our Mutual Friend," I shall devote the day of Friday (*not* the evening) to making up news. Therefore I write to say that if you would rather stay where you are than come to London, *don't come*. I shall throw my hat into the ring at eleven, and shall receive all the punishment that can be administered by two Nos. on end like a British Glutton.

Ever.

The same.

GAD'S HILL, *Wednesday, 30th November, 1864.*

MY DEAR WILLS,

I found the beautiful and perfect Brougham[74] awaiting me in triumph at the Station when I came down yesterday afternoon. Georgina and Marsh were both highly mortified that it had fallen dark, and the beauties of the carriage were obscured. But of course I had it out in the yard the first thing this morning, and got in and out at both the doors, and let down and pulled up the windows, and checked an imaginary coachman, and leaned back in a state of placid contemplation.

It is the lightest and prettiest and best carriage of the class ever made. But you know that I value it for higher reasons than these. It will always be dear to me—far dearer than anything on wheels could ever be for its own sake—as a proof of your ever generous friendship and appreciation, and a memorial of a happy intercourse and a perfect confidence that have never had a break, and that surely never can have any break now

(after all these years) but one.

Ever your faithful.

Miss Mary Boyle.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Saturday, 31st December, 1864.

MY DEAR MARY,

Many happy years to you and those who are near and dear to you. These and a thousand unexpressed good wishes of his heart from the humble Jo.

And also an earnest word of commendation of the little Christmas book.[75] Very gracefully and charmingly done. The right feeling, the right touch; a very neat hand, and a very true heart.

Ever your affectionate.

1865.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Thursday, 20th July, 1865.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I am truly sorry to reply to your kind and welcome note that we cannot come to Knebworth on a visit at this time: firstly, because I am tied by the leg to my book. Secondly, because my married daughter and her husband are with us. Thirdly, because my two boys are at home for their holidays.

But if you would come out of that murky electioneering atmosphere and come to us, you don't know how delighted we should be. You should have your own way as completely as though you were at home. You should have a cheery room, and you should have a Swiss châlet all to yourself to write in. *Smoking regarded as a personal favour to the family.* Georgina is so insupportably vain on account of being a favourite of yours, that you might find *her* a drawback; but nothing else would turn out in that way, I hope.

Won't you manage it? *Do* think of it. If, for instance, you would come back with us on that Guild Saturday. I have turned the house upside down and inside out since you were here, and have carved new rooms out of places then non-existent. Pray do think of it, and do manage it. I should be heartily pleased.

I hope you will find the purpose and the plot of my book very plain when you see it as a whole piece. I am looking forward to sending you the proofs complete about the end of next month. It is all sketched out and I am working hard on it, giving it all the pains possible to be bestowed on a labour of love. Your critical opinion two months in advance of the public will be invaluable to me. For you know what store I set by it, and how I think over a hint from you.

I notice the latest piece of poisoning ingenuity in Pritchard's case. When he had made his medical student boarders sick, by poisoning the family food, he then quietly walked out, took an emetic, and made himself sick. This with a view to ask them, in examination on a possible trial, whether he did not present symptoms at the time like the rest?—A question naturally asked for him and answered in the affirmative. From which I get at the fact.

If your constituency don't bring you in they deserve to lose you, and may the Gods continue to confound them! I shudder at the thought of such public life as political life. Would there not seem to be something horribly rotten in the system of it, when one stands amazed how any man—not forced into it by position, as you are—can bear to live it?

But the private life here is my point, and again I urge upon you. Do think of it, and Do come.

I want to tell you how I have been impressed by the “Boatman.” It haunts me as only a beautiful and profound thing can. The lines are always running in my head, as the river runs with me.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. Henry F. Chorley.

OFFICE OF “ALL THE YEAR ROUND,”
NO. 26, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, W.C.,
Saturday, 28th of October, 1865.

MY DEAR CHORLEY,

I find your letter here only to-day. I shall be delighted to dine with you on Tuesday, the 7th, but I cannot answer for Mary, as she is staying with the Lehmanns. To the best of my belief, she is coming to Gad’s this evening to dine with a neighbour. In that case, she will immediately answer for herself. I have seen the *Athenæum*, and most heartily and earnestly thank you. Trust me, there is nothing I could have wished away, and all that I read there affects and delights me. I feel so generous an appreciation and sympathy so very strongly, that if I were to try to write more, I should blur the words by seeing them dimly.

Ever affectionately yours.

Mrs. Procter.

GAD’S HILL, *Sunday, 29th October, 1865.*

MY DEAR MRS. PROCTER,

The beautiful table-cover was a most cheering surprise to me when I came home last night, and I lost not a moment in finding a table for it, where it stands in a beautiful light and a perfect situation. Accept my heartiest thanks for a present on which I shall set a peculiar and particular value.

Enclosed is the MS. of the introduction.[76] The printers have cut it across and mended it again, because I always expect them to be quick, and so they distribute my “copy” among several hands, and apparently not very clean ones in this instance.

Odd as the poor butcher’s feeling appears, I think I can understand it. Much as he would not have liked his boy’s grave to be without a tombstone, had he died ashore and had a grave, so he can’t bear him to drift to the depths of the ocean unrecorded.

My love to Procter.

Ever affectionately yours.

Mr. W. B. Rye.[77]

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday, 3rd November, 1865.

DEAR SIR,

I beg you to accept my cordial thanks for your curious "Visits to Rochester." As I peeped about its old corners with interest and wonder when I was a very little child, few people can find a greater charm in that ancient city than I do.

Believe me, yours faithfully and obliged.

1866.

Mr. Forster.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Friday, 26th January, 1866.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

I most heartily hope that your doleful apprehensions will prove unfounded. These changes from muggy weather to slight sharp frost, and back again, touch weak places, as I find by my own foot; but the touch goes by. May it prove so with you!

Yesterday Captain ——, Captain ——, and Captain ——, dined at Gad's. They are, all three, naval officers of the highest reputation. —— is supposed to be the best sailor in our Service. I said I had been remarking at home, *à propos* of the *London*, that I knew of no shipwreck of a large strong ship (not carrying weight of guns) in the open sea, and that I could find none such in the shipwreck books. They all agreed that the unfortunate Captain Martin *must* have been unacquainted with the truth as to what can and what can not be done with a Steamship having rigging and canvas; and that no sailor would dream of turning a ship's stern to such a gale—*unless his vessel could run faster than the sea*. —— said (and the other two confirmed) that the *London* was the better for everything that she lost aloft in such a gale, and that with her head kept to the wind by means of a storm topsail—which is hoisted from the deck and requires no man to be sent aloft, and can be set under the worst circumstances—the disaster could not have occurred. If he had no such sail, he could have improvised it, even of hammocks and the like. They said that under a Board of Enquiry into the wreck, any efficient witness must of necessity state this as the fact, and could not possibly avoid the conclusion that the seamanship was utterly bad; and as to the force of the wind, for which I suggested allowance, they all had been in West Indian hurricanes and in Typhoons, and had put the heads of their ships to the wind under the most adverse circumstances.

I thought you might be interested in this, as you have no doubt been interested in the case. They had a great respect for the unfortunate Captain's character, and for his behaviour when the case was hopeless, but they had not the faintest doubt that he lost the ship and those two hundred and odd lives.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. R. M. Ross.[78]

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, 19th February, 1866.

DEAR SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging letter enclosing a copy of the Resolution passed by the members of the St. George Club on my last past birthday. Do me the kindness to assure those friends of mine that I am touched to the heart by their affectionate remembrance, and that I highly esteem it. To have established such relations with readers of my books is a great happiness to me, and one that I hope never to forfeit by being otherwise than manfully and truly in earnest in my vocation.

I am, dear sir,
Your faithful servant.

Mr. R. Browning.

6, Southwick Place, Hyde Park,
Monday, 12th March, 1866.

My dear Browning,[79]

Will you dine here next Sunday at half-past six punctually, instead of with Forster? I am going to read Thirty times, in London and elsewhere, and as I am coming out with "Doctor Marigold," I had written to ask Forster to come on Sunday and hear me sketch him. Forster says (with his own boldness) that he is sure it would not bore you to have that taste of his quality after dinner. I should be delighted if this should prove true. But I give warning that in that case I shall exact a promise from you to come to St. James's Hall one evening in April or May, and hear "David Copperfield," my own particular favourite.

Ever affectionately yours.

Lord Lytton.

Gad's Hill, *Monday, 16th July, 1866.*

My dear Lytton,

First, let me congratulate you on the honour which Lord Derby has conferred upon the peerage. And next, let me thank you heartily for your kind letter.

I am very sorry to report that we are so encumbered with engagements in the way of visitors coming here that we cannot see our way to getting to Knebworth yet.

Mary and Georgina send you their kind regard, and hope that the delight of coming to see you is only deferred.

Fitzgerald will be so proud of your opinion of his "Mrs. Tillotson," and will (I know) derive such great encouragement from it that I have faithfully quoted it, word for word, and sent it on to him in Ireland. He is a very clever fellow (you may remember, perhaps, that I brought him to Knebworth on the Guild day) and has charming sisters and an excellent position.

Ever affectionately yours.

Mr. Rusden.[80]

September, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,

Again I have to thank you very heartily for your kindness in writing to me about my son. The intelligence you send me concerning him is a great relief and satisfaction to my mind, and I cannot separate those feelings from a truly grateful recognition of the advice and assistance for which he is much beholden to you, or from his strong desire to deserve your good opinion.

Believe me always, my dear sir,
Your faithful and truly obliged.

Anonymous.

GAD'S HILL, *Thursday, 27th December, 1866.*

DEAR MADAM,[81]

You make an absurd, though common mistake, in supposing that any human creature can help you to be an authoress, if you cannot become one in virtue of your own powers. I know nothing about "impenetrable barrier," "outsiders," and "charmed circles." I know that anyone who can write what is suitable to the requirements of my own journal—for instance—is a person I am heartily glad to discover, and do not very often find. And I believe this to be no rare case in periodical literature. I cannot undertake to advise you in the abstract, as I number my unknown correspondents by the hundred. But if you offer anything to me for insertion in "All the Year Round," you may be sure that it will be honestly read, and that it will be judged by no test but its own merits and adaptability to those pages.

But I am bound to add that I do not regard successful fiction as a thing to be achieved in "leisure moments."

Faithfully yours.

1867.

Hon. Robert Lytton.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, 17th April, 1867.

MY DEAR ROBERT LYTTON,[82]

It would have been really painful to me, if I had seen you and yours at a Reading of mine in right of any other credentials than my own. Your appreciation has given me higher and purer gratification than your modesty can readily believe. When I first entered on this interpretation of myself (then quite strange in the public ear) I was sustained by the hope that I could drop into some hearts, some new expression of the meaning of my books, that would touch them in a new way. To this hour that purpose is so strong in me, and so real are my fictions to myself, that, after hundreds of nights, I come with a feeling of perfect freshness to that little red table, and laugh and cry with my hearers, as if I had never stood there before. You will know from this what a delight it is to be delicately understood, and why your earnest words cannot fail to move me.

We are delighted to be remembered by your charming wife, and I am entrusted with more messages from this house to her, than you would care to give or withhold, so I suppress them myself and absolve you from the difficulty.

Affectionately yours.

Mr. Henry W. Phillips.

GAD'S HILL, *Thursday, 16th April, 1867.*

MY DEAR MR. PHILLIPS,[83]

Although I think the scheme has many good points, I have this doubt: Would boys so maintained at any one of our great public schools stand at a decided disadvantage towards boys not so maintained? Foundation Scholars, in many cases, win their way into public schools and so enforce respect and even assert superiority. In many other cases their patron is a remote and misty person, or Institution, sanctioned by Time and custom. But the proposed position would be a very different one for a student to hold, and boys are too often inconsiderate, proud, and cruel. I should like to know whether this point has received consideration from the projectors of the design?

Faithfully yours always.

Mr. Henry F. Chorley.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, June 2nd, 1867.

MY DEAR CHORLEY,

Thank God I have come triumphantly through the heavy work of the fifty-one readings, and am wonderfully fresh. I grieve to hear of your sad occupation. You know where to find rest, and quiet, and sympathy, when you can change the dreary scene.

I saw poor dear Stanfield (on a hint from his eldest son) in a day's interval between two expeditions. It was clear that the shadow of the end had fallen on him.

It happened well that I had seen, on a wild day at Tynemouth, a remarkable sea-effect, of which I wrote a description to him, and he had kept it under his pillow. This place is looking very pretty. The freshness and repose of it, after all those thousands of gas-lighted faces, sink into the soul.[84]

Mr. James T. Fields.

September 3rd, 1867.

MY DEAR FIELDS,[85]

Your cheering letter of the 21st of August arrived here this morning. A thousand thanks for it. I begin to think (nautically) that I "head west'ard." You shall hear from me fully and finally as soon as Dolby shall have reported personally.

The other day I received a letter from Mr. ——, of New York (who came over in the winning yacht, and described the voyage in *The Times*), saying he would much like to see me. I made an appointment in London, and observed that when he *did* see me he was obviously astonished. While I was sensible that the magnificence of my appearance would fully account for his being overcome, I nevertheless angled for the cause of his surprise. He then told me that there was a paragraph going round the papers to the effect that I was "in a critical state of health." I asked him if he was sure it wasn't "cricketing" state of health. To which he replied, Quite. I then asked him down here to dinner, and he was again staggered by finding me in sporting training; also much amused.

Yesterday's and to-day's post bring me this unaccountable paragraph from hosts of uneasy friends, with the enormous and wonderful addition that "eminent surgeons" are sending me to America for "cessation from literary labour"!!! So I have written a quiet line to *The Times*, certifying to my own state of health, and have also begged Dixon to do the like in *The Athenæum*. I mention the matter to you, in order that you may contradict, from me, if the nonsense should reach America unaccompanied by the truth. But I suppose that *The New York Herald* will probably have got the letter from Mr. —— aforesaid. . . . .

Charles Reade and Wilkie Collins are here; and the joke of the time is to feel my pulse when I appear at table, and also to inveigle innocent messengers to come over to the summer-house, where I write (the place is quite changed since you were here, and a tunnel under the highroad connects this shrubbery with the front garden), to ask, with their compliments, how I find myself *now*.

If I come to America this next November, even you can hardly imagine with what interest I shall try Copperfield on an American audience, or, if they give me their heart, how freely and fully I shall give them mine. We will ask Dolby then whether he ever heard it before.

I cannot thank you enough for your invaluable help to Dolby. He writes that at every turn and moment the sense and knowledge and tact of Mr. Osgood are inestimable to him.

Ever, my dear Fields, faithfully yours.

Lord Lytton.

"All the Year Round" Office,
Tuesday, 17th September, 1867.

My dear Lytton,

I am happy to tell you that the play was admirably done last night, and made a marked impression. Pauline is weak, but so carefully trained and fitted into the picture as to be never disagreeable, and sometimes (as in the last scene) very pathetic. Fechter has played nothing nearly so well as Claude since he played in Paris in the "Dame aux Camélias," or in London as Ruy Blas. He played the fourth act as finely as Macready, and the first much better. The dress and bearing in the fifth act are quite new, and quite excellent.

Of the Scenic arrangements, the most noticeable are:—the picturesque struggle of the cottage between the taste of an artist, and the domestic means of poverty (expressed to the eye with infinite tact);—the view of Lyons (Act v. Scene 1), with a foreground of quay wall which the officers are leaning on, waiting for the general;—and the last scene—a suite of rooms giving on a conservatory at the back, through which the moon is shining. You are to understand that all these scenic appliances are subdued to the Piece, instead of the Piece being sacrificed to them; and that every group and situation has to be considered, not only with a reference to each by itself, but to the whole story.

Beauséant's speaking the original contents of the letter was a decided point, and the immense house was quite breathless when the Tempter and the Tempted stood confronted as he made the proposal.

There was obviously a great interest in seeing a Frenchman play the part. The scene between Claude and Gaspar (the small part very well done) was very closely watched for the same reason, and was loudly applauded. I cannot say too much of the brightness, intelligence, picturesqueness, and care of Fechter's impersonation throughout. There was a remarkable delicacy in his gradually drooping down on his way home with his bride, until he fell upon the table, a crushed heap of shame and remorse, while his mother told Pauline the story. His gradual recovery of himself as he formed better resolutions was equally well

expressed; and his being at last upright again and rushing enthusiastically to join the army, brought the house down.

I wish you could have been there. He never spoke English half so well as he spoke your English; and the audience heard it with the finest sympathy and respect. I felt that I should have been very proud indeed to have been the writer of the Play.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. James T. Fields.

[86]*October, 1867.*

My dear Fields,

I hope the telegraph clerks did not mutilate out of recognition or reasonable guess the words I added to Dolby's last telegram to Boston. "*Tribune* London correspondent totally false." Not only is there not a word of truth in the pretended conversation, but it is so absurdly unlike me that I cannot suppose it to be even invented by anyone who ever heard me exchange a word with mortal creature. For twenty years I am perfectly certain that I have never made any other allusion to the republication of my books in America than the good-humoured remark, "that if there had been international copyright between England and the States, I should have been a man of very large fortune, instead of a man of moderate savings, always supporting a very expensive public position." Nor have I ever been such a fool as to charge the absence of international copyright upon individuals. Nor have I ever been so ungenerous as to disguise or suppress the fact that I have received handsome sums for advance sheets. When I was in the States, I said what I had to say on the question, and there an end. I am absolutely certain that I have never since expressed myself, even with soreness, on the subject. Reverting to the preposterous fabrication of the London correspondent, the statement that I ever talked about "these fellows" who republished my books or pretended to know (what I don't know at this instant) who made how much out of them, or ever talked of their sending me "conscience money," is as grossly and completely false as the statement that I ever said anything to the effect that I could not be expected to have an interest in the American people. And nothing can by any possibility be falser than that. Again and again in these pages ("All the Year Round") I have expressed my interest in them. You will see it in the "Child's History of England." You will see it in the last preface to "American Notes." Every American who has ever spoken with me in London, Paris, or where not, knows whether I have frankly said, "You could have no better introduction to me than your country." And for years and years when I have been asked about reading in America, my invariable reply has been, "I have so many friends there, and constantly receive so many earnest letters from personally unknown readers there, that, but for domestic reasons, I would go to-morrow." I think I must, in the confidential intercourse between you and me, have written you to this effect more than once.

The statement of the London correspondent from beginning to end is false. It is false in the letter and false in the spirit. He may have been misinformed, and the statement may not have originated with him. With whomsoever it originated, it never originated with me,

and consequently is false. More than enough about it.

As I hope to see you so soon, my dear Fields, and as I am busily at work on the Christmas number, I will not make this a longer letter than I can help. I thank you most heartily for your proffered hospitality, and need not tell you that if I went to any friend's house in America, I would go to yours. But the readings are very hard work, and I think I cannot do better than observe the rule on that side of the Atlantic which I observe on this, of never, under such circumstances, going to a friend's house, but always staying at a hotel. I am able to observe it here, by being consistent and never breaking it. If I am equally consistent there, I can (I hope) offend no one.

Dolby sends his love to you and all his friends (as I do), and is girding up his loins vigorously.

Ever, my dear Fields,
Heartily and affectionately yours.

Mr. Thornbury.

GAD'S HILL, *Saturday, 5th October, 1867.*

MY DEAR THORNBURY,

Behold the best of my judgment on your questions.[87]

Susan Hopley and Jonathan Bradford? No. Too well known.

London Strikes and Spitalfields Cutters? Yes.

Fighting FitzGerald? Never mind him.

Duel of Lord Mohun and Duke of Hamilton? Ye-e-es.

Irish Abductions? I think not.

Brunswick Theatre? More Yes than No.

Theatrical Farewells? Yes.

Bow Street Runners (as compared with Modern Detectives)? Yes.

Vauxhall and Ranelagh in the Last Century? Most decidedly. Don't forget Miss Burney.

Smugglers? No. Overdone.

Lacenaire? No. Ditto.

Madame Laffarge? No. Ditto.

Fashionable Life Last Century? Most decidedly yes.

Debates on the Slave Trade? Yes, generally. But beware of the Pirates, as we did them in the beginning of "Household Words."

Certainly I acquit you of all blame in the Bedford case. But one cannot do otherwise than sympathise with a son who is reasonably tender of his father's memory. And no amount of private correspondence, we must remember, reaches the readers of a printed

and published statement.

I told you some time ago that I believed the arsenic in Eliza Fenning's case to have been administered by the apprentice. I never was more convinced of anything in my life than of the girl's innocence, and I want words in which to express my indignation at the muddle-headed story of that parsonic blunderer whose audacity and conceit distorted some words that fell from her in the last days of her baiting.

Ever faithfully yours.

Lord Lytton.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, 14th October, 1867.

MY DEAR LYTTON,

I am truly delighted to find that you are so well pleased with Fechter in "The Lady of Lyons." It was a labour of love with him, and I hold him in very high regard.

Don't give way to laziness, and *do* proceed with that play. There never was a time when a good new play was more wanted, or had a better opening for itself. Fechter is a thorough artist, and what he may sometimes want in personal force is compensated by the admirable whole he can make of a play, and his perfect understanding of its presentation as a picture to the eye and mind.

I leave London on the 8th of November early, and sail from Liverpool on the 9th.

Ever affectionately yours.

The same.

"ALL THE YEAR ROUND" OFFICE,
Friday, 25th October, 1867.

MY DEAR LYTTON,

I have read the Play[88] with great attention, interest, and admiration; and I need not say to *you* that the art of it—the fine construction—the exquisite nicety of the touches—with which it is wrought out—have been a study to me in the pursuit of which I have had extraordinary relish.

Taking the Play as it stands, I have nothing whatever to add to your notes and memoranda of the points to be touched again, except that I have a little uneasiness in that burst of anger and inflexibility consequent on having been deceived, coming out of Hegio. I see the kind of actor who *must* play Hegio, and I see that the audience will not believe in his doing anything so serious. (I suppose it would be impossible to get this effect out of the mother—or through the mother's influence, instead of out of the godfather of Hegiopolis?)

Now, as to the classical ground and manners of the Play. I suppose the objection to the

Greek dress to be already—as Defoe would write it, “gotten over” by your suggestion. I suppose the dress not to be conventionally associated with stilts and boredom, but to be new to the public eye and very picturesque. Grant all that;—the names remain. Now, not only used such names to be inseparable in the public mind from stately weariness, but of late days they have become inseparable in the same public mind from silly puns upon the names, and from Burlesque. You do not know (I hope, at least, for my friend’s sake) what the Strand Theatre is. A Greek name and a break-down nigger dance, have become inseparable there. I do not mean to say that your genius may not be too powerful for such associations; but I do most positively mean to say that you would lose half the play in overcoming them. At the best you would have to contend against them through the first three acts. The old tendency to become frozen on classical ground would be in the best part of the audience; the new tendency to titter on such ground would be in the worst part. And instead of starting fair with the audience, it is my conviction that you would start with them against you and would have to win them over.

Furthermore, with reference to your note to me on this head, you take up a position with reference to poor dear Talfourd’s “Ion” which I altogether dispute. It never was a popular play, I say. It derived a certain amount of out-of-door’s popularity from the circumstances under which, and the man by whom, it was written. But I say that it never was a popular play on the Stage, and never made out a case of attraction there.

As to changing the ground to Russia, let me ask you, did you ever see the “Nouvelles Russes” of Nicolas Gogol, translated into French by Louis Viardot? There is a story among them called “Tarass Boulla,” in which, as it seems to me, all the conditions you want for such transplantation are to be found. So changed, you would have the popular sympathy with the Slave or Serf, or Prisoner of War, from the first. But I do not think it is to be got, save at great hazard, and with lamentable waste of force on the ground the Play now occupies.

I shall keep this note until to-morrow to correct my conviction if I can see the least reason for correcting it; but I feel very confident indeed that I cannot be shaken in it.

* * * * * *

Saturday.

I have thought it over again, and have gone over the play again with an imaginary stage and actors before me, and I am still of the same mind. Shall I keep the MS. till you come to town?

Believe me, ever affectionately yours.

Mr. Fechter.

PARKER HOUSE, BOSTON, *3rd December, 1867.*

MY DEAR FECHTER,

I have been very uneasy about you, seeing in the paper that you were taken ill on the stage. But a letter from Georgy this morning reassures me by giving me a splendid account of your triumphant last night at the Lyceum.

I hope to bring out our Play[89] with Wallack in New York, and to have it played in many other parts of the States. I have sent to Wilkie for models, etc. If I waited for time to do more than write you my love, I should miss the mail to-morrow. Take my love, then, my dear fellow, and believe me ever

Your affectionate.

1868.

3rd February, 1868.

[90]Articles of Agreement entered into at Baltimore, in the United States of America, this third day of February in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, between —— ——, British subject, *alias* the man of Ross, and —— —— ——, American citizen, *alias* the Boston Bantam.

Whereas, some Bounce having arisen between the above men in reference to feats of pedestrianism and agility, they have agreed to settle their differences and prove who is the better man, by means of a walking-match for two hats a side and the glory of their respective countries; and whereas they agree that the said match shall come off, whatsoever the weather, on the Mill Dam Road outside Boston, on Saturday, the twenty-ninth day of this present month; and whereas they agree that the personal attendants on themselves during the whole walk, and also the umpires and starters and declarers of victory in the match shall be —— —— of Boston, known in sporting circles as Massachusetts Jemmy, and Charles Dickens of Falstaff's Gad's Hill, whose surprising performances (without the least variation) on that truly national instrument, the American catarrh, have won for him the well-merited title of the Gad's Hill Gasper:

1. The men are to be started, on the day appointed, by Massachusetts Jemmy and The Gasper.

2. Jemmy and The Gasper are, on some previous day, to walk out at the rate of not less than four miles an hour by The Gasper's watch, for one hour and a half. At the expiration of that one hour and a half they are to carefully note the place at which they halt. On the match's coming off they are to station themselves in the middle of the road, at that precise point, and the men (keeping clear of them and of each other) are to turn round them, right shoulder inward, and walk back to the starting-point. The man declared by them to pass the starting-point first is to be the victor and the winner of the match.

3. No jostling or fouling allowed.

4. All cautions or orders issued to the men by the umpires, starters, and declarers of victory to be considered final and admitting of no appeal.

A sporting narrative of the match to be written by The Gasper within one week after its coming off, and the same to be duly printed (at the expense of the subscribers to these articles) on a broadside. The said broadside to be framed and glazed, and one copy of the same to be carefully preserved by each of the subscribers to these articles.

6. The men to show on the evening of the day of walking at six o'clock precisely, at the Parker House, Boston, when and where a dinner will be given them by The Gasper. The Gasper to occupy the chair, faced by Massachusetts Jemmy. The latter promptly and formally to invite, as soon as may be after the date of these presents, the following guests to honour the said dinner with their presence; that is to say [here follow the names of a

few of his friends, whom he wished to be invited].

Now, lastly. In token of their accepting the trusts and offices by these articles conferred upon them, these articles are solemnly and formally signed by Massachusetts Jemmy and by the Gad's Hill Gasper, as well as by the men themselves.

Signed by the Man of Ross, otherwise ————.

Signed by the Boston Bantam, otherwise ————.

Signed by Massachusetts Jemmy, otherwise ————.

Signed by the Gad's Hill Gasper, otherwise Charles Dickens.

Witness to the signatures, ————.

Mr. Charles Lanman.

WASHINGTON, *February 5th, 1868.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Allow me to thank you most cordially for your kind letter, and for its accompanying books. I have a particular love for books of travel, and shall wander into the "Wilds of America" with great interest. I have also received your charming Sketch with great pleasure and admiration. Let me thank you for it heartily. As a beautiful suggestion of nature associated with this country, it shall have a quiet place on the walls of my house as long as I live.

Your reference to my dear friend Washington Irving renews the vivid impressions reawakened in my mind at Baltimore the other day. I saw his fine face for the last time in that city. He came there from New York to pass a day or two with me before I went westward, and they were made among the most memorable of my life by his delightful fancy and genial humour. Some unknown admirer of his books and mine sent to the hotel a most enormous mint julep, wreathed with flowers. We sat, one on either side of it, with great solemnity (it filled a respectable-sized paper), but the solemnity was of very short duration. It was quite an enchanted julep, and carried us among innumerable people and places that we both knew. The julep held out far into the night, and my memory never saw him afterward otherwise than as bending over it, with his straw, with an attempted gravity (after some anecdote, involving some wonderfully droll and delicate observation of character), and then, as his eyes caught mine, melting into that captivating laugh of his which was the brightest and best I have ever heard.

Dear Sir, with many thanks, faithfully yours.

Mrs. Pease.

BALTIMORE, *9th February, 1868.*

DEAR MADAM,

Mr. Dolby has *not* come between us, and I have received your letter. My answer to it is,

unfortunately, brief. I am not coming to Cleveland or near it. Every evening on which I can possibly read during the remainder of my stay in the States is arranged for, and the fates divide me from "the big woman with two smaller ones in tow." So I send her my love (to be shared in by the two smaller ones, if she approve—but not otherwise), and seriously assure her that her pleasant letter has been most welcome.

Dear madam, faithfully your friend.

Mr. James T. Fields.

ABOARD THE "RUSSIA," BOUND FOR LIVERPOOL,
Sunday, 26th April, 1868.

MY DEAR FIELDS,

In order that you may have the earliest intelligence of me, I begin this note to-day in my small cabin, purposing (if it should prove practicable) to post it at Queenstown for the return steamer.

We are already past the Banks of Newfoundland, although our course was seventy miles to the south, with the view of avoiding ice seen by Judkins in the *Scotia* on his passage out to New York. The *Russia* is a magnificent ship, and has dashed along bravely. We had made more than thirteen hundred and odd miles at noon to-day. The wind, after being a little capricious, rather threatens at the present time to turn against us, but our run is already eighty miles ahead of the *Russia's* last run in this direction—a very fast one. . . . . To all whom it may concern, report the *Russia* in the highest terms. She rolls more easily than the other Cunard Screws, is kept in perfect order, and is most carefully looked after in all departments. We have had nothing approaching to heavy weather, still one can speak to the trim of the ship. Her captain, a gentleman; bright, polite, good-natured, and vigilant. . . . .

As to me, I am greatly better, I hope. I have got on my right boot to-day for the first time; the "true American" seems to be turning faithless at last; and I made a Gad's Hill breakfast this morning, as a further advance on having otherwise eaten and drunk all day ever since Wednesday.

You will see Anthony Trollope, I daresay. What was my amazement to see him with these eyes come aboard in the mail tender just before we started! He had come out in the *Scotia* just in time to dash off again in said tender to shake hands with me, knowing me to be aboard here. It was most heartily done. He is on a special mission of convention with the United States post-office.

We have been picturing your movements, and have duly checked off your journey home, and have talked about you continually. But I have thought about you both, even much, much more. You will never know how I love you both; or what you have been to me in America, and will always be to me everywhere; or how fervently I thank you.

All the working of the ship seems to be done on my forehead. It is scrubbed and holystoned (my head—not the deck) at three every morning. It is scraped and swabbed all day. Eight pairs of heavy boots are now clattering on it, getting the ship under sail again.

Legions of ropes'-ends are flopped upon it as I write, and I must leave off with Dolby's love.

* * * * * *

Thursday, 30th.

Soon after I left off as above we had a gale of wind which blew all night. For a few hours on the evening side of midnight there was no getting from this cabin of mine to the saloon, or *vice versâ*, so heavily did the sea break over the decks. The ship, however, made nothing of it, and we were all right again by Monday afternoon. Except for a few hours yesterday (when we had a very light head-wind), the weather has been constantly favourable, and we are now bowling away at a great rate, with a fresh breeze filling all our sails. We expect to be at Queenstown between midnight and three in the morning.

I hope, my dear Fields, you may find this legible, but I rather doubt it, for there is motion enough on the ship to render writing to a landsman, however accustomed to pen and ink, rather a difficult achievement. Besides which, I slide away gracefully from the paper, whenever I want to be particularly expressive. . . . .

——, sitting opposite to me at breakfast, always has the following items: A large dish of porridge into which he casts slices of butter and a quantity of sugar. Two cups of tea. A steak. Irish stew. Chutnee and marmalade. Another deputation of two has solicited a reading to-night. Illustrious novelist has unconditionally and absolutely declined. More love, and more to that, from your ever affectionate friend.

The same.

"ALL THE YEAR ROUND" OFFICE, *May 15th, 1868.*

MY DEAR FIELDS,

I have found it so extremely difficult to write about America (though never so briefly) without appearing to blow trumpets on the one hand, or to be inconsistent with my avowed determination *not* to write about it on the other, that I have taken the simple course enclosed. The number will be published on the 6th of June. It appears to me to be the most modest and manly course, and to derive some graceful significance from its title.

Thank my dear Mrs. Fields for me for her delightful letter received on the 16th. I will write to her very soon, and tell her about the dogs. I would write by this post, but that Wills' absence (in Sussex, and getting no better there as yet) so overwhelms me with business that I can scarcely get through it.

Miss me? Ah, my dear fellow, but how do I miss *you!* We talk about you both at Gad's Hill every day of our lives. And I never see the place looking very pretty indeed, or hear the birds sing all day long and the nightingales all night, without restlessly wishing that you were both there.

With best love, and truest and most enduring regard, ever, my dear Fields,

Your most affectionate.

. . . . I hope you will receive by Saturday's Cunard a case containing:

1. A trifling supply of the pen-knibs that suited your hand.

2. A do. of unfailing medicine for cockroaches.

3. Mrs. Gamp, for ——.

The case is addressed to you at Bleecker Street, New York. If it should be delayed for the knibs (or nibs) promised to-morrow, and should be too late for the Cunard packet, it will in that case come by the next following Inman steamer.

Everything here looks lovely, and I find it (you will be surprised to hear) really a pretty place! I have seen "No Thoroughfare" twice. Excellent things in it, but it drags to my thinking. It is, however, a great success in the country, and is now getting up with great force in Paris. Fechter is ill, and was ordered off to Brighton yesterday. Wills is ill too, and banished into Sussex for perfect rest. Otherwise, thank God, I find everything well and thriving. You and my dear Mrs. Fields are constantly in my mind. Procter greatly better.

Mr. Fechter.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Friday, 22nd May, 1868.

MY DEAR FECHTER,

I have an idea about the bedroom act, which I should certainly have suggested if I had been at our "repetitions" here.[91] I want it done *to the sound of the Waterfall*. I want the sound of the Waterfall louder and softer as the wind rises and falls, to be spoken through —like the music. I want the Waterfall *listened to when spoken of, and not looked out at*. The mystery and gloom of the scene would be greatly helped by this, and it would be new and picturesquely fanciful.

I am very anxious to hear from you how the piece seems to go,[92] and how the artists, who are to act it, seem to understand their parts. Pray tell me, too, when you write, how you found Madame Fechter, and give all our loves to all.

Ever heartily yours.

Mrs. James T. Fields.

GAD'S HILL, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
25th May, 1868.

MY DEAR MRS. FIELDS,

As you ask me about the dogs, I begin with them. When I came down first, I came to Gravesend, five miles off. The two Newfoundland dogs, coming to meet me with the usual

carriage and the usual driver, and beholding me coming in my usual dress out at the usual door, it struck me that their recollection of my having been absent for any unusual time was at once cancelled. They behaved (they are both young dogs) exactly in their usual manner; coming behind the basket phaeton as we trotted along, and lifting their heads to have their ears pulled—a special attention which they receive from no one else. But when I drove into the stable-yard, Linda (the St. Bernard) was greatly excited; weeping profusely, and throwing herself on her back that she might caress my foot with her great fore-paws. Mamie's little dog, too, Mrs. Bouncer, barked in the greatest agitation on being called down and asked by Mamie, "Who is this?" and tore round and round me, like the dog in the Faust outlines. You must know that all the farmers turned out on the road in their market-chaises to say, "Welcome home, sir!" and that all the houses along the road were dressed with flags; and that our servants, to cut out the rest, had dressed this house so that every brick of it was hidden. They had asked Mamie's permission to "ring the alarm-bell" (!) when master drove up, but Mamie, having some slight idea that that compliment might awaken master's sense of the ludicrous, had recommended bell abstinence. But on Sunday the village choir (which includes the bell-ringers) made amends. After some unusually brief pious reflections in the crowns of their hats at the end of the sermon, the ringers bolted out, and rang like mad until I got home. There had been a conspiracy among the villagers to take the horse out, if I had come to our own station, and draw me here. Mamie and Georgy had got wind of it and warned me.

Divers birds sing here all day, and the nightingales all night. The place is lovely, and in perfect order. I have put five mirrors in the Swiss châlet (where I write) and they reflect and refract in all kinds of ways the leaves that are quivering at the windows, and the great fields of waving corn, and the sail-dotted river. My room is up among the branches of the trees; and the birds and the butterflies fly in and out, and the green branches shoot in, at the open windows, and the lights and shadows of the clouds come and go with the rest of the company. The scent of the flowers, and indeed of everything that is growing for miles and miles, is most delicious.

Dolby (who sends a world of messages) found his wife much better than he expected, and the children (wonderful to relate!) perfect. The little girl winds up her prayers every night with a special commendation to Heaven of me and the pony—as if I must mount him to get there! I dine with Dolby (I was going to write "him," but found it would look as if I were going to dine with the pony) at Greenwich this very day, and if your ears do not burn from six to nine this evening, then the Atlantic is a non-conductor. We are already settling—think of this!—the details of my farewell course of readings. I am brown beyond belief, and cause the greatest disappointment in all quarters by looking so well. It is really wonderful what those fine days at sea did for me! My doctor was quite broken down in spirits when he saw me, for the first time since my return, last Saturday. "Good Lord!" he said, recoiling, "seven years younger!"

It is time I should explain the otherwise inexplicable enclosure. Will you tell Fields, with my love (I suppose he hasn't used *all* the pens yet?), that I think there is in Tremont Street a set of my books, sent out by Chapman, not arrived when I departed. Such set of the immortal works of our illustrious, etc., is designed for the gentleman to whom the enclosure is addressed. If T., F. and Co., will kindly forward the set (carriage paid) with the enclosure to ——'s address, I will invoke new blessings on their heads, and will get

Dolby’s little daughter to mention them nightly.

“No Thoroughfare” is very shortly coming out in Paris, where it is now in active rehearsal. It is still playing here, but without Fechter, who has been very ill. The doctor’s dismissal of him to Paris, however, and his getting better there, enables him to get up the play there. He and Wilkie missed so many pieces of stage-effect here, that, unless I am quite satisfied with his report, I shall go over and try my stage-managerial hand at the Vaudeville Theatre. I particularly want the drugging and attempted robbing in the bedroom scene at the Swiss inn to be done to the sound of a waterfall rising and falling with the wind. Although in the very opening of that scene they speak of the waterfall and listen to it, nobody thought of its mysterious music. I could make it, with a good stage-carpenter, in an hour.

My dear love to Fields once again. Same to you and him from Mamie and Georgy. I cannot tell you both how I miss you, or how overjoyed I should be to see you here.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Fields,
Your most affectionate friend.

Mr. Alexander Ireland.

THE ATHENÆUM, *Saturday, 30th May, 1868.*

DEAR MR. IRELAND,

Many thanks for the book[93] you have kindly lent me. My interest in its subject is scarcely less than your own, and the book has afforded me great pleasure. I hope it will prove a very useful tribute to Hazlett and Hunt (in extending the general knowledge of their writings), as well as a deservedly hearty and loving one.

You gratify me much by your appreciation of my desire to promote the kindest feelings between England and America. But the writer of the generous article in *The Manchester Examiner* is quite mistaken in supposing that I intend to write a book on the United States. The fact is exactly the reverse, or I could not have spoken without some appearance of having a purpose to serve.

Very faithfully yours.

Mr. James T. Fields.

GAD’S HILL PLACE, *Tuesday, 7th July, 1868.*

My dear Fields,

I have delayed writing to you (and Mrs. Fields, to whom my love) until I should have seen Longfellow. When he was in London the first time he came and went without reporting himself, and left me in a state of unspeakable discomfiture. Indeed, I should not have believed in his having been here at all, if Mrs. Procter had not told me of his calling to see Procter. However, on his return he wrote to me from the Langham Hotel, and I went up to town to see him, and to make an appointment for his coming here. He, the girls, and Appleton, came down last Saturday night and stayed until Monday forenoon. I showed them all the neighbouring country that could be shown in so short a time, and they finished off with a tour of inspection of the kitchens, pantry, wine-cellar, pickles, sauces, servants' sitting-room, general household stores, and even the Cellar Book, of this illustrious establishment. Forster and Kent (the latter wrote certain verses to Longfellow, which have been published in *The Times*, and which I sent to D——) came down for a day, and I hope we all had a really "good time." I turned out a couple of postillions in the old red jacket of the old red royal Dover Road, for our ride; and it was like a holiday ride in England fifty years ago. Of course we went to look at the old houses in Rochester, and the old cathedral, and the old castle, and the house for the six poor travellers who, "not being rogues or procters, shall have lodging, entertainment, and four pence each."

Nothing can surpass the respect paid to Longfellow here, from the Queen downward. He is everywhere received and courted, and finds (as I told him he would, when we talked of it in Boston) the working-men at least as well acquainted with his books as the classes socially above them. . . . .

Last Thursday I attended, as sponsor, the christening of Dolby's son and heir—a most jolly baby, who held on tight by the rector's left whisker while the service was performed. What time, too, his little sister, connecting me with the pony, trotted up and down the centre aisle, noisily driving herself as that celebrated animal, so that it went very hard with the sponsorial dignity.

Wills is not yet recovered from that concussion of the brain, and I have all his work to do. This may account for my not being able to devise a Christmas number, but I seem to have left my invention in America. In case you should find it, please send it over. I am going up to town to-day to dine with Longfellow. And now, my dear Fields, you know all about me and mine.

You are enjoying your holiday? and are still thinking sometimes of our Boston days, as I do? and are maturing schemes for coming here next summer? A satisfactory reply to the last question is particularly entreated.

I am delighted to find you both so well pleased with the Blind Book scheme.[94] I said nothing of it to you when we were together, though I had made up my mind, because I wanted to come upon you with that little burst from a distance. It seemed something like meeting again when I remitted the money and thought of your talking of it.

The dryness of the weather is amazing. All the ponds and surface-wells about here are waterless, and the poor people suffer greatly. The people of this village have only one spring to resort to, and it is a couple of miles from many cottages. I do not let the great dogs swim in the canal, because the people have to drink of it. But when they get into the

Medway it is hard to get them out again. The other day Bumble (the son, Newfoundland dog) got into difficulties among some floating timber, and became frightened. Don (the father) was standing by me, shaking off the wet and looking on carelessly, when all of a sudden he perceived something amiss, and went in with a bound and brought Bumble out by the ear. The scientific way in which he towed him along was charming.

Ever your loving.

Mr. J. E. Millais, R.A.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, 19th July, 1868.

MY DEAR MILLAIS,[95]

I received the enclosed letter yesterday, and I have, perhaps unjustly—some vague suspicions of it. As I know how faithful and zealous you have been in all relating to poor Leech, I make no apology for asking you whether you can throw any light upon its contents.

You will be glad to hear that Charles Collins is decidedly better to-day, and is out of doors.

Believe me always, faithfully yours.

Mr. Serle.

GAD'S HILL, *Wednesday, 29th July, 1868.*

MY DEAR SERLE,[96]

I do not believe there is the slightest chance of an international Copyright law being passed in America for a long time to come. Some Massachusetts men do believe in such a thing, but they fail (as I think) to take into account the prompt western opposition.

Such an alteration as you suggest in the English law would give no copyright in America, you see. The American publisher could buy no absolute *right* of priority. Any American newspaper could (and many would, in a popular case) pirate from him, as soon as they could get the matter set up. He could buy no more than he buys now when he arranges for advance sheets from England, so that there may be simultaneous publication in the two countries. And success in England is of so much importance towards the achievement of success in America, that I greatly doubt whether previous publications in America would often be worth more to an American publisher or manager than simultaneous publication. Concerning the literary man in Parliament who would undertake to bring in a Bill for such an amendment of our copyright law, with weight enough to keep his heart unbroken while he should be getting it through its various lingering miseries, all I can say is—I decidedly don't know him.

On that horrible Staplehurst day, I had not the slightest idea that I knew anyone in the train out of my own compartment. Mrs. Cowden Clarke[97] wrote me afterwards, telling

me in the main what you tell me, and I was astonished. It is remarkable that my watch (a special chronometer) has never gone quite correctly since, and to this day there sometimes comes over me, on a railway—in a hansom cab—or any sort of conveyance—for a few seconds, a vague sense of dread that I have no power to check. It comes and passes, but I cannot prevent its coming.

Believe me, always faithfully yours.

Mr. Rusden.

24th August, 1868.

MY DEAR SIR,

I should have written to you much sooner, but that I have been home from the United States barely three months, and have since been a little uncertain as to the precise time and way of sending my youngest son out to join his brother Alfred.

It is now settled that he shall come out in the ship *Sussex*, 1000 tons, belonging to Messrs. Money, Wigram, and Co. She sails from Gravesend, but he will join her at Plymouth on the 27th September, and will proceed straight to Melbourne. Of this I apprise Alfred by this mail. . . . . I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kindness to Alfred. I am certain that a becoming sense of it and desire to deserve it, has done him great good.

Your report of him is an unspeakable comfort to me, and I most heartily assure you of my gratitude and friendship.

In the midst of your colonial seethings and heavings, I suppose you have some leisure to consult equally the hopeful prophets and the dismal prophets who are all wiser than any of the rest of us as to things at home here. My own strong impression is that whatsoever change the new Reform Bill may effect will be very gradual indeed and quite wholesome.

Numbers of the middle class who seldom or never voted before will vote now, and the greater part of the new voters will in the main be wiser as to their electoral responsibilities and more seriously desirous to discharge them for the common good than the bumptious singers of “Rule Britannia,” “Our dear old Church of England,” and all the rest of it.

If I can ever do anything for any accredited friend of yours coming to the old country, command me. I shall be truly glad of any opportunity of testifying that I do not use a mere form of words in signing myself,

Cordially yours.

Mr. Russell Sturgis.

KENNEDY’S HOTEL, EDINBURGH,
Monday, 14th December, 1868.[98]

MY DEAR MR. RUSSELL STURGIS,

I am “reading” here, and shall be through this week. Consequently I am only this

morning in receipt of your kind note of the 10th, forwarded from my own house.

Believe me I am as much obliged to you for your generous and ready response to my supposed letter as I should have been if I had really written it. But I know nothing whatever of it or of "Miss Jeffries," except that I have a faint impression of having recently noticed that name among my begging-letter correspondents, and of having associated it in my mind with a regular professional hand. Your caution has, I hope, disappointed this swindler. But my testimony is at your service if you should need it, and I would take any opportunity of bringing one of those vagabonds to punishment; for they are, one and all, the most heartless and worthless vagabonds on the face of the earth.

Believe me, faithfully yours.

Mrs. James T. Fields.

GLASGOW, *Wednesday, December 16, 1868.*

MY DEAR MRS. FIELDS,

. . . . First, as you are curious about the Oliver murder, I will tell you about that trial of the same at which you *ought* to have assisted. There were about a hundred people present in all. I have changed my stage. Besides that back screen which you know so well, there are two large screens of the same colour, set off, one on either side, like the "wings" at a theatre. And besides these again, we have a quantity of curtains of the same colour, with which to close in any width of room from wall to wall. Consequently, the figure is now completely isolated, and the slightest action becomes much more important. This was used for the first time on the occasion. But behind the stage—the orchestra being very large and built for the accommodation of a numerous chorus—there was ready, on the level of the platform, a very long table, beautifully lighted, with a large staff of men ready to open oysters and set champagne-corks flying. Directly I had done, the screens being whisked off by my people, there was disclosed one of the prettiest banquets you can imagine; and when all the people came up, and the gay dresses of the ladies were lighted by those powerful lights of mine, the scene was exquisitely pretty; the hall being newly decorated, and very elegantly; and the whole looking like a great bed of flowers and diamonds.

Now, you must know that all this company were, before the wine went round, unmistakably pale, and had horror-stricken faces. Next morning Harness (Fields knows—Rev. William—did an edition of Shakespeare—old friend of the Kembles and Mrs. Siddons), writing to me about it, and saying it was "a most amazing and terrific thing," added, "but I am bound to tell you that I had an almost irresistible impulse upon me to *scream*, and that, if anyone had cried out, I am certain I should have followed." He had no idea that, on the night, P——, the great ladies' doctor, had taken me aside and said: "My dear Dickens, you may rely upon it that if only one woman cries out when you murder the girl, there will be a contagion of hysteria all over this place." It is impossible to soften it without spoiling it, and you may suppose that I am rather anxious to discover how it goes on the 5th of January!!! We are afraid to announce it elsewhere, without knowing, except that I have thought it pretty safe to put it up once in Dublin. I asked Mrs. K——, the famous actress, who was at the experiment: "What do *you* say? Do it or not?" "Why, of

course, do it," she replied. "Having got at such an effect as that, it must be done. But," rolling her large black eyes very slowly, and speaking very distinctly, "the public have been looking out for a sensation these last fifty years or so, and by Heaven they have got it!" With which words, and a long breath and a long stare, she became speechless. Again, you may suppose that I am a little anxious!

Not a day passes but Dolby and I talk about you both, and recall where we were at the corresponding time of last year. My old likening of Boston to Edinburgh has been constantly revived within these last ten days. There is a certain remarkable similarity of *tone* between the two places. The audiences are curiously alike, except that the Edinburgh audience has a quicker sense of humour and is a little more genial. No disparagement to Boston in this, because I consider an Edinburgh audience perfect.

I trust, my dear Eugenius, that you have recognised yourself in a certain Uncommercial, and also some small reference to a name rather dear to you? As an instance of how strangely something comic springs up in the midst of the direst misery, look to a succeeding Uncommercial, called "A Small Star in the East," published to-day, by-the-bye. I have described, *with exactness*, the poor places into which I went, and how the people behaved, and what they said. I was wretched, looking on; and yet the boiler-maker and the poor man with the legs filled me with a sense of drollery not to be kept down by any pressure.

The atmosphere of this place, compounded of mists from the highlands and smoke from the town factories, is crushing my eyebrows as I write, and it rains as it never does rain anywhere else, and always does rain here. It is a dreadful place, though much improved and possessing a deal of public spirit. Improvement is beginning to knock the old town of Edinburgh about, here and there; but the Canongate and the most picturesque of the horrible courts and wynds are not to be easily spoiled, or made fit for the poor wretches who people them to live in. Edinburgh is so changed as to its notabilities, that I had the only three men left of the Wilson and Jeffrey time to dine with me there, last Saturday.

I think you will find "Fatal Zero" (by Percy Fitzgerald) a very curious analysis of a mind, as the story advances. A new beginner in "A. Y. R." (Hon. Mrs. Clifford, Kinglake's sister), who wrote a story in the series just finished, called "The Abbot's Pool," has just sent me another story. I have a strong impression that, with care, she will step into Mrs. Gaskell's vacant place. Wills is no better, and I have work enough even in that direction.

God bless the woman with the black mittens for making me laugh so this morning! I take her to be a kind of public-spirited Mrs. Sparsit, and as such take her to my bosom. God bless you both, my dear friends, in this Christmas and New Year time, and in all times, seasons, and places, and send you to Gad's Hill with the next flowers!

Ever your most affectionate.

Mr. Russell Sturgis.

KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH,
Friday, 18th December, 1868.

My dear Mr. Russell Sturgis,

I return you the forged letter, and devoutly wish that I had to flog the writer in virtue of a legal sentence. I most cordially reciprocate your kind expressions in reference to our future intercourse, and shall hope to remind you of them five or six months hence, when my present labours shall have gone the way of all other earthly things. It was particularly interesting to me when I was last at Boston to recognise poor dear Felton's unaffected and genial ways in his eldest daughter, and to notice how, in tender remembrance of him, she is, as it were, Cambridge's daughter.

Believe me always, faithfully yours.

1869.

Mrs. Forster.

QUEEN'S HOTEL, MANCHESTER,
Monday, 8th March, 1869.

MY DEAR MRS. FORSTER,

A thousand thanks for your note, which has reached me here this afternoon. At breakfast this morning Dolby showed me the local paper with a paragraph in it recording poor dear Tennent's[99] death. You may imagine how shocked I was. Immediately before I left town this last time, I had an unusually affectionate letter from him, enclosing one from Forster, and proposing the friendly dinner since appointed for the 25th. I replied to him in the same spirit, and felt touched at the time by the gentle earnestness of his tone. It is remarkable that I talked of him a great deal yesterday to Dolby (who knew nothing of him), and that I reverted to him again at night before going to bed—with no reason that I know of. Dolby was strangely impressed by this, when he showed me the newspaper.

God be with us all!

Ever your affectionate.

Mr. H. A. Layard.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Saturday, 13th March, 1869.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

Coming to town for a couple of days, from York, I find your beautiful present.[100] With my heartiest congratulations on your marriage, accept my most cordial thanks for a possession that I shall always prize foremost among my worldly goods; firstly, for your sake; secondly, for its own.

Not one of these glasses shall be set on table until Mrs. Layard is there, to touch with her lips the first champagne that any of them shall ever hold! This vow has been registered in solemn triumvirate at Gad's Hill.

The first week in June will about see me through my present work, I hope. I came to town hurriedly to attend poor dear Emerson Tennent's funeral. You will know how my mind went back, in the York up-train at midnight, to Mount Vesuvius and our Neapolitan supper.

I have given Mr. Hills, of Oxford Street, the letter of introduction to you that you kindly permitted. He has immense local influence, and could carry his neighbours in favour of any good design.

My dear Layard, ever cordially yours.

Miss Florence Olliffe.

26, Wellington Street, *Tuesday, 16th March, 1869.*

My dear Florence,[101]

I have received your kind note this morning, and I hasten to thank you for it, and to assure your dear mother of our most cordial sympathy with her in her great affliction, and in loving remembrance of the good man and excellent friend we have lost. The tidings of his being very ill indeed had, of course, been reported to me. For some days past I had taken up the newspaper with sad misgivings; and this morning, before I got your letter, they were realised.

I loved him truly. His wonderful gentleness and kindness, years ago, when we had sickness in our household in Paris, has never been out of my grateful remembrance. And, socially, his image is inseparable from some of the most genial and delightful friendly hours of my life. I am almost ashamed to set such recollections by the side of your mother's great bereavement and grief, but they spring out of the fulness of my heart.

May God be with her and with you all!

Ever yours affectionately.

Mr. James T. Fields.

Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, *Friday, April 9th, 1869.*

My dear Fields,

The faithful *Russia* will bring this out to you, as a sort of warrant to take you into loving custody and bring you back on her return trip.

I rather think that when the 12th of June shall have shaken off these shackles,[102] there *will* be borage on the lawn at Gad's. Your heart's desire in that matter, and in the minor particulars of Cobham Park, Rochester Castle, and Canterbury, shall be fulfilled, please God! The red jackets shall turn out again upon the turnpike-road, and picnics among the cherry-orchards and hop-gardens shall be heard of in Kent. Then, too, shall the Uncommercial resuscitate (being at present nightly murdered by Mr. W. Sikes) and uplift his voice again.

The chief officer of the *Russia* (a capital fellow) was at the Reading last night, and Dolby specially charged him with the care of you and yours. We shall be on the borders of Wales, and probably about Hereford, when you arrive. Dolby has insane projects of getting over here to meet you; so amiably hopeful and obviously impracticable, that I encourage him to the utmost. The regular little captain of the *Russia*, Cook, is just now changed into the *Cuba*, whence arise disputes of seniority, etc. I wish he had been with you, for I liked him very much when I was his passenger. I like to think of your being in *my* ship!

—— and —— have been taking it by turns to be “on the point of death,” and have been complimenting one another greatly on the fineness of the point attained. My people got a very good impression of ——, and thought her a sincere and earnest little woman.

The *Russia* hauls out into the stream to-day, and I fear her people may be too busy to come to us to-night. But if any of them do, they shall have the warmest of welcomes for your sake. (By-the-bye, a very good party of seamen from the Queen’s ship *Donegal*, lying in the Mersey, have been told off to decorate St. George’s Hall with the ship’s bunting. They were all hanging on aloft upside down, holding to the gigantically high roof by nothing, this morning, in the most wonderfully cheerful manner.)

My son Charley has come for the dinner, and Chappell (my Proprietor, as—isn’t it Wemmick?—says) is coming to-day, and Lord Dufferin (Mrs. Norton’s nephew) is to come and make *the* speech. I don’t envy the feelings of my noble friend when he sees the hall. Seriously, it is less adapted to speaking than Westminster Abbey, and is as large. . . . .

I hope you will see Fechter in a really clever piece by Wilkie.[103] Also you will see the Academy Exhibition, which will be a very good one; and also we will, please God, see everything and more, and everything else after that. I begin to doubt and fear on the subject of your having a horror of me after seeing the murder. I don’t think a hand moved while I was doing it last night, or an eye looked away. And there was a fixed expression of horror of me, all over the theatre, which could not have been surpassed if I had been going to be hanged to that red velvet table. It is quite a new sensation to be execrated with that unanimity; and I hope it will remain so!

[Is it lawful—would that woman in the black gaiters, green veil, and spectacles, hold it so—to send my love to the pretty M——?]

Pack up, my dear Fields, and be quick.

Ever your most affectionate.

Mr. Rusden.

PRESTON, *Thursday, 22nd April, 1869.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I am finishing my Farewell Readings—to-night is the seventy-fourth out of one hundred—and have barely time to send you a line to thank you most heartily for yours of the 30th January, and for your great kindness to Alfred and Edward. The latter wrote by the same mail, on behalf of both, expressing the warmest gratitude to you, and reporting himself in the stoutest heart and hope. I never can thank you sufficiently.

You will see that the new Ministry has made a decided hit with its Budget, and that in the matter of the Irish Church it has the country at its back. You will also see that the “Reform League” has dissolved itself, indisputably because it became aware that the people did not want it.

I think the general feeling in England is a desire to get the Irish Church out of the way of many social reforms, and to have it done *with* as already done *for*. I do not in the least

believe myself that agrarian Ireland is to be pacified by any such means, or can have it got out of its mistaken head that the land is of right the peasantry's, and that every man who owns land has stolen it and is therefore to be shot. But that is not the question.

The clock strikes post-time as I write, and I fear to write more, lest, at this distance from London, I should imperil the next mail.

Cordially yours.

Mr. Thomas Chappell.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Monday, 3rd May, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPPELL,

I am really touched by your letter. I can most truthfully assure you that your part in the inconvenience of this mishap has given me much more concern than my own; and that if I did not hope to have our London Farewells yet, I should be in a very gloomy condition on your account.

Pray do not suppose that *you* are to blame for my having done a little too much—a wild fancy indeed! The simple fact is, that the rapid railway travelling was stretched a hair's breadth too far, and that *I* ought to have foreseen it. For, on the night before the last night of our reading in America, when Dolby was cheering me with a review of the success, and the immediate prospect of the voyage home, I told him, to his astonishment: "I am too far gone, and too worn out to realise anything but my own exhaustion. Believe me, if I had to read but twice more, instead of once, I couldn't do it." We were then just beyond our recent number. And it was the travelling that I had felt throughout.

The sharp precautionary remedy of stopping instantly, was almost as instantly successful the other day. I told Dr. Watson that he had never seen me knocked out of time, and that he had no idea of the rapidity with which I should come up again.

Just as three days' repose on the Atlantic steamer made me, in my altered appearance, the amazement of the captain, so this last week has set me up, thank God, in the most wonderful manner. The sense of exhaustion seems a dream already. Of course I shall train myself carefully, nevertheless, all through the summer and autumn.

I beg to send my kind regards to Mrs. Chappell, and I shall hope to see her and you at Teddington in the long bright days. It would disappoint me indeed if a lasting friendship did not come of our business relations.

In the spring I trust I shall be able to report to you that I am ready to take my Farewells in London. Of this I am pretty certain: that I never will take them at all, unless with you on your own conditions.

With an affectionate regard for you and your brother, believe me always,

Very faithfully yours.

Mr. Rusden.

"All the Year Round" Office,
Tuesday, 18th May, 1869.

My dear Mr. Rusden,

As I daresay some exaggerated accounts of my having been very ill have reached you, I begin with the true version of the case.

I daresay I *should* have been very ill if I had not suddenly stopped my Farewell Readings when there were yet five-and-twenty remaining to be given. I was quite exhausted, and was warned by the doctors to stop (for the time) instantly. Acting on the advice, and going home into Kent for rest, I immediately began to recover, and within a fortnight was in the brilliant condition in which I can now—thank God—report myself.

I cannot thank you enough for your care of Plorn. I was quite prepared for his not settling down without a lurch or two. I still hope that he may take to colonial life. . . . . In his letter to me about his leaving the station to which he got through your kindness, he expresses his gratitude to you quite as strongly as if he had made a wonderful success, and seems to have acquired no distaste for anything but the one individual of whom he wrote that betrayed letter. But knowing the boy, I want to try him fully.

You know all our public news, such as it is, at least as well as I do. Many people here (of whom I am one) do not like the look of American matters.

What I most fear is that the perpetual bluster of a party in the States will at last set the patient British back up. And if our people begin to bluster too, and there should come into existence an exasperating war-party on both sides, there will be great danger of a daily-widening breach.

The first shriek of the first engine that traverses the San Francisco Railroad from end to end will be a death-warning to the disciples of Jo Smith. The moment the Mormon bubble gets touched by neighbours it will break. Similarly, the red man's course is very nearly run. A scalped stoker is the outward and visible sign of his utter extermination. Not Quakers enough to reach from here to Jerusalem will save him by the term of a single year.

I don't know how it may be with you, but it is the fashion here to be absolutely certain that the Emperor of the French is fastened by Providence and the fates on a throne of adamant expressly constructed for him since the foundations of the universe were laid.

He knows better, and so do the police of Paris, and both powers must be grimly entertained by the resolute British belief, knowing what they have known, and doing what they have done through the last ten years. What Victor Hugo calls "the drop-curtain, behind which is constructing the great last act of the French Revolution," has been a little shaken at the bottom lately, however. One seems to see the feet of a rather large chorus getting ready.

I enclose a letter for Plorn to your care, not knowing how to address him. Forgive me for so doing (I write to Alfred direct), and believe me, my dear Mr. Rusden,

Yours faithfully and much obliged.

Miss Emily Jolly.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Thursday, 22nd July, 1869.

DEAR MISS JOLLY,

Mr. Wills has retired from here (for rest and to recover his health), and my son, who occupies his place, brought me this morning a story[104] in MS., with a request that I would read it. I read it with extraordinary interest, and was greatly surprised by its uncommon merit. On asking whence it came, I found that it came from you!

You need not to be told, after this, that I accept it with more than readiness. If you will allow me I will go over it with great care, and very slightly touch it here and there. I think it will require to be divided into three portions. You shall have the proofs and I will publish it immediately. I think so VERY highly of it that I will have special attention called to it in a separate advertisement. I congratulate you most sincerely and heartily on having done a very special thing. It will always stand apart in my mind from any other story I ever read. I write with its impression newly and strongly upon me, and feel absolutely sure that I am not mistaken.

Believe me, faithfully yours always.

Hon. Robert Lytton.

26, WELLINGTON STREET, LONDON,
Thursday, 2nd September, 1869.

MY DEAR ROBERT LYTTON,

"John Acland" is most willingly accepted, and shall come in to the next monthly part. I shall make bold to condense him here and there (according to my best idea of story-telling), and particularly where he makes the speech:—And with the usual fault of being too long, here and there, I think you let the story out too much—prematurely—and this I hope to prevent artfully. I think your title open to the same objection, and therefore propose to substitute:

THE DISAPPEARANCE
OF JOHN ACLAND.

This will leave the reader in doubt whether he really *was* murdered, until the end.

I am sorry you do not pursue the other prose series. You can do a great deal more than you think for, with whatever you touch; and you know where to find a firmly attached and admiring friend always ready to take the field with you, and always proud to see your plume among the feathers in the Staff.

Your account of my dear Boffin[105] is highly charming:—I had been troubled with a

misgiving that he was good. May his shadow never be more correct!

I wish I could have you at the murder from “Oliver Twist.”

I am always, my dear Robert Lytton,
Affectionately your friend.

* * * * * *

Pray give my kindest regards to Fascination Fledgeby, who (I have no doubt) has by this time half-a-dozen new names, feebly expressive of his great merits.

The same.

OFFICE OF “ALL THE YEAR ROUND,”
26, Wellington Street, Strand, London ,
Friday, 1st October, 1869.

MY DEAR ROBERT LYTTON,

I am assured by a correspondent that “John Acland” has been done before. Said correspondent has evidently read the story—and is almost confident in “Chambers’s Journal.” This is very unfortunate, but of course cannot be helped. There is always a possibility of such a malignant conjunction of stars when the story is a true one.

In the case of a good story—as this is—liable for years to be told at table—as this was—there is nothing wonderful in such a mischance. Let us shuffle the cards, as Sancho says, and begin again.

You will of course understand that I do not tell you this by way of complaint. Indeed, I should not have mentioned it at all, but as an explanation to you of my reason for winding the story up (which I have done to-day) as expeditiously as possible. You might otherwise have thought me, on reading it as published, a little hard on Mr. Doilly. I have not had time to direct search to be made in “Chambers’s;” but as to the main part of the story having been printed somewhere, I have not the faintest doubt. And I believe my correspondent to be also right as to the where. You could not help it any more than I could, and therefore will not be troubled by it any more than I am.

The more I get of your writing, the better I shall be pleased.

Do believe me to be, as I am,
Your genuine admirer
And affectionate friend.

Mr. Rusden.

GAD’S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, 24th October, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. RUSDEN,

This very day a great meeting is announced to come off in London, as a demonstration in favour of a Fenian “amnesty.” No doubt its numbers and importance are ridiculously over-estimated, but I believe the gathering will turn out to be big enough to be a very serious obstruction in the London streets. I have a great doubt whether such demonstrations ought to be allowed. They are bad as a precedent, and they unquestionably interfere with the general liberty and freedom of the subject.

Moreover, the time must come when this kind of threat and defiance will have to be forcibly stopped, and when the unreasonable toleration of it will lead to a sacrifice of life among the comparatively innocent lookers-on that might have been avoided but for a false confidence on their part, engendered in the damnable system of *laisser-aller*. You see how right we were, you and I, in our last correspondence on this head, and how desperately unsatisfactory the condition of Ireland is, especially when considered with a reference to America. The Government has, through Mr. Gladstone, just now spoken out boldly in reference to the desired amnesty. (So much the better for them or they would unquestionably have gone by the board.) Still there is an uneasy feeling abroad that Mr. Gladstone himself would grant this amnesty if he dared, and that there is a great weakness in the rest of their Irish policy. And this feeling is very strong amongst the noisiest Irish howlers. Meanwhile, the newspapers go on arguing Irish matters as if the Irish were a reasonable people, in which immense assumption I, for one, have not the smallest faith.

Again, I have to thank you most heartily for your kindness to my two boys. It is impossible to predict how Plorn will settle down, or come out of the effort to do so. But he has unquestionably an affectionate nature, and a certain romantic touch in him. Both of these qualities are, I hope, more impressible for good than for evil, and I trust in God for the rest.

The news of Lord Derby’s death will reach you, I suppose, at about the same time as this letter. A rash, impetuous, passionate man; but a great loss for his party, as a man of mind and mark. I was staying last June with Lord Russell—six or seven years older, but (except for being rather deaf) in wonderful preservation, and brighter and more completely armed at all points than I have seen him these twenty years.

As this need not be posted till Friday, I shall leave it open for a final word or two; and am until then, and then, and always afterwards, my dear Mr. Rusden,

Your faithful and much obliged.

Thursday, 28th.

We have no news in England except two slight changes in the Government consequent on Layard's becoming our Minister at Madrid. He is not long married to a charming lady, and will be far better in Spain than in the House of Commons. The Ministry are now holding councils on the Irish Land Tenure question, which is the next difficulty they have to deal with, as you know. Last Sunday's meeting was a preposterous failure; still, it brought together in the streets of London all the ruffian part of the population of London, and that is a serious evil which any one of a thousand accidents might render mischievous. There is no existing law, however, to stop these assemblages, so that they keep moving while in the streets.

The Government was undoubtedly wrong when it considered it had the right to close Hyde Park; that is now universally conceded.

I write to Alfred and Plorn both by this mail. They can never say enough of your kindness when they write to me.

Mr. A. H. Layard.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Monday, 8th November, 1869.*

MY DEAR LAYARD,

On Friday or Saturday next I can come to you at any time after twelve that will suit your convenience. I had no idea of letting you go away without my God-speed; but I knew how busy you must be; and kept in the background, biding my time.

I am sure you know that there is no man living more attached to you than I am. After considering the subject with the jealousy of a friend, I have a strong conviction that your change[106] is a good one; ill as you can be spared from the ranks of men who are in earnest here.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Layard.

Ever faithfully yours.

1870.

Mr. James T. Fields.

5, HYDE PARK PLACE, LONDON, W.,
Friday, January 14th, 1870.

MY DEAR FIELDS,

We live here (opposite the Marble Arch) in a charming house until the 1st of June, and then return to Gad's. The conservatory is completed, and is a brilliant success; but an expensive one!

I should be quite ashamed of not having written to you and my dear Mrs. Fields before now, if I didn't know that you will both understand how occupied I am, and how naturally, when I put my papers away for the day, I get up and fly. I have a large room here, with three fine windows, overlooking the Park—unsurpassable for airiness and cheerfulness.

You saw the announcement of the death of poor dear Harness. The circumstances are curious. He wrote to his old friend the Dean of Battle saying he would come to visit him on that day (the day of his death). The Dean wrote back: "Come next day, instead, as we are obliged to go out to dinner, and you will be alone." Harness told his sister a little impatiently that he *must* go on the first-named day; that he had made up his mind to go, and MUST. He had been getting himself ready for dinner, and came to a part of the staircase whence two doors opened—one, upon another level passage; one, upon a flight of stone steps. He opened the wrong door, fell down the steps, injured himself very severely, and died in a few hours.

You will know—*I* don't—what Fechter's success is in America at the time of this present writing. In his farewell performances at the Princess's he acted very finely. I thought the three first acts of his Hamlet very much better than I had ever thought them before—and I always thought very highly of them. We gave him a foaming stirrup cup at Gad's Hill.

Forster (who has been ill with his bronchitis again) thinks No. 2 of the new book ("Edwin Drood") a clincher,—I mean that word (as his own expression) for *Clincher*. There is a curious interest steadily working up to No. 5, which requires a great deal of art and self-denial. I think also, apart from character and picturesqueness, that the young people are placed in a very novel situation. So I hope—at Nos. 5 and 6, the story will turn upon an interest suspended until the end.

I can't believe it, and don't, and won't, but they say Harry's twenty-first birthday is next Sunday. I have entered him at the Temple just now; and if he don't get a fellowship at Trinity Hall when his time comes, I shall be disappointed, if in the present disappointed state of existence.

I hope you may have met with the little touch of Radicalism I gave them at Birmingham in the words of Buckle? With pride I observe that it makes the regular

political traders, of all sorts, perfectly mad. Such was my intentions, as a grateful acknowledgment of having been misrepresented.

I think Mrs. ——‘s prose very admirable; but I don’t believe it! No, I do *not*. My conviction is that those islanders get frightfully bored by the islands, and wish they had never set eyes upon them!

Charley Collins has done a charming cover for the monthly part of the new book. At the very earnest representations of Millais (and after having seen a great number of his drawings) I am going to engage with a new man; retaining of course, C. C.‘s cover aforesaid.[107] Katie has made some more capital portraits, and is always improving.

My dear Mrs. Fields, if “He” (made proud by chairs and bloated by pictures) does not give you my dear love, let us conspire against him when you find him out, and exclude him from all future confidences. Until then,

Ever affectionately yours and his.

Lord Lytton.

5, Hyde Park Place, *Monday, 14th February, 1870.*

My dear Lytton,

I ought to have mentioned in my hurried note to you, that my knowledge of the consultation[108] in question only preceded yours by certain hours; and that Longman asked me if I would make the design known to you, as he thought it might be a liberty to address you otherwise. This I did therefore.

The class of writers to whom you refer at the close of your note, have no copyright, and do not come within my case at all. I quite agree with you as to their propensities and deserts.

Indeed, I suppose in the main that there is very little difference between our opinions. I do not think the present Government worse than another, and I think it better than another by the presence of Mr. Gladstone; but it appears to me that our system fails.

Ever yours.

Mr. Frederic Chapman.

5, Hyde Park Place, *Monday, 14th March, 1870.*

Dear Frederic Chapman,

Mr. Fildes has been with me this morning, and without complaining of —— or expressing himself otherwise than as being obliged to him for his care in No. 1, represents that there is a brother-student of his, a wood-engraver, perfectly acquainted with his style and well understanding his meaning, who would render him better.

I have replied to him that there can be no doubt that he has a claim beyond dispute to our employing whomsoever he knows will present him in his best aspect. Therefore, we

must make the change; the rather because the fellow-student in question has engraved Mr. Fildes' most successful drawings hitherto.

Faithfully yours.

Mr. Charles Mackay.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Thursday, 21st April, 1870.

MY DEAR MACKAY,

I have placed "God's Acre." The prose paper, "The False Friend," has lingered, because it seems to me that the idea is to be found in an introduced story of mine called "The Baron of Grogzwig" in "Pickwick."

Be pleasant with the Scottish people in handling Johnson, because I love them.

Ever faithfully.

Sir John Bowring.

GAD'S HILL, *Thursday, 5th May, 1870.*

MY DEAR SIR JOHN,

I send you many cordial thanks for your note, and the very curious drawing accompanying it. I ought to tell you, perhaps, that the opium smoking I have described, I saw (exactly as I have described it, penny ink-bottle and all) down in Shadwell this last autumn. A couple of the Inspectors of Lodging-Houses knew the woman and took me to her as I was making a round with them to see for myself the working of Lord Shaftesbury's Bill.

Believe me, always faithfully yours.

Mr. J. B. Buckstone.

[109]*Sunday, 15th May, 1870.*

MY DEAR BUCKSTONE,

I send a duplicate of this note to the Haymarket, in case it should miss you out of town. For a few years I have been liable, at wholly uncertain and incalculable times, to a severe attack of neuralgia in the foot, about once in the course of a year. It began in an injury to the finer muscles or nerves, occasioned by over-walking in the deep snow. When it comes on I cannot stand, and can bear no covering whatever on the sensitive place. One of these seizures is upon me now. Until it leaves me I could no more walk into St. James's Hall than I could fly in the air. I hope you will present my duty to the Prince of Wales, and assure his Royal Highness that nothing short of my being (most unfortunately) disabled for the moment would have prevented my attending, as trustee of the Fund,[110] at the

dinner, and warmly expressing my poor sense of the great and inestimable service his Royal Highness renders to a most deserving institution by so kindly commending it to the public.

Faithfully yours always.

Mr. Rusden.

ATHENÆUM, *Friday Evening, 20th May, 1870.*

MY DEAR MR. RUSDEN,

I received your most interesting and clear-sighted letter about Plorn just before the departure of the last mail from here to you. I did not answer then because another incoming mail was nearly due, and I expected (knowing Plorn so well) that some communication from him such as he made to you would come to me. I was not mistaken. The same arguing of the squatter question—vegetables and all—appeared. This gave me an opportunity of touching on those points by this mail, without in the least compromising you. I cannot too completely express my concurrence with your excellent idea that his correspondence with you should be regarded as confidential. Just as I could not possibly suggest a word more neatly to the point, or more thoughtfully addressed, to such a young man than your reply to his letter, I hope you will excuse my saying that it is a perfect model of tact, good sense, and good feeling. I had been struck by his persistently ignoring the possibility of his holding any other position in Australasia than his present position, and had inferred from it a homeward tendency. What is most curious to me is that he is very sensible, and yet does not seem to understand that he has qualified himself for no public examinations in the old country, and could not possibly hold his own against any competition for anything to which I could get him nominated.

But I must not trouble you about my boys as if they were yours. It is enough that I can never thank you for your goodness to them in a generous consideration of me.

I believe the truth as to France to be that a citizen Frenchman never forgives, and that Napoleon will never live down the *coup d'état*. This makes it enormously difficult for any well-advised English newspaper to support him, and pretend not to know on what a volcano his throne is set. Informed as to his designs on the one hand, and the perpetual uneasiness of his police on the other (to say nothing of a doubtful army), *The Times* has a difficult game to play. My own impression is that if it were played too boldly for him, the old deplorable national antagonism would revive in his going down. That the wind will pass over his Imperiality on the sands of France I have not the slightest doubt. In no country on the earth, but least of all there, can you seize people in their houses on political warrants, and kill in the streets, on no warrant at all, without raising a gigantic Nemesis—not very reasonable in detail, perhaps, but none the less terrible for that.

The commonest dog or man driven mad is a much more alarming creature than the same individuality in a sober and commonplace condition.

Your friend —— —— is setting the world right generally all round (including the flattened ends, the two poles), and, as a Minister said to me the other day, "has the one

little fault of omniscience.”

You will probably have read before now that I am going to be everything the Queen can make me.[111] If my authority be worth anything believe on it that I am going to be nothing but what I am, and that that includes my being as long as I live,

Your faithful and heartily obliged.

Mr. Alfred Tennyson Dickens.

ATHENÆUM CLUB, *Friday Night, 20th May, 1870.*

MY DEAR ALFRED,[112]

I have just time to tell you under my own hand that I invited Mr. Bear to a dinner of such guests as he would naturally like to see, and that we took to him very much, and got on with him capitally.

I am doubtful whether Plorn is taking to Australia. Can you find out his real mind? I notice that he always writes as if his present life were the be-all and the end-all of his emigration, and as if I had no idea of you two becoming proprietors, and aspiring to the first positions in the colony, without casting off the old connection.

From Mr. Bear I had the best accounts of you. I told him that they did not surprise me, for I had unbounded faith in you. For which take my love and blessing.

They will have told you all the news here, and that I am hard at work. This is not a letter so much as an assurance that I never think of you without hope and comfort.

Ever, my dear Alfred,
Your affectionate Father.

This Letter did not reach Australia until after these two absent sons of Charles Dickens had heard, by telegraph, the news of their father’s death.

THE END.

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4. THE MUSCLES, Back View.
5. THE SKELETON, Side View.
6. THE MUSCLES, Side View.
7. THE FEMALE SKELETON, Front View.

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THE FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW

Edited by JOHN MORLEY.

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] “The Village Coquettes.”

[2] Mrs. Braham.

[3] Printed in “Forty Years’ Recollections of Life, Literature, and Public Affairs,” by Charles Mackay.

[4] A chain made of Mary Hogarth’s hair, sent to Charles Dickens on the first anniversary of her birthday, after her death.

[5] This fragment of a diary was found amongst some papers which have recently come to light. The Editors give only those paragraphs which are likely to be of any public interest. The original manuscript has been added to "The Forster Collection," at the South Kensington Museum.

[6] "Sunday, under Three Heads," a small pamphlet published about this time.

[7] "Bentley's Miscellany."

[8] No other date, but it must have been 7th February, 1839.

[9] Mr. Adams, the Hon. Secretary of the Chatham Mechanics' Institute, which office he held for many years.

[10] "The Kentish Coronal."

[11] An intimate friend.

[12] A Dissenting minister, once himself a workhouse boy, and writing on the character of Oliver Twist. This letter was published in "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," in 1862.

[13] This, and all other Letters addressed to the Countess of Blessington, were printed in "Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington."

[14] The death of his correspondent's twin-brother, Willis Gaylord Clark.

[15] On the occasion of the sudden death of Mrs. Hogarth's son, George.

[16] This, and all other Letters addressed to Mr. Washington Irving, were printed in "The Life and Letters of Washington Irving," edited by his nephew, Pierre M. Irving.

[17] This, and all other Letters addressed to Professor Felton, were printed in Mr. Field's "Yesterdays with Authors," originally published in *The Atlantic Monthly Magazine*.

[18] On the subject of International Copyright.

[19] This, and all other Letters addressed to Mr. Macvey Napier, were printed in "Selection from the Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier, Esq.," editor of *The Edinburgh Review*, edited by his son Macvey Napier.

[20] His complaint was that the reviewer of his "American Notes," in the number for January, 1843, had represented him as having gone to America as a missionary in the cause of international copyright—an allegation which Charles Dickens repudiated, and which was rectified in the way he himself suggested.

[21] On the occasion of a great meeting of the Mechanics' Institution at Liverpool, with Charles Dickens in the chair.

[22] He had also presided two evenings previously at a meeting of the Polytechnic Institution at Birmingham.

[23] A character in a Play, well known at this time.

[24] "Studies of Sensation and Event."

[25] Lieut. Tracey, R.N., who was at this time Governor of Tothill Fields Prison.

[26] Mrs. Thompson.

[27] Mr. W. J. Fox, afterwards M.P. for Oldham, well known for his eloquent advocacy of the Repeal of the Corn Laws, was engaged to write the political articles in the first numbers of the *Daily News*.

[28] The first issue of the *Daily News* was a sad failure, as to printing.

[29] The birth, at Lausanne, of Mr. Thompson's eldest daughter, Elizabeth Thompson, now Mrs. Butler, the celebrated artist.

[30] In the dramatised "Battle of Life."

[31] Written to Mr. Sheridan Knowles after some slight misunderstanding, the cause of which is unknown to the Editors.

[32] Dr. Hodgson, then Principal of the Liverpool Institute, and Principal of the Chorlton High School, Manchester.

[33] Mr. Alexander Ireland, the manager and one of the proprietors of *The Manchester Examiner*.

[34] This refers to an essay on “The Genius and Writings of Leigh Hunt,” contributed to *The Manchester Examiner*.

[35] The “Autobiography of a Working Man,” by “One who has whistled at the Plough” (Alex. Somerville), originally appeared in *The Manchester Examiner*, and afterwards was published as a volume, 1848.

[36] This and following letters to Mr. and Mrs. Cowden Clarke appeared in a volume entitled “Recollections of Writers.”

[37] The house in which Shakespeare was born, at Stratford-on-Avon.

[38] A character in “Used Up.”

[39] As fairies in “Merry Wives.”

[40] A huge blot of smeared ink.

[41] “Young Gas.”}

[42] “Gas-Light Boy.”} Names he had playfully given himself.

[43] Mr. Joseph Charles King, the friend of many artists and literary men, conducted a private school, at which the sons of Mr. Macready and of Charles Dickens were being educated at this time.

[44] “Not So Bad As We Seem; or, Many Sides to a Character.”

[45] “Not So Bad As We Seem.”

[46] An embroidered blotting-book given by Mrs. Cowden Clarke.

[47] One of the series in “The Girlhood of Shakespeare’s Heroines,” dedicated to Charles Dickens.

[48] Wilmot, the clever veteran prompter, who was engaged to accompany the acting-tours.

[49] A wooden one.

[50] Miss Eden had a cottage at Broadstairs, and was residing there at this time.

[51] Tavistock House.

[52] Now Sir Austen Henry Layard.

[53] The “Medical Aspects of Death, and the Medical Aspects of the Human Mind.”

[54] The injurious effects of the manufacture of lucifer matches on the employed.

[55] Charles Dickens, Mr. Wilkie Collins, Mr. Augustus Egg, and Edward the courier.

[56] Secretary to the Artizans’ Committee in aid of the Birmingham and Midland Institute.

[57] The Editors have great pleasure in publishing another note to Mr. Thackeray, which has been found and sent to them by his daughter, Mrs. Ritchie, since the publication of the first two volumes.

[58] Chairman of the “Administrative Reform League” Meeting at Drury Lane Theatre.

[59] Mr. Higgins, best known as a writer in *The Times*, under the name of “Jacob Omnium.”

[60] The Members of the Administrative Reform League.

[61] Mrs. Winter, a very dear friend and companion of Charles Dickens in his youth.

[62] Miss Emily Jolly, authoress of “Mr. Arle,” and many other clever novels.

[63] This, and another Letter to Captain Morgan which appears under date of 1860, were published in *Scribner’s Monthly*, October, 1877.

[64] Captain Morgan was a captain in the American Merchant Service. He was an intimate friend of Mr. Leslie, R.A. (the great painter), by whom he was made known to Charles Dickens.

[65] This Letter was written during the Crimean war.

[66] The farce alluded to, however, was never written. It had been projected to be played at the Amateur Theatricals at Tavistock House.

[67] The portrait by Mr. Frith is now in the Forster Collection, at the South Kensington Museum.

[68] A porcelain paper-weight with two green leaves enamelled on it, between which were placed the initials C. D. A present from Mrs. C. Clarke.

[69] This and all other Letters addressed to Mr. H. F. Chorley, were printed in "Autobiography, Memoir, and Letters of Henry Fothergill Chorley," compiled by Mr. H. G. Hewlett.

[70] Sir John Bowring, formerly Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary in China, and Governor of Hong Kong.

[71] "A Message from the Sea."

[72] "A Strange Story."

[73] The first of the series on "National Music."

[74] A present from Mr. Wills.

[75] The book was called "Woodland Gossip."

[76] Written by Charles Dickens for a new edition of Miss Adelaide Procter's Poems, which was published after her death.

[77] Late keeper of printed books at the British Museum, now of Exeter.

[78] The honorary secretary of the St. George Club, Manchester.

[79] Robert Browning, the Poet, a dear and valued friend.

[80] Mr. Rusden was, at this time, Clerk to the House of Parliament, in Melbourne. He was the kindest of friends to the two sons of Charles Dickens, in Australia, from the time that the elder of the two first went out there. And Charles Dickens had the most grateful regard for him, and maintained a frequent correspondence with him—as a friend—although they never saw each other.

[81] Anonymous.

[82] The Hon. Robert Lytton—now the Earl of Lytton—in literature well known as "Owen Meredith."

[83] Mr. Henry W. Phillips, at this time secretary of the Artists' General Benevolent Society. He was eager to establish some educational system in connection with that institution.

[84] The remainder has been cut off for the signature.

[85] This and all other Letters to Mr. J. T. Fields were printed in Mr. Fields' "In and Out of Doors with Charles Dickens."

[86] A ridiculous paragraph in the papers following close on the public announcement that Charles Dickens was coming to America in November, drew from him this letter to Mr. Fields, dated early in October.

[87] As to subjects for articles in "All the Year Round."

[88] The Play referred to is founded on the "Captives" of Plautus, and is entitled "The Captives." It has never been acted or published.

[89] "No Thoroughfare."

[90] It was at Baltimore that Charles Dickens first conceived the idea of a walking-match, which should take place on his return to Boston, and he drew up a set of humorous "articles."

[91] The Play of "No Thoroughfare," was produced at the Adelphi Theatre, under the management of Mr. Webster.

[92] Mr. Fechter was, at this time, superintending the production of a French version of "No Thoroughfare," in Paris. It was called "L'Abîme."

[93] The volume referred to is a "List of the Writings of William Hazlett and Leigh Hunt,

chronologically arranged, with Notes, descriptive, critical, and explanatory, etc."

[94] A copy of "The Old Curiosity Shop," in raised letters for the use of the Blind, had been printed by Charles Dickens's order at the "Perkins Institution for the Blind" in Boston, and presented by him to that institution in this year.

[95] John Everett Millais, R.A. (The Editors make use of this note, as it is the only one which Mr. Millais has been able to find for them, and they are glad to have the two names associated together).

[96] A dramatic author, who was acting manager of Covent Garden Theatre in 1838, when his acquaintance with Charles Dickens first began. This letter is in answer to some questions put to Charles Dickens by Mr. Serle on the subject of the extension of copyright to the United States of America.

[97] Mrs. Cowden Clarke wrote to tell Charles Dickens that her sister, Miss Sabilla Novello, and her brother, Mr. Alfred Novello, were also in the train, and escaped without injury.

[98] A forged letter from Charles Dickens, introducing an impostor, had been addressed to Mr. Russell Sturgis.

[99] Sir James Emerson Tennent.

[100] Some Venetian glass champagne tumblers.

[101] Miss Florence Olliffe, who wrote to announce the death of her father, Sir Joseph Olliffe.

[102] The Readings.

[103] The "piece" here alluded to was called "Black and White." It was presented at the Adelphi Theatre. The outline of the plot was suggested by Mr. Fechter.

[104] The story was called "An Experience."

[105] "Boffin" and "Fascination Fledgeby," were nicknames given to his children by Mr. Robert Lytton at this time.

[106] Mr. Layard's appointment as British Minister at Madrid.

[107] Mr. Charles Collins was obliged to give up the illustrating of "Edwin Drood," on account of his failing health.

[108] A meeting of Publishers and Authors to discuss the subject of International Copyright.

[109] Printed in Mackenzie's "Life of Dickens."

[110] The General Theatrical Fund.

[111] An allusion to an unfounded rumour.

[112] Charles Dickens's son, Alfred Tennyson.

Transcriber's Notes:

Obvious punctuation errors repaired.

The remaining corrections made are indicated by dotted lines under the corrections. Scroll the mouse over the word and the original text will appear.